



What?

Grazing land is land which supports vegetation that can be harvested by grazing animals. In Wisconsin, grazing land includes permanent pasture with introduced forage species, rotated cropland planted to grass and legume species for hay and grazing, native prairies, and grazed oak savannas. NRCS Conservationists will help you develop and implement a “Managed Grazing” Plan to maintain or improve your grazing lands.

How?

The first step is for you and the conservationist to discuss and observe together, in the field, factors that affect grazing land management. These include:

1. Identifying major plants that grow on your land.
2. Discussing how these plants grow, how they respond to grazing, and how grazing can be managed to enhance the most productive plants.
3. Observing various plants to understand why some plants are grazed and why others remain ungrazed.
4. Observing soil and landscape characteristics on the farm. Some sites have a higher potential to produce forage than other sites. The types of sites located on the farm/ranch and their condition will influence the stocking rate.
5. Evaluating the condition of each pasture unit. This will give you an idea of how much forage is being produced in relation to how much forage the site is capable of producing.
6. Discussing the possible grazing management alternatives for improving the production potential of each ecological site.
7. Calculating an annual stocking rate based on the present condition of the pasture and the management intensity to be used.
8. Delineating pasture units and facilities such as lanes, watering troughs, and pipelines based on management and site characteristics.
9. Observing and monitoring grazing land and animal changes over time and making recommendations for additional land and livestock practices.



And Then?

You develop your “Managed Grazing” Plan. You make all the decisions. The NRCS Conservationist’s role is to help you understand your grazing land and to provide alternatives and recommendations based on your situation.

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