

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

**PRESCRIBED GRAZING
SUPPLEMENT**

**WINTER FEEDING SYSTEM
(Acres)**

Code 528

DEFINITION

Changing to a feeding system to meet livestock needs and protect natural resources.

PURPOSE

To minimize livestock feeding on concentration areas near water bodies during late fall, winter and early spring runoff. Improve use of pastureland, reduce soil erosion, protect water quality and improves health of livestock.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

This practice may be applied to all lands where concentrations of livestock create a potential soil erosion, water quality, or health problem. Specifically, this practice develops a feeding strategy that allows for animals to be moved between sites in a frequency to minimize adverse impacts.

CRITERIA

1. Quality and quantity of feed, including supplements are adequate to meet desired body condition (i.e.: forage test, nutbal).
2. Supplemental feeding areas will be located a minimum of 50 feet from drainage ways, surface water or sinkholes.
3. Stream or other water bodies will be used for livestock watering **only if no alternative method is feasible.**

4. Temporary or permanent electric fencing with solar charger (382), access roads (560), or trail or walkway (575) can be used to manage livestock movement.
5. Extending grazing in the fall and winter by stockpiling ("deferred grazing") of tall fescue will follow procedure in Appendix 3.
6. Sowing/planting cool season annual crops (such as brassica or cereal grasses) will follow procedures in Appendix 3.
7. Provide adequate water for livestock.
8. Provide livestock adequate access to stored feed.
9. Prepare a grazing plan for pasture use for extended grazing of fescue, or cool season annuals.
10. A nutrient management plan will be developed to protect water quality.
11. Use Critical Area Planting standard for site preparation, seed mixture and seeding rates recommendation for re-seeding disturbed areas.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

1. Utilize nutrient balance (NUTBAL) program to ensure nutrition needs are met.
2. Rotate livestock at least every 30 to 40 days to minimize development of problems associated with an animal feeding operation.

Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically, and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

3. To avoid concentrated trampling areas, especially on soils that are saturated in winter or early spring, roll out hay or uniformly distribute hay bales.
4. Fenced areas of a woodlot may be used as a livestock windbreak, if managed to control erosion and protect water quality.
5. To insure beef cattle access to baled hay, pre-position the hay near windbreaks or at wind swept areas. Move stored hay to different parts of a pasture to distribute manure.
6. In Karst areas, consider establishing windbreaks to relocate cattle out of sinks.
7. Hay storage facilities located in or adjacent to planned feeding areas.
8. Establish access roads, trails or walkways to move livestock and feed too less environmentally sensitive areas.
9. Provide alternative source of feed for late fall-winter grazing if deep snow prohibits livestock grazing.

SPECIFICATIONS

1. Plans and specifications for this practice shall be prepared for each winter feeding system. Plans and specifications shall be recorded using approved specification sheets, job sheets, technical notes or narrative documentation in the conservation plan and provide to the client.
2. As a minimum, each management plan will contain the following (as appropriate):
 - Identify on a map the locations that are planned to be used for feeding livestock, location of road network, location of planned conservation practices, location of streams or other sensitive areas and location of buffer areas.
 - The number of livestock and duration that livestock will be fed in each area.
 - The design, operation and maintenance of any structural practice to meet standard.

- Temporary storage structure locations (i.e. hay storage area) will be identified.
- Identify location and type of watering facility.
- Identify location and type of waste storage structure; the location and capacity of each structure and/or feeding pad.
- Operation and maintenance plan.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

1. Extended grazing of fescue or cool-season annuals should be evaluated on a daily basis.
2. Check watering facilities once a day during freezing temperatures to ensure adequate water for livestock. For lactating animals check water twice a day.
3. Check fences after any flooding event to ensure they are functioning properly.
4. Areas with more than 50% loss of vegetative cover will be re-seeded in the spring.
5. A nutrient management plan will be followed for systems with waste storage structures.

REFERENCES

- Gerrish, J. and C. Roberts, Editor. 1999. Missouri Grazing Manual. Missouri University Extension, Columbia, MO.
- Rayburn, E. 1993. Forage Management. Tall Fescue. West Virginia University Extension Service, Morgantown, WV.
- Rayburn, E. 1995. Forage Management – Small Grains as Forage Crops. West Virginia University Extension Service, Morgantown, WV.

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