

# S.E. Grazing Conference Offers Expert Technical Information

**VERNON ACHENBACH, JR.**  
Lancaster Farming Staff  
INTERCOURSE (Lancaster County Co.) — The Lancaster County Grazers held its first Southeast Pa. Grazing Conference Wednesday at the Harvest Drive Restaurant in Intercourse with more than 200 attending.

The day-long conference was designed to bring together people with an interest in increasing profits in raising cattle or dairying, by reducing the amount of overhead needed for production.

Five successful practioners of grazing addressed a number of topics selected to provide a rounded introduction into the practice, as well as great deal of technical advice for those wishing it.

Also speaking was Glenn Shirk, Lancaster County Extension agent, who also supported the conference. According to Shirk, grazing not only can provide more efficient production, but it seems to fit in well with nutrient management.

Roger Wentling, a well-known grazing consultant, provided an introduction and also talked about

the economics of grazing.

Wentling also discussed soil fertility and managing pastures for grazing. According to Wentling, he operates his land by managing for the microbes and macroinvertebrates in the soil, in order to provide a healthy crop of plants for grazing, and also to help maintain the health of the operation.

He said that on healthy soil, a normal cow pattie should be broken down within 20 days. He said raking dried manure should be unnecessary, but it takes from four years to 12 years.

"The whole reason for grazing is because it's possible to get more net profit out of grass with lower inputs," Wentling said.

He suggested using rotational grazing with "biological farming practices." He described those practices as amanging for the microbes and the soil fertility.

He said he promotes the use of soft rock phosphate and downplays the use of nitrogen and potash.

Also, he said to be careful when listening to consultants who advise raising the soil pH to 7. It's not

necessary to have a high pH, he said. In fact, he said using magnesium-free (low percentage) limestone or soft rock phosphate can provide the calcium better in a more acidic soil than in a high pH

soil. "White sand has a pH of 7," he said. "Can you grow anything in it?"

He said he also manages to maintain a high earthworm popu-

lation in his pasture.

Turnout for the conference was very good, according to organizers. Those wishing more information, should call Arden Landis at (215) 593-8160.



From the left, Marvin Metzler, Glen Moyer, and Allen Welcksel answer questions about grazing, while Arden Landis moderates the panel.

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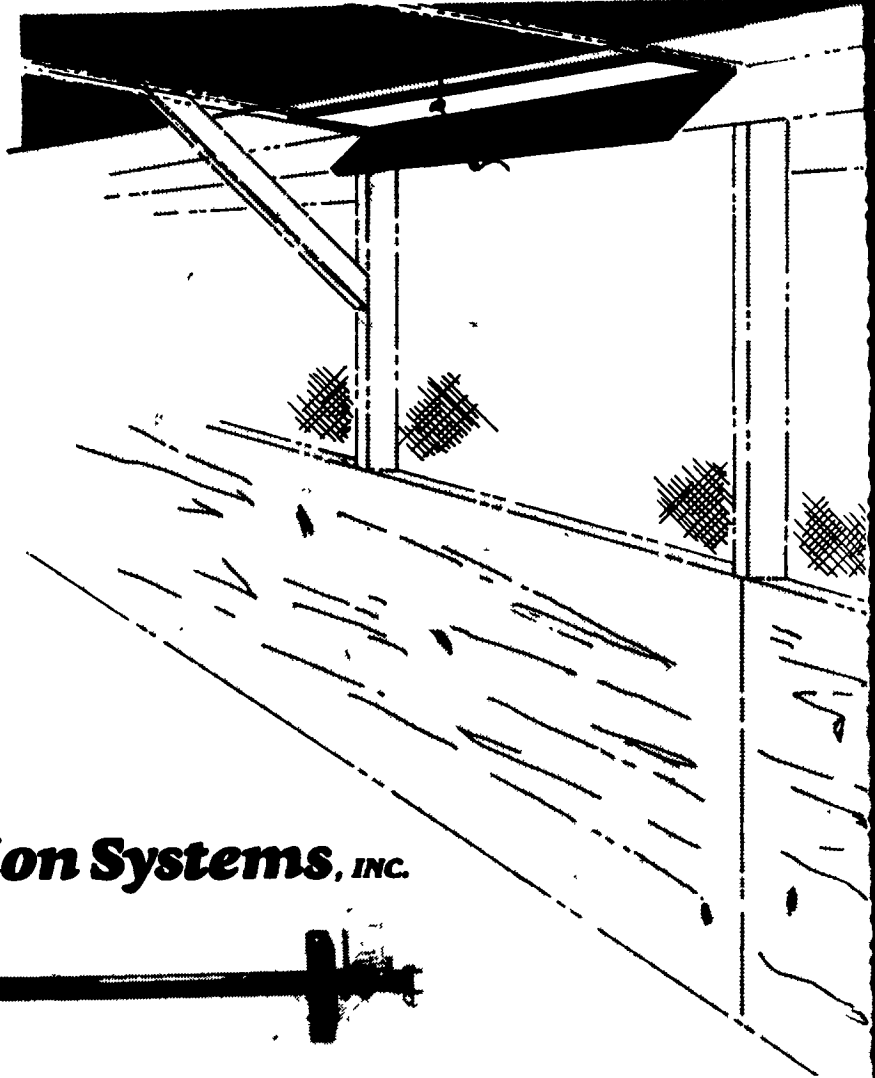


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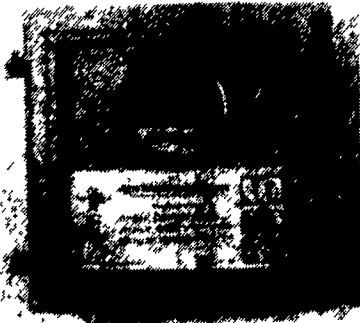


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