United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service 2013 Ranking Period 1

Animal Enhancement Activity – ANM29 – On-farm forage based grazing system

Enhancement Description
A forage based grazing system that supplies all roughage (forage and supplemental hay) requirements for a livestock operation.

Land Use Applicability
Pastureland, Rangeland, Forestland

Benefits
Forage based grazing systems reduce the time that livestock are confined resulting in less manure to store and allows manure to become a fertilizer instead of a pollutant. Management of perennial grass and forbs ground cover improves nutrient and water cycling, soil structure and increases organic matter. Energy conservation is achieved by reducing annual cropping, transport of feed and less reliance on synthetic nitrogen.

Conditions Where Enhancement Applies
This enhancement applies to all pasture, range or forest land use acres.

Criteria
1. Develop a grazing management plan with a forage based grazing system that provides **ALL** livestock feed and nutrient needs for the duration the animals are on the participant's land.
2. Livestock operations include those that produce cattle, sheep, goats, etc.
3. Manage pasture grazing and rest periods to follow NRCS Prescribed Grazing practice standard (528) criteria for recommended maximum (begin) and minimum (end) grazing heights by forage species or Ecological Site Description interpretations. Begin and end grazing heights are followed to maximize forage quality and palatability, as well as to promote rapid recovery and forage regrowth.
   a. Maintain a livestock watering system that accommodates an appropriate grazing strategy through several different pastures or paddocks during the grazing season.
   b. Follow NRCS practice standard criteria for Prescribed Grazing (528), Watering Facility (614), Pipeline (516), or other related standards for appropriate supply and travel distance to water.
   c. Use fencing that is permanent, semi-permanent, and/or temporary to facilitate pasture rotation and/or livestock distribution improvement. Follow the NRCS Fence practice standard (382).

Adoption Requirements
This enhancement is considered adopted when no external forage or hay is utilized in the grazing operation.

Documentation Requirements

1. Provide a copy of the written grazing plan, and
2. Include time and timing of grazing, minimum and maximum grazing heights, season of use, grazing records and monitoring plan of pastures/paddocks in the grazing plan, as appropriate for the land use.

Note: NRCS Pasture Notes, grazers' notebooks, or other record keeping systems for pasture livestock operations can be used to facilitate record-keeping.

North Dakota Requirements:

All feed or forage must be produced on farm or ranch where the livestock are located and fed or grazed. Need to meet practice 528 standard and specifications. Standards and specifications will be met for any additional conservation practices required to implement this activity (e.g. 382, 516, 614).

References

Ball, D. M., E. N. Ballard, M. L. Kennedy, G. D. Lacefield, and D. J. Undersander. 2008. Extending Grazing and Reducing Stored Feed Needs. Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative Publication 8-01, Bryan TX.

Parish, J. A., J. D. Rivera, H. T. Boland, and R. Lemus. 2010. Beef Cattle Grazing Management. Mississippi State University Extension Service. Publication 2629.

Rayburn, E. B. (editor). 2007. Forage Utilization for Pasture Based Livestock Production. NRAES – Book 173. PALS Publishing, Ithaca, New York.

USDA-NRCS. 2011. Conservation Practice Standard: Livestock Pipeline-Code 516.

USDA-NRCS. 2010. Conservation Practice Standards: Fence-Code 382, Forage Harvest Management-Code 511, Prescribed Grazing-Code 528 and Watering Facility-Code 614.

USDA-NRCS. 2006. Watering Systems for Serious Grazers. NRCS-Missouri Publication, Columbia, Mo.

USDA-NRCS. 2005. Electric Fencing for Serious Grazers. NRCS-Missouri Publication, Columbia, Mo.