

HEAVY USE AREA PROTECTION ROTATIONAL LOAFING LOTS ON DAIRY

CODE 561



OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE PLAN

The life of this installation can be assured and usually increased by developing and carrying out a good operation and maintenance program. Operation and Maintenance (O & M) is necessary for all conservation practices and is required for all practices installed with NRCS assistance. The land user is responsible for proper O & M throughout the life of the practice and as may be required by federal, state, or local laws or regulations. This practice is designed to reduce animal concentrations on heavily used pasture areas by spreading and rotating dairy livestock on vegetated loafing paddocks to reduce sediment and manure transport and improve herd health and comfort. This practice is not intended to provide a source of forage supplement, but primarily intended to provide a rotational resting area for dairy livestock between milkings.

Operation is defined as operating the practice in compliance with all laws, regulations, ordinances, and easements and in a manner that is beneficial to the environment and will permit the practice to serve its intended purpose. Maintenance includes working to prevent deterioration of the practice, repairing damage, or replacing components that may fail.

Grassed loafing lots will be operated and maintained as follows:

- Cows should be rotated to a rested loafing lot before conditions in the occupied loafing lot deteriorate or vegetation begins to become damaged. During wet weather, restrict cows to the free stall barn.

Recommended Heights and Rest Period

Species	Beginning Height	Ending Height	Days Rest
Tall Fescue/ Bermudagrass Mix	5" to 8"	2" to 4"	14 to 45 days

- Inspect pastures just prior to University of Tennessee recommended seeding and fertilizer dates. Re-seed pastures if tall fescue plants are greater than 6" apart with less than two tillers or bermudagrass is greater than 2 feet apart. Preferably, bermudagrass will be established first with tall fescue established the following fall.
- When cows are in the paddock of use, readily accessible water must be provided in the paddocks, or feed and water may be provided at the barn. Access to the other grassed loafing lots must be restricted. If shading is provided, it should be portable or accessible at the barn.
- Weed invasion is likely to occur both during and following establishment of the grassed

loafing lots. Control broadleaf weeds by mowing. In some cases, it will be necessary to control weeds with herbicides. Consult extension agent or pest management specialist for pest management recommendation. As always, read and follow label directions when using pesticides. Do not allow the milking herd in the sprayed paddock(s) for seven days after application.

- **Follow University of Tennessee recommendations for amount of N, P, and K to apply and dates to make applications. Apply nitrogen fertilizer as needed to stimulate growth. Nitrogen applied in the spring and fall will favor tall fescue; nitrogen applied in the summer will favor bermudagrass.**
- **Harvest hay from the grassed loafing lots, when conditions warrant.**
- **Maintain all support practices such as fence, watering facilities, and heavy use areas in good working order. Inspect these practices regularly for repairs and maintenance.**

Other:

Tract/Field No.:			
Landowner/Operator Name:		Review Date:	
Prepared By:		Date:	