



**NRCS
NEBRASKA**

Natural Resources Conservation Service

PASTURE CONDITION SCORE SHEET

NE-ECS-13

Name:		Date:	
Conservationist:		Pasture Number:	Acres:
MLRA - FSG - Species/Mix:			
Estimated Production Potential From FSG (lbs.)		to	Estimated Annual AUMs
Measured Production (lbs.)		AUMs calculated from Measured Production	

*Evaluate the present plant community and rate each category based on your observations.
Ratings for each category may range from 1 to 5. If rating falls between the listed narratives, select that value.*

Indicator	Evaluate Site and Enter Appropriate Score in Column at Right					Score
	1 Point (Very Poor)	2 Points	3 Points	4 Points	5 Points (Excellent)	
1) Percent desirable plants (adapted to site, and high production potential)	Desirable species <20% of stand by weight. Annual weeds and/or perennial weedy species dominate.		40 - 60% desirable forage species by weight. Grazing resistant forage species with lower production potential make up a substantial portion of the stand. Undesirable broad-leaf weeds and annual weedy grasses invading.		Desirable species exceed 80% of plant community by weight.	
2) Plant cover	Very poor stand relative to FSG. Photosynthetic area very low. Very little desirable plant cover to moderate soil temperatures and slow or stop runoff.		Moderate stand relative to FSG. Moderate leaf area to intercept sunlight and raindrops. Bare areas may be common.		Excellent stand relative to FSG. Forages maintained in leafy condition for best photosynthetic activity. Very thick stand, slow or no runoff.	
3) Plant vigor	Plants spindly, with yellowish green leaves. Productivity much below site potential. Little or no regrowth after grazing.		Urine/dung patches dark green in contrast to rest of plants indicating an unfavorable plant nutrient status. Yields regularly below site's potential. Moderate regrowth after grazing.		Plants healthy green color. Urine/dung patches only slightly greener than rest of plants. Yields at site potential for species adapted to the site's soil and climate. Rapid regrowth.	
4) Percent legume	No legumes in cool season pasture or > 60% bloat causing legume by weight.		20 to 30% legume by weight in cool season pasture.		40-50% legume by weight.	
5) Plant Diversity (may be considered across several pastures if they are grazed in rotation)	One forage species or functional group providing a narrow time period when forages are of high nutritive quality.		2 or more forage species from 1 or more functional groups with similar growth periods resulting in low forage quality through a significant portion of the grazing season.		2 or more forage species from two or more functional groups with complimentary growth periods resulting in high forage quality throughout the grazing season.	
6) Uniformity of use	Urine and dung spots ungrazed. Remainder of pasture appears to be consistently grazed below proper stubble heights.		Spot or patch grazing evident across much of the pasture indicating selectivity by grazing animals, OR zone grazing with significant areas lightly or not grazed by livestock.		Rejected areas only at urine and dung patches. No forage species rejection.	
7) Plant residue	Very little litter present on soil surface to buffer soil temperatures and intercept and retain moisture, OR litter present in extreme amounts, reducing tillering and suppressing stand.		Surface litter present in amounts moderately more or less than what would be expected for the site, AND/OR excessive standing dead plants reducing forage intake and quality.		Litter present in amounts considered normal for the site and in contact with soil surface.	
8) Erosion	Severe wind, sheet and rill, trail, gully, and/or riparian area erosion, active and readily apparent.		Moderate wind, sheet and rill, trail, gully, and/or riparian area erosion evident.		No active erosion visible.	

Overall Pasture Condition Score	Indicator Score	Management Change Suggested	Overall Pasture Condition Score
35-40	5	No changes in management needed at this time.	
15-35	2-4	Improvements would benefit productivity and/or environment.	
8-15	1	Major effort required in time, management and expense.	

Comments:	
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