



Glenn's Udderings

By
Glenn A. Shirk

Lancaster Extension
Dairy Agent

Pastures Can Be Dr. Green
"Pastures, they do a body good."

This might be a good slogan to adopt if you are interested in promoting good health and physical fitness in cattle. Many times you hear of pastures being referred to as "Dr. Green." It is a reputation well deserved.

Cows that have been raised in close confinement, on concrete and fed feeds that have been cured, chopped, fermented and stored for long periods of time, frequently "perk up" when turned out to graze fresh spring pastures.

They recover from their lamenesses, they appear thriftier and perhaps conceive better. Produc-

tion can go up or down, depending upon feed quality and feeding practices.

This is not to say that cows can't be raised successfully in confinement for long periods of time. They can, and many good dairymen do so successfully.

The point is, pastures have much to offer. They give cows relief from concrete stress. They offer cows more opportunity for fresh air, sunshine and exercise. Fresh pasture forage can be more nutritious than stored forages, if properly managed, and can reduce purchased feed costs. They generally contain more vitamins, minerals, protein and energy, and are lower in non-digestible fiber.

Pastures have their down side too. They can get muddy and become a source of infections and parasites. Streams can become polluted and the water unfit for cows to consume. Cows can also be exposed to toxic weeds, yard

wastes, and to conditions causing bloat.

Getting The Most From Your Pastures

To get more benefit from your present pastures you may not have to invest a lot of time and expense. It may be as simple as protecting and encouraging the pastures you already have.

Start by limiting cows' access to pasture areas. Fence off an area close to the barn and use it as a sacrifice area or exercise lot. In other words, don't let cows turn the entire pasture into a non-productive exercise lot.

To help prevent the fenced off sacrifice lot from becoming a mud lot, divide it into about three smaller lots and seed them to a rugged grass such as K31 tall fescue. Now you have the opportunity to rotate cows from plot to plot.

This reduces the risk of sacrifice lots being trampled to death and it gives the lots time to rest and recover.

These sacrifice areas are not intended to be grazing areas, so don't be concerned about seeding a grass that is palatable to cows. The main thing we want from these sacrifice lots is a healthy, dry sodded area where cows can rest comfortably.

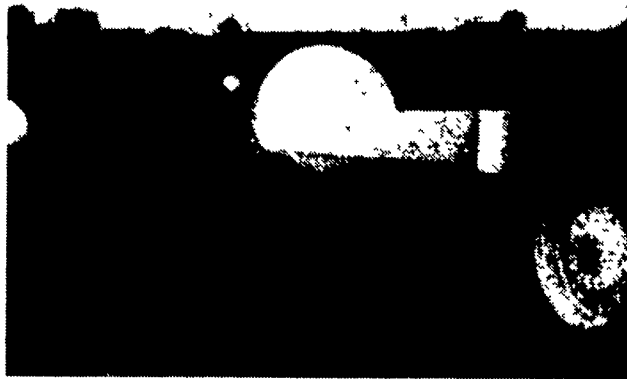
Back to the pasture area.

Rather than going to the expense and effort of reseeding, risking erosion and seeding failure, simply try to encourage what is already present. You could be pleasantly surprised with the results.

Start by controlling cows' access to pasture areas. Divide the pasture into a minimum of four plots so you can graze them rota-

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TANCO AUTOWRAP

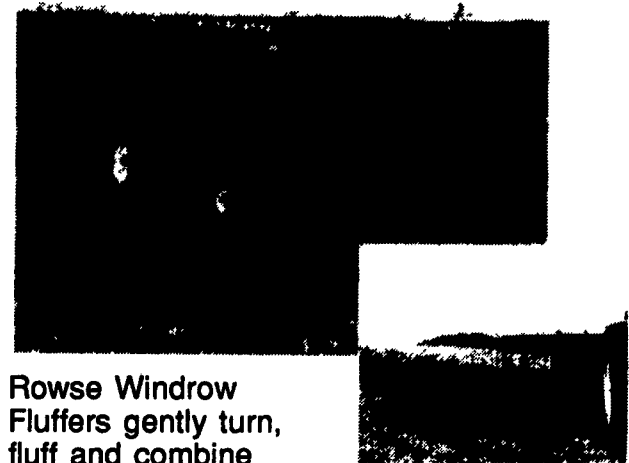


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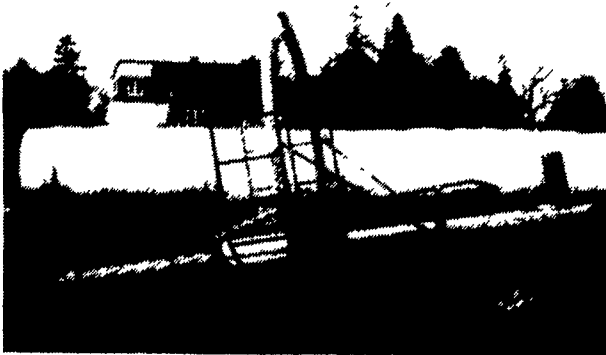
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