

THE VALUE OF A HORSE GRAZING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR COVER IN DOLLARS AND SENSE?

ASSUME: 6 Acres of well drained soil with a pH 6.2 with good fertility
 3 horses / one fenced field / 1 watering system in place
 Cost of replacement forage is \$3.00 / small hay bale
 Established Novel Endophyte Tall Fescue and Kentucky bluegrass on all acres with an annual yield of 4.5 tons (9,000 lbs)/ acre

LET'S EVALUATE SOME KEY EXPENSES OVER 5 YEARS

1 Paddock System

Purchased hay \$ 5,220
 Seeding costs (seed only) 3,000
 Temporary fencing 0
 Watering system 0
 System cost \$ 8,220

3 Paddock System

Purchased hay \$ 4,860
 Seeding costs (seed only) 300
 Temporary fencing 800
 Portable Watering system 600
 System cost \$ 6,560

ROTATIONAL GRAZING FOR COVER DOESN'T COST, IT PAYS AND CREATES MUCH LESS RESEEDING HEADACHES!

Forage calculations were done using the NRCS Maryland Grazing Handbook and C-Graz Grazing Analysis Tool. Cost estimates were based on using basic portable fencing and watering systems.

Only about 25% of the forage yield potential will be realized due to regrazing of recovering grass plants. Grass quickly regrazed is high in sugar a concern with founder issues. Constant regrazing will cause rapid stand death.

Value of pasture forage is 45 small bales of hay / acre. Needed additional hay/acre: 58 small bales of hay costing \$174 an acre or \$1,044 a year or \$5,220 over a 5 year expected stand life in a 6 paddock rotation.

Annual reseeding costs \$100 an acre (seed only) or \$600 per year.

EXISTING CONTINUOUS GRAZING HORSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM - NO COVER

1 6 ACRE Paddock

Also suggest having a sacrifice area to prevent the worst compaction in wet field conditions.

To prevent grazing below recommended heights which will kill your grass, feed animals hay elsewhere when grass is below recommended grazing heights.

LEGEND

	GRAZING
	RECOVERY

0 Days in Recovery
 30 Days Grazing per paddock

1 Paddock
 No Rotation

Age of forage should be fine for most horses. About 27% of the forage yield potential will be realized due to short regrowth time and regrazing of the grass plants, but this grass recovery time usually will maintain cover. Think about your lawn!

Pasture forage produced equals 49 bales/acre: Worth \$147 an acre or \$882 a year or \$4,410 over a 5 year expected stand life in a 3 paddock rotation where animals are moved when grass removal heights are reached to the sacrifice area and kept till next pasture has adequate regrowth grass height. Additional forage needs are 54 bales/acre or \$162 in purchased hay per acre or \$972 per year or \$4,860 over a five year period.

Annual reseeding costs for spot treatments should be less than \$10 /acre or \$60/yr (seed only).

HORSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR COVER

LEGEND

GRAZING

RECOVERY

SACRIFICE AREA

14 Days in Recovery
7 Days Grazing per paddock per 21 day rotation.

3 Paddocks
21 Day Rotation

Maryland USDA
NRCS

BENEFITS OF A HORSE PASTURE ROTATIONAL GRAZING SYSTEM FOR COVER WITH RECOVERY (REGROWTH) TIME AND A SACRIFICE AREA USED WHEN WET FIELD CONDITIONS EXIST OR GRASS HEIGHTS ARE AT REMOVAL HEIGHTS. See Pasture Stick.

- 1. COSTS** - Seeding Costs decline dramatically by up to 90%
- 2. HORSE HEALTH** - Horses will be eating more mature grasses lower in sugars that are hard on horses with founder. The more mature the grass the less it's a problem.

Less dust as well for respiratory problems.
- 3. PROPERTY APPEAL** - Pastures appear green and healthy.

Weeds are less of a problem.
- 4. POLLUTION** - Less sediment and polluting nutrients (animal waste and fertilizer) will leave your property when it rains. Less regulatory concern.