

Good Range Management Can Produce More Meat

Better management of the nation's grasslands can mean more money for the farmer and more meat on the consumer's table, says an official of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Kenneth E. Grant, Administrator of the Soil Conservation Service, cites as an example a west Texas rancher whose 19,000 acres barely supported 300 cattle in 1961. Then he

switched to a planned grazing system accompanied by brush control and range reseeding. This year his land supported 545 mature cattle, 255 heifers, 750 goats, and an estimated 3,000 wild deer, on better-than-ever grass.

"From reports reaching our range specialists, a 50 to 100 percent increase in range production through these

methods is not at all unusual," reports the SCS Administrator.

He says that the benefits — besides more forage for cattle — are stronger and more desirable grasses, resulting in better ground cover; less soil erosion; and more rain "insoak" into the ground. Improved grasslands generally provide better habitat for wildlife as well, he points out.

Planned grazing systems now cover more than 36.5 million acres of grasslands, with 6 million acres going under a plan last year alone, according to SCS.

Systems call for improving grass growth and vigor by fencing available grassland into a number of pastures and allowing heavy, short-term grazing in rotation. After a grazing period, each pasture has a long period of "rest" to allow full grass

land go under some form of improved grazing during the first part of 1974.

Grant added, "With beef demand high — and with rising feed costs facing the rancher — major improvements in our grassland benefit everyone: the consumer, the animal producer, and the wildlife enthusiast. Planned grazing systems can help stockmen to produce more — and protect more — in 1974."

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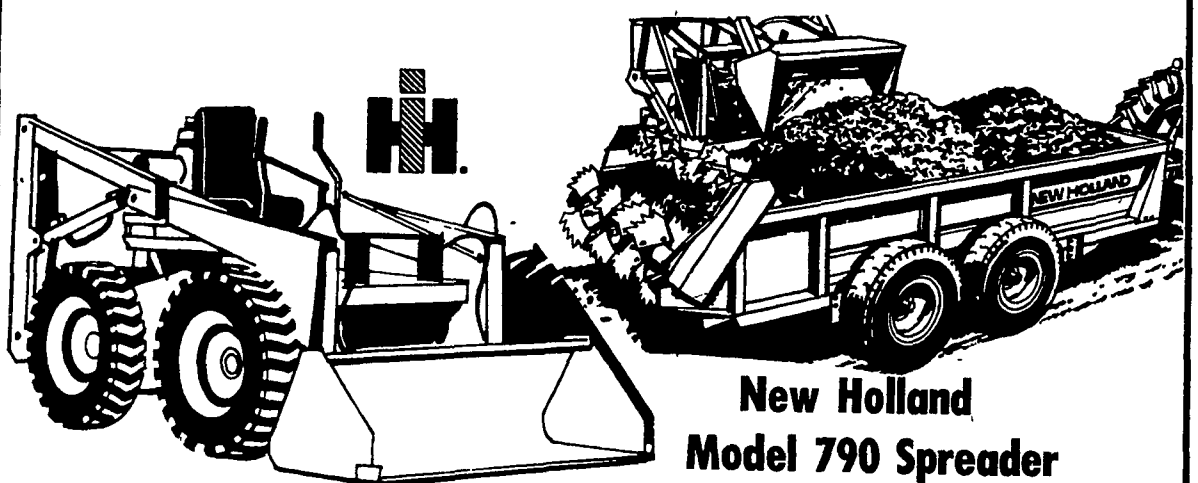
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