



GRAZING PASTURE MANAGEMENT

(Continued from Page E37)

mine stocking rate and carrying capacity, the concept of animal units is often used — this gives a much better measure of pasture required, as compared to using animal numbers. One animal unit is based on the daily forage intake of one 1,000-pound dry cow (about 25 pounds of dry forage per day). Table 1 gives some typical animal unit values for various species and classes of livestock.

Estimating the amount of acres required to pasture a herd or flock depends not only on the feed requirements of the animals but also on the available forage produced. Pasture growth is dependent upon plant species, soil characteristics, topography, fertilization, temperature, and soil

moisture. Because of the variability in pasture growth, we can only estimate the amount of pasture required for grazing animals. Table 2 provides some estimated values of the acres required for grazing animals for various types of pasture.

To estimate how much pasture a herd or flock will need, first calculate the total animal units of the herd using Table 1. For example, if a beef herd contained 25 dry cows weighing 1,300 pound each and 15 heifers at 550 pound each, then there are 47.5 animal units (AU) in this herd.

The same herd grazing high-producing Kentucky bluegrass and white clover pasture would only need approximately 19 acres during May.

25 cows x 1.3 AU per cow =	32.5 AU
+ 15 heifers x 1.0 AU per heifer =	15.0 AU
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Total AU for herd	47.5 AU

Second estimate how many acres the herd will need during each month of the grazing season using Table 2. If the herd will be

grazing low producing Kentucky bluegrass and white clover pasture in May, then approximately 57 acres will be needed to support the herd.

47.5 AU x 1.2 acres per AU = 57 acres

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Table 2. Estimates of the acreage required to provide the forage needs for one animal unit assuming 70% pasture utilization. Actual acreage will depend on pasture yield, dry matter intake and the efficiency of pasture utilization.

Pasture species	Pasture prod.	Annual yield (T/a)	Acres required to provide forage needs for one animal unit*						
			April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct
Ky bluegrass w. clover	low	1.0	10.7	1.2	2.7	11.1	11.1	4.5	6.9
	medium	2.0	5.4	0.6	1.3	5.5	5.5	2.2	3.5
	high	3.0	3.6	0.4	0.9	3.7	3.7	1.5	2.3
Alfalfa/grass	low	3.0	-	0.6	0.9	1.2	1.2	1.8	3.1
	medium	4.5	-	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.8	1.2	2.1
	high	6.0	-	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.5
Red clover/grass	low	2.0	-	0.9	1.3	2.3	2.3	1.7	3.5
	medium	3.0	-	0.6	0.9	1.5	1.5	1.1	2.3
	high	4.5	-	0.4	0.6	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.5
Bdft trefoil/grass	low	2.0	-	1.0	1.1	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.5
	medium	3.0	-	0.7	0.7	1.2	1.2	1.2	6.2
	high	3.5	-	0.6	0.6	1.1	1.1	1.0	5.3
Tall grass plus nitrogen	low	2.0	5.4	0.8	1.3	2.8	2.3	1.8	9.2
	medium	3.0	3.6	0.5	0.9	1.8	1.5	1.2	6.2
	high	4.5	2.4	0.4	0.6	1.2	1.0	0.8	4.1
Warm-season grass	low	3.0	-	-	0.9	0.6	0.6	1.2	-
	medium	4.0	-	-	0.7	0.4	0.4	0.9	-
	high	5.0	-	-	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.7	-
Stockpiled tall fescue	low	3.0	3.6	0.6	0.9	1.5	-	-	1.7
	medium	4.5	2.4	0.4	0.6	1.0	-	-	1.1
	high	5.5	1.9	0.3	0.5	0.8	-	-	0.9
Spring seeded brassicas	low	2.5	-	-	-	1.1	0.6	0.5	-
	medium	3.8	-	-	-	0.7	0.4	0.4	-
	high	5.0	-	-	-	0.6	0.3	0.3	-
Summer seeded brassicas	low	2.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.4
	medium	3.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.9
	high	4.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.7
Corn stover		1.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

*Based on an animal unit consuming 25 lb of dry matter forage per day with 70% of pasture utilized.

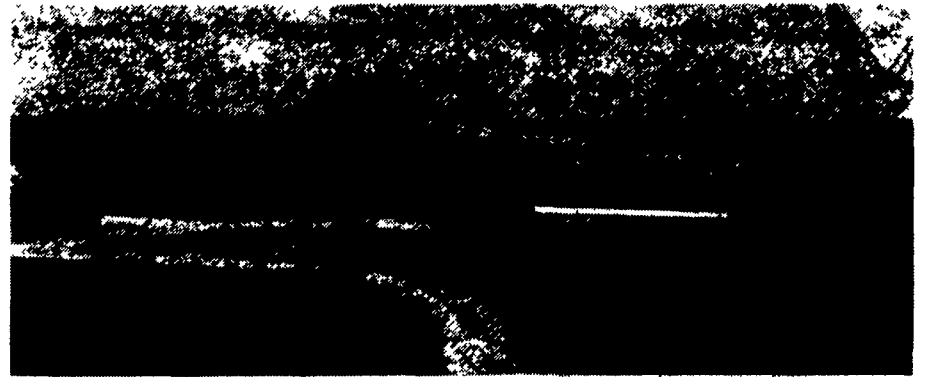
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