



Conservation Information Sheet

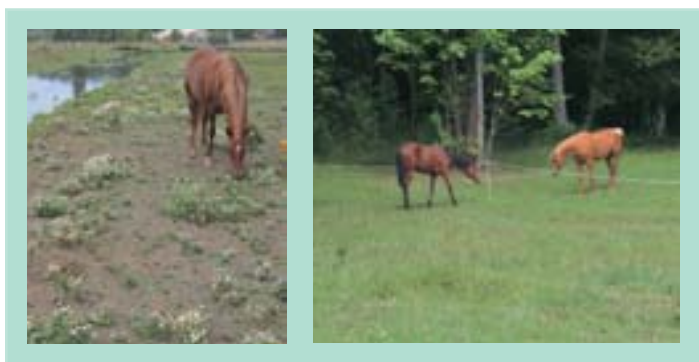
Tips on PASTURE MANAGEMENT

Pastures

Are Your Pastures Properly Managed?

- 1) Does your livestock have prolonged access to pastures in the spring before the grasses are six inches tall?
- 2) Are your animals prone to colic or respiratory problems?
- 3) Do your animals waste grass by not grazing evenly?
- 4) Do you manage all of your pastures the same even if they have different soils or slopes?
- 5) Are your animals allowed to roam freely year-round?
- 6) Do you graze pastures below three inches in the fall?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you need a new pasture management program that will provide grass throughout the growing season, save you money and protect your resources!



Continuous grazing allows weeds to grow where grass roots have been weakened.

Pasture rotation and good grazing management produces more grass, fewer weeds and no bare ground.

► How Grazing Affects Root Growth

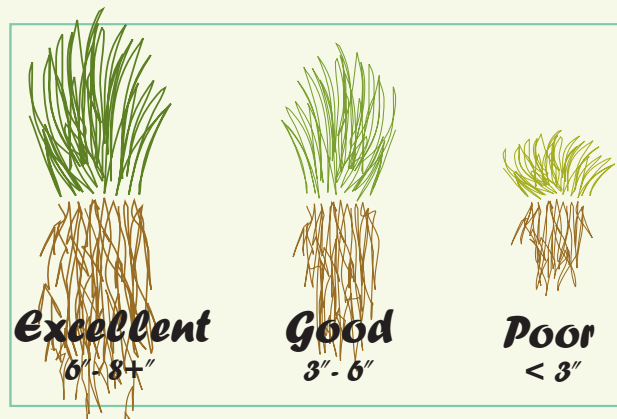
	% Grass Plant Removed	% Root Growth Stopped
Overgrazing occurs when 50% or more of the grass plant is removed all at once. Overgrazing stops root growth and reduces grass production.	10%	0%
	20%	0%
	30%	0%
	40%	0%
	50%	2-4%
Look what happens when you try to sneak another 10% "harvest"-- 50% of the roots stop growing!	60%	50%
	70%	78%
	80%	100%
	90%	100%

Notice how the root mass of these grasses decreases in pastures that range from excellent to good to poor condition.

Tips

For a Successful Grazing Program

- ♦ Do not graze animals on flooded or saturated soils.
- ♦ Hold animals in a confinement area during the winter and in times of drought.
- ♦ In the spring, begin grazing only after grasses have grown to at least six inches in height. Allow livestock to graze until approximately **three inches** remains. Confine animals again until grasses have regrown to at least six inches (this generally takes two to six weeks).
- ♦ You may want to confine animals for a portion of the day to prevent overgrazing and extend your pasture forage. Because grass is particularly high in sugars during the spring, only allow horses to graze for short periods and gradually increase grazing time.
- ♦ Mow pastures to a uniform three inches in height after grazing to stimulate equal growth of all plants. (Mowing also helps to prevent weeds from going to seed.)
- ♦ Drag or harrow to spread nutrient-rich manure and to promote uniform grazing.
- ♦ Compost manure and apply to pastures during the growing season (April through October). Apply about half an inch at a time and no more than three to four inches per year.
- ♦ Control weeds and fertilize according to soil test recommendations. For information on soil testing, visit: www.kingcd.org/pro_far_so_i.htm or call 425-277-5581 ext. 105
- ♦ Subdivide large pastures into smaller pastures and develop a pasture-rotation grazing system. (See the next page for more information.)
- ♦ In the fall, leave at least three inches of stubble. This will ensure the grass plants will have enough reserves through winter to allow for vigorous spring growth.



Grazing

A Sample Schedule for a Multiple-Pasture System

Start by dividing your pasture into sections; you may even just want to divide it in half. Start grazing in the first section in the spring when grass has reached six to eight inches in height. Once the grass has been grazed down to about **three inches**, move your animals onto the next section of pasture (again, this grass should be at least six inches tall). Continue to rotate animals through the pastures as each section is grazed to three inches. You may need to confine livestock and feed them hay until your first section has regrown to six inches (this generally takes two to six weeks).

	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M
Pasture 1	G	G	G	G		G						
Pasture 2	G	G	G	G		G						
Pasture 3	G	G	G		G		G					
Pasture 4		G	G		G		G					

Grazed each pasture no shorter than 3" in length, then take 2 - 6 weeks off.

G Graze Rest Provide Hay

Fencing

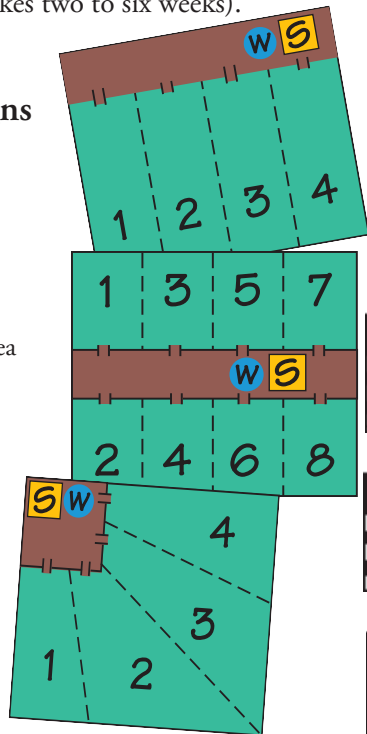
Choosing the Right Fence

Some points to consider when selecting a fence are:

- Purpose - type of animal(s) you're keeping and their habits
- Type of soil material - rocky, loamy or mucky
- Topography and terrain
- Availability of power
- Aesthetics and visual appeal
- Safety and people access
- Cost of materials and labor
- Maintenance requirements
- Weather
- Vegetation control

Sample Designs

- Shelter
- Water
- Gate
- Confinement area
- Pasture
- Pasture fence



Basic Types of Livestock Fencing

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Barbed Wire 4 or 5 strand Good control of cattle and sheep. Inexpensive.</p>	May injure horses and llamas.
<p>Smooth/Coated Wire Less harsh than barbed wire. Inexpensive and easy to build.</p>	Needs more strands to be equivalent barrier to barbed wire. Needs periodic maintenance. Less visible to horses.
<p>Woven Wire Good control for horses and sheep. May be combined with electric strand. Variety of sizes and types for specific animals.</p>	Maintenance is difficult and fence is easily damaged by falling trees and floods. Needs to be combined with electric wire offset for horses. Harder to keep tight. More expensive.
<p>Portable Electric Lightweight and easy to move for pasture rotation. Inexpensive.</p>	Requires a power source. Not very durable. Not a physical barrier. Not recommended for perimeters.
<p>High Tensile Electric (New Zealand Style) Inexpensive and requires little maintenance. Good control of all animals. Can be built to withstand floods.</p>	Less of a physical barrier if there are power outages.
<p>Rail (Wood or Vinyl) Visually attractive. Little maintenance and very durable.</p>	Very expensive to purchase and install. Wood is susceptible to rot and chewing by horses. Easily damaged by falling trees and floods.

Stockwater

As you divide your acreage into several pastures, establish separate water sources for each pasture or a single water source that is accessible from all pastures. Clean, fresh water is essential for good animal health. Options for stockwater include:

- ♦ Pipe water to a stock tank in each pasture or a centralized location. It is highly recommended (and may be required) that you fence your livestock away from streams to keep manure out of the stream, protect and maintain streamside vegetation and control erosion.
- ♦ Use a nose pump to draw water from a stream or pond.