Evaluating Your Pastures After Fire

Question to ask:

What did you have before?
Perennial grasses or annuals and weeds?

Do you have perennial grasses?

• Do you have 3-5 plants/crowns per square foot? If so, you may be OK. If not, re-seeding following the strategy below under Annuals and Weeds may be appropriate.
• If you do have 3-5 plants per square foot:

GIVE THEM A CHANCE TO RECOVER

• Best strategy is rest for a growing season and do not graze until July 2016.
  o Can you at least rest some of your pastures by using electric fence?
• Wait until the leaves are at least 6-8 inches high before turning out livestock.
• Leave a 4 inch stubble height.
• Let your pastures go to seed every two to three years.
• Be vigilant for weeds and act on new infestations.

Do you have Annuals and Weeds?

  • They will come back. Good time to investigate ways to re-establish perennials.

DO NOT JUST THROW SEED ON GROUND.

Take care of your weeds first.

  • Kill weeds when they start to sprout this fall. Spray with non-selective herbicide or cultivate.
  • Kill again in the spring when they green up.
  • Repeat one more time in the spring before re-seeding. Repeating for another year would be even better.
  • Be sure you have good seed to soil contact. A smooth seedbed free of weeds is important. Using a drill would be preferable if not double your seed rate if broadcasting.
  • Cover seed with a harrow or rake.
Call the NRCS Grangeville office for additional information. (208) 983-1046. Other NRCS field offices can be found at this site: Office Locator.