


2013 Georgia Grazing School:

Grazing systems, methods, & tricks

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Fencing + Animals ≠ Grazing System




System vs. Method Strategy vs. Tactic

- Grazing system: “A defined, integrated combination of animal, plant, soil and other environmental components and the grazing method(s) by which the system is managed to **achieve specific results or goals**” Ex:
 - Continuous Grazing System
 - Management Intensive Grazing (or “Rational Grazing”) System
 - Ultra-High Stock Density, Long Rest Period, Short Duration Grazing (or “Mob Grazing”) System
- Grazing methods- “...technique of grazing management designed to **achieve a specific objective.**” Ex:
 - Deferred grazing (“stockpiling”) to reduce fall hay feeding
 - Creep grazing to increase gain on calves still on the cow

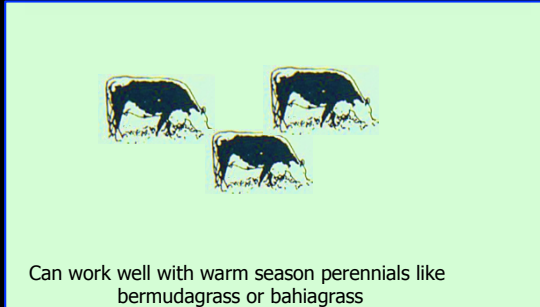


Grazing Methods to Consider

- Continuous stocking
- Rotational stocking
- Deferred grazing “stockpiling”
- Creep grazing
- Strip grazing
- Limit grazing
- Leader-follower, first-last, or forward grazing



Continuous Stocking



Can work well with warm season perennials like bermudagrass or bahiagrass


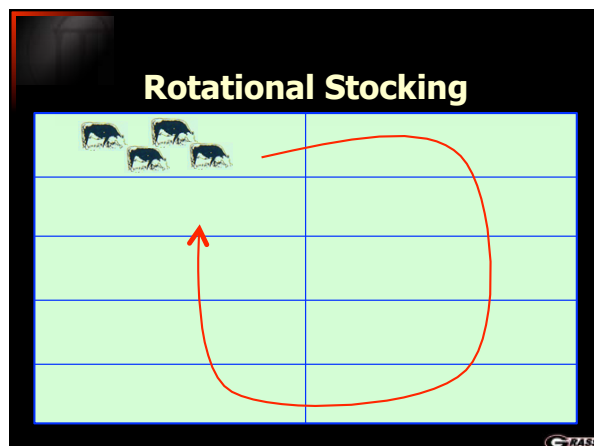


Photo credit: John Andrae, Clemson Univ.

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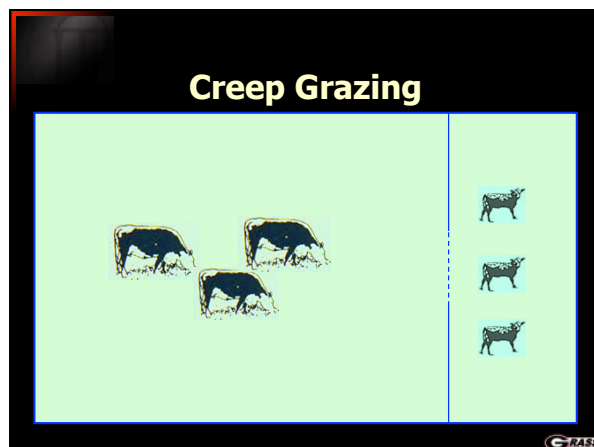
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Real benefits of rotational stocking

- Increased stocking rate (in many cases)
- Better persistence and productivity of pasture plants that are sensitive to close, continuous grazing
 - Alfalfa, red clover, tall fescue, orchardgrass, natives
- Improved utilization of more species in pasture
- Less waste of forage
- Better distribution of urine and feces
- Better control of livestock
- Increases establishment options (clovers, “crop rotations”)
- Improves pasture management skills



Creep Grazing Pearl Millet on Tall Fescue-Based Pastures

	Control	Creep Grazed
Calf gain, lbs	144	219
Calf ADG, lbs/d	1.38	2.10
Cow wt change, lbs	-60	+27

Data from Thomas, Eason, Ball and Ruffin; AL Agric. Exp. Stn. Highlights Vol 30 No 2

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Effects of creep grazing treatments on average daily gain of calves.

Creep Treatments	Calf ADG, lbs
Aeschynomene	1.98
Hairy Indigo	1.80
Tifleaf 1 Pearl Millet	1.80
Alyceclover	1.70
Commercial creep	1.86
No Creep	1.50

Data by Bill Ocumpaugh. IFAS Circular S-318, 1985. Gainesville FL. Bahiagrass based pastures.

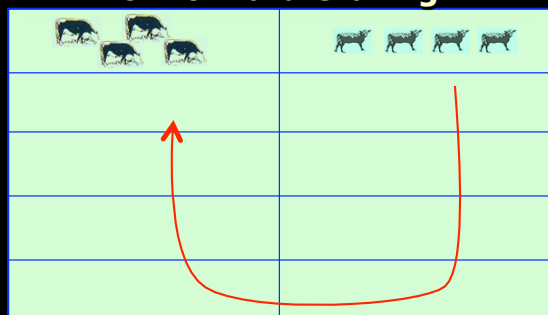


Creep grazing

- Excellent potential to improve calf gains
- Easy to implement into existing continuous grazing system
- Several forages have potential for creep grazing
 - Pearl millet, legumes, chicory, alfalfa, small grains and ryegrass

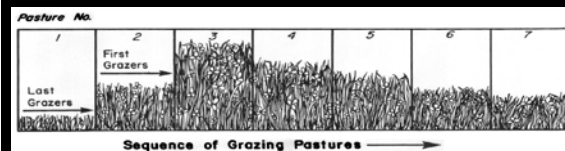


Leader-Follower, First-Last, or Forward Grazing



Leader-Follower Grazing

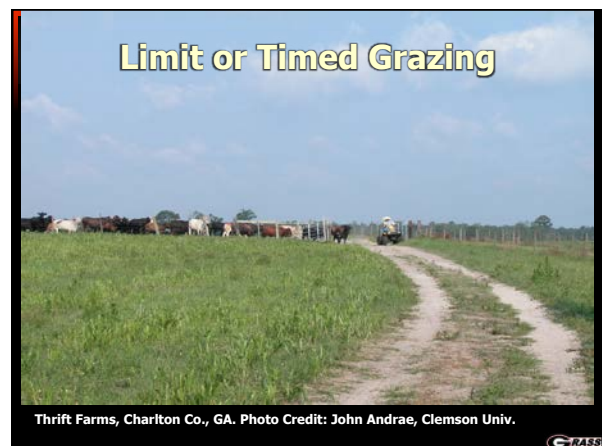
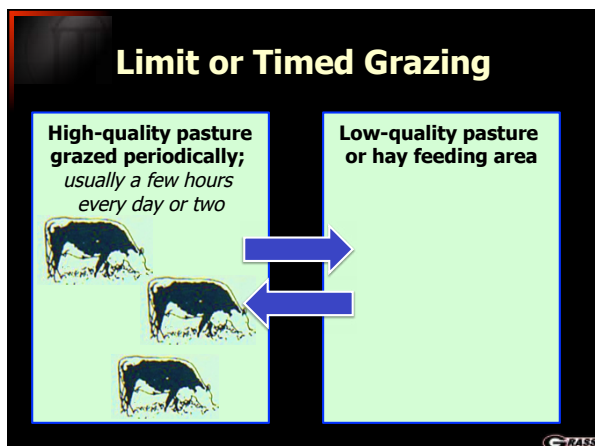
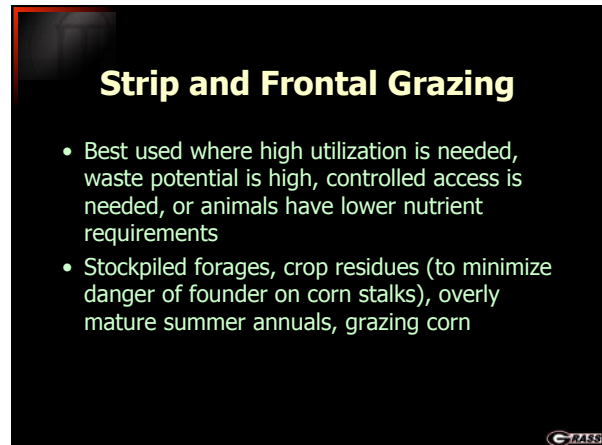
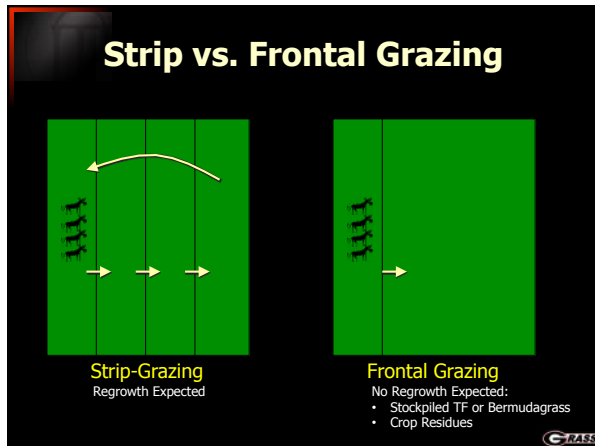
- High requirement animals (leaders) get "tops" - leafy, high quality forage
 - Lact. dairy animals, replacement heifers, growing calves etc
- Last grazers get lowest quality - stems
 - Dry cows, mature animals
- Can have intermediate group(s).



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Limit or Timed Grazing

- Graze 2-3 h per day or on alternate day basis
 - Think of this as a supplement to lower quality pasture or hay
 - Allows cows to fill up
 - Consider implications of time of day on grazing behavior
 - Daybreak (2 x intake of any other period)
 - Sunset
 - About 3:00 p.m. for ~90 minutes.
 - Useful where forage quality greatly exceeds animal requirements or where limited access is needed
 - Winter annuals (70+% TDN vs beef cow req. 58%).



Summary

- The “System” is more general and reflects your general grazing strategy (or philosophy)
- Methods are TACTICS
 - All are at your disposal
 - Mix and match as needed to optimize efficiency
- The greatest advantage of a managed, rational grazing system is that it is FLEXIBLE!



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