

Prepared for: _____
 Prepared by: _____
 Farm: _____ Tract: _____ Date: _____



Cattle operation practicing prescribed grazing.

DEFINITION

Managing the harvest of vegetation with grazing and/or browsing animals.

PURPOSE

- Improve or maintain desired species composition and vigor of plant communities.
- Improve or maintain quantity and quality of forage for grazing and browsing animals' health and productivity.
- Improve or maintain surface and/or subsurface water quality and quantity.
- Improve or maintain riparian and watershed function.
- Reduce accelerated soil erosion, and maintain or improve soil condition.

CRITERIA

Adequate quantity and quality drinking water will be supplied at all times during period of occupancy.

Removal of herbage will be in accordance with site production limitations, rate of plant growth, the physiological needs of forage plants, and the nutritional needs of the animals. Utilize NCSU developed guidance on "stop/start forage specific grazing heights.

Adjust intensity, frequency, timing and duration of grazing and/or browsing to meet the desired objectives for the plant communities and the associated resources, including the grazing and/or browsing animal.

Manage type of animal, animal number, grazing distribution, length of grazing and/or browsing periods, and timing of use to provide grazed plants sufficient recovery time to meet planned objectives.

Provide rest from grazing or browsing to ensure the success of other conservation practices that cause stress or damage to key plants.

Manage grazing and/or browsing animals to maintain adequate vegetative cover on sensitive areas (riparian, wetland, and habitats of concern). Move livestock before the most sensitive resource is impacted.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Prescribed Grazing will be applied on a continuing basis throughout the occupation period of all planned grazing management units.

Adjustments will be made as needed to ensure that the goals and objectives of the prescribed grazing strategy are met.

Monitoring data and grazing records will be used on a regular basis within the prescribed grazing plan to insure that objectives are being met, or to make necessary changes.

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Prescribed Grazing Checklist

North Carolina Practice Checklist 528
Job Sheet Supplement

The following is a certification checklist for Prescribed Grazing. Every statement must be checked as completed in order to meet minimum prescribed grazing requirements.

- Pastureland Conditioning Scorecard (PCS) utilized to determine current condition. The value of periodic assessment with PCS is explained to the producer.
- Forage heights maintained at optimum levels. Livestock removed from grazing or rotated to the next paddock at forage heights of:
 - Fescue – 3 inches.
 - Bermudagrass – 2 inches.
 - Native warm season grasses – 6 inches.

**See table on next page for more information on targeted grazing heights.*

Up to 10% of the prescribed grazing area may fall below the recommended forage grazing stop heights during dormant or drought periods to allow external feeding and further regrowth of remaining acreage. Permanently damaged forages within this 10% area must be restored (see NC Practice Standard 512, Forage and Biomass Planting). If needed, this sacrifice grazing area will be identified and planned on the least environmentally sensitive part of the prescribed grazing area. Rotating and dividing sacrifice areas if possible and removing nutrients through haying is encouraged.

- Livestock are seasonally or permanently excluded from streams and wetlands when degradation is occurring from lounging, wading, or general overuse.
- No gully, sheet and rill, or streambank erosion is evident.
- Feeding, handling and watering areas are located as far from (but not less than 100 feet from) environmentally sensitive areas such as streams (perennial, seasonal or intermittent), wetlands, other drainage ways, and other critical areas as possible. Existing watering facilities located less than 100 feet from water courses are satisfactory if drainage to water courses is greater than 100 feet. Document drainage distance.
- Updated soil test report (no more than three years old) on prescribed grazing pastures. The value in fertility management is explained to producers.

I certify that prescribed grazing is being followed on _____ acres on tract _____.

Producer _____ Date _____

Designated Conservationist _____ Date _____

Additional information on management of forages is available at the NCSU Department of Crop Science-Forages website, <http://www.forages.ncsu.edu/ForageFacts>.
For more information, refer to NRCS NC Practice Standard 528, Prescribed Grazing.

GRAZING GUIDE—Additional information for managing forages at start/stop heights that will result in a sustainable grazing resource and meet the requirements of NRCS Practice 528, Prescribed Grazing. Information in this document is taken from NCSU Forage Facts “Grazing Guide”.

Species	Growth periods	Target Grazing Height (in.)		Grazing recovery period (days)	Comments
		Start grazing	Stop grazing		
<i>Bermudagrass: Common, hybrid & seeded varieties</i>	Apr-May	4-6	2-3	21-30	
	Jun-Jul	4-6	2-3	10-21	
	Aug-Sep	4-6	2-3	20-40	
	Frosted	3+	2-3	Spring	Any frosted grazing should be done prior to leaf deterioration
<i>Bermudagrass: overseeded with small grain (rye, oats, etc.)</i>	Feb-Mar	8-10 (small grain)	3-4	21-30	Target heights directed toward small grain
	Apr-May	6-8	2-3	14-21	Control small grains so Bermuda can emerge
	Jun-Jul	3-5	2-3	10-21	
	Aug-Sep	3-5	2-3	21-30	
	October	3-5	1-2	45-90	Graze Bermuda close during late Sept to allow emergence of overseeded small grain
	Nov-Jan	6-8 (small grain)	3-4	45-90	Don't allow small grain grazing until target height reached
<i>Kentucky Bluegrass w/ white clover</i>	Mar-May	4-6	2-3	14-30	If clover is White Dutch, then may graze to 1.5"
	Jun-Aug	6-8	2-4	30-45	
	Sep-Oct	6-8	2-3	21-45	
	Nov-Feb	4-6	2-3	Spring	
<i>Crabgrass and associated warm season species</i>	May-Jun	6-8	2-3	14-30	Summer growth may be grazed in fall; quality may be limiting
	Jul-Aug	6-8	2-3	14-30	
	Sep-Oct	4-6	1-2	Replant in Spring	
<i>Fescue or Orchardgrass dominant with or without ladino clover</i>	Feb-Mar	4-6	2-3	30-45	
	Apr-Jun	6-8	3-4	14-30	
	Jul-Aug	6-8	3-4	30-60	
	Sep-Oct	6-8	2-3	21-35	If clover mix is "stockpiled", clover may be shaded if canopy reaches 10-12" prior to grazing
	Nov-Jan	4-6	2-3	45-90	
<i>Fescue (<70%) mixed with bermuda or crabgrass</i>	Feb-Mar	4-6	2-3	30-45	Grazing height of mix during the summer is dictated by climate-favored species. Shorter "stop" heights will favor Bermuda/crabgrass, taller will favor fescue
	Apr-Jun	6-8	2-3	14-30	
	Jul-Aug	6-8	3-4	21-45	
	Sep-Oct	6-8	2-3	21-35	
	Nov-Jan	4-6	2-3	45-90	
<i>Switchgrass, Indiangrass, Big Bluestem</i>	Apr-Jun	14-18	5-7	21-30	Allow plants to reach seed head stage during establishment year prior to grazing
	Jul-Aug	18-22	5-7	21-40	
	Sep-Oct	16-20	8-12	Spring	