

The Systems Effect

Farming systems that use a combination of conservation practices to protect natural resources (soil, water, air, plant, and animal) promote long-term, sustainable use, and they help move your farm forward on the Pastureland Conservation Continuum. Your rotational grazing, alternative water supply, and nutrient and manure application decisions can protect your land and water and result in *healthy soil to produce high quality and yielding forage crops for livestock production*.

Minimum grazing heights, forage grazing and rest periods, and improved manure distribution help develop healthy pastures and ground cover that protect soil from erosion. Healthy root systems stabilize the soil and provide organic matter that builds soil structure and increases water infiltration. Water available for plant growth is increased, while runoff is decreased. Exclude livestock from streams and ponds, and use an alternative water supply to provide fresh, clean drinking water for improved animal health. Add nutrient and manure management to these practices to create a system that results in higher yielding pastures, increased stocking rates (or reduced input requirements), and a variety of other positive results, all of which improve the foundation of your livestock operation... *Your Soil*.

Farm Bill Programs Can Help

The Natural Resources Conservation Service offers financial assistance to help farmers use conservation practices and systems on cropland. Contact us for information about the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).

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Conservation

Continuum

Management Options for Pastureland

www.nrcs.usda.gov
soils.usda.gov/sqi



Pastureland Conservation Continuum

Take your farm to
Better → Best

Follow each management sequence for options that move your farm forward on the Pastureland Conservation Continuum.

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service staff provide technical assistance to help you use management practices that solve common resource problems.

Grazing Management



overstocking



cross fencing



rotation frequency

Livestock Water Supply



unlimited access



watering ramp



exclusion / troughs

Nutrient & Manure Management



open-stack manure



covered storage



managed application

Stream Habitat Protection



habitat loss



stream crossing



riparian buffers