

*Morgan County Soil  
and Water  
Conservation District*

*100 S. Burke Street*

*Versailles, MO 65084*

*573-378-5822 ext. 3*

## SOIL CONSERVATION NEWS



### *Rotational Grazing What's In It For You*

#### **Why rotational grazing?**

Pastures represent a largely untapped resource for farmers. More than one quarter of the Midwest's agricultural land is in some form of pasture. Yet, 80% of these pastures suffer from poor, uneven fertility coupled with serious weed and erosion problems. Most pastures are continuously grazed throughout the season. However, continuous grazing results in the lowest possible pasture yields since the forage is not allowed to recuperate between grazing. The lack of management makes these pastures a poor forage source and most farmers are reluctant to rely too heavily on pastures to feed their high-producing livestock.

To produce good livestock feed from pasture, we must manage our pastures differently. By using rotational grazing, you can make a profit from pastures.

#### **What is rotational grazing?**

Under rotational grazing, only one portion of pasture is grazed at a time while the remainder of the pasture "rests". To accomplish this, pastures are subdivided into smaller areas (referred to as paddocks) and livestock are moved from one paddock to another. Resting grazed paddocks allows forage plants to renew energy reserves, rebuild vigor, deepen their root system, and give long-term maximum production.

For rotational grazing to be successful, the timing of rotations must be adjusted to the growth stage of the forage. Unfortunately, rotational grazing is often reduced to regular animal shifts from paddock to paddock based on rigid time schedules rather than in response to forage growth rate. Rigid schedules reduce the benefit of rotational grazing.

Rotational grazing can be practiced in a variety of intensities. Systems can range from 2 to 30 or more paddocks. Management intensive rotational grazing involves a higher level of management with greater paddock numbers, shorter grazing periods, and longer rest periods. Generally, more intense management results in greater livestock production per acre.

Management intensive rotational grazing offers a number of advantages over both continuous grazing and less intensive rotations systems. These include:

- \* more stable production during poor growing conditions (especially drought)
- \* greater yield potential
- \* higher quality forage available
- \* decreased weed and erosion problems
- \* more uniform soil fertility levels

There are many names for intensive rotational grazing: Voisin grazing, Hohenheim grazing, intensive grazing management, management intensive grazing, short duration grazing, Savory systems, strip grazing, controlled grazing, and high-intensity, low-frequency grazing. Although each term implies slight differences in management, they all refer to some sort of intensive rotational grazing system. *Continued on Page 2*

## *Rotational Grazing What's In It For You—Continued*

### **Who is using rotational grazing?**

Many farmers throughout the Midwest practice rotational grazing. Wisconsin surveys indicate that in the 1990s, the number of rotational graziers among dairy farmers has increased from essentially 0 to over 21%. These range from a large dairy farmer who rotationally grazes 1,600 head on his 2,100 acre all-grass farm to much smaller dairy, beef, sheep, hog, and even chicken operations. Most livestock have the potential to receive a substantial amount of their feed from pasture.

### **How to get started on rotational grazing?**

The first step to getting started on implementing a rotational grazing system is to learn more about everything involved. As stated in the above, a rotational grazing system is more than the fence, pipeline, and waterers used to divide a system into paddocks. So, where can you go to find more information?

The internet is usually the first stop for most people when doing research. This can be a good starting point to learn a little about rotational grazing, but it can be a bit overwhelming and it is less tailored to specific situations. There are local organizations you can turn to for information and direction such as University of Missouri Extension, NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Services), and your local SWCD (Soil and Water Conservation District).

Did you know that University of Missouri Extension, NRCS, and your local SWCD work together to regularly hold grazing schools? These grazing schools last 2-3 days and enlist different speakers who specialize in the many areas which are used to create a successful rotational grazing system. In addition, you will get to visit a local rotational grazing system and even evaluate your own farm using aerial photos all while having representatives from the above mentioned organizations to ask questions and bounce ideas off of.

Further, after attending the grazing school you will have completed a very important step in meeting the criteria to qualify for the state cost-share program (administered by your local SWCD) and/or the federal EQIP program regarding grazing systems. The cost-share program can help you to install cross-fencing, a water source, pipeline, and/or waterers by providing up to 75% of the funding.

**Morgan County SWCD, University Extension, and NRCS are planning to hold a grazing school this coming April in Versailles. To learn more about the grazing school and these cost-share programs and others offered, call our office at (573)378-5822 or stop and see us at 100 S. Burke Street in Versailles.**



# MID-MISSOURI GRAZING CONFERENCE

THURSDAY, JANUARY 31, 2019

ST. MARTINS KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

537 Route T • Jefferson City, Missouri

## ITINERARY

- 1:00-2:00 pm.....Registration & Vendor Time
- 2:00-2:45 pm.....Break-Out Session 1
- 2:45-3:15 pm.....Vendors
- 3:15-4:00 pm.....Break-Out Session 2
- 4:00-4:30 pm.....Vendors
- 4:30-5:15 pm.....Break-Out Session 3
- 5:15-5:30 pm.....Vendors
- 5:30-6:30 pm.....Keynote Speaker
- 6:30 pm.....Dinner & Door Prizes

## BREAK-OUT TOPICS

- ➔ Selecting Genetics for the Environment
- ➔ Multi-Species Grazing
- ➔ Stocker vs. Cow/Calf
- ➔ Weed ID & Economic Impact
- ➔ Mineral Supplementation
- ➔ Soil Testing & Interpretation

**COME SEE THE TRADE SHOW**  
beginning at 1:00 pm

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER

5:30-6:30 pm **GREG JUDY** *"Holistic Grazing Management"*

Greg and Jan Judy of Clark, Missouri run a grazing operation on 1620 acres of leased and owned land. Greg and Jan went from near bankruptcy in 1999 to paying off a 200 acre farm and house in 3 years with custom grazing on leased land and are completely debt free. They own 4 farms and lease 12 farms. They graze cattle, hair sheep, pastured pigs and pastured laying hens.

Greg wrote a book in 2001, entitled **"NO RISK RANCHING, Custom Grazing On Leased Land"**, which details the methods they used to build their operation from scratch. In 2008 Greg wrote a second book **"COMEBACK FARMS, Rejuvenating Soils, Pastures and Profits with Livestock Grazing Management"**. Greg's second book covers all the methods they use with Holistic High Density Grazing, multi-species grazing, grass finishing animals, eliminating costly inputs.

**Advanced Registration due by January 18, 2019. \$30 individual (non-refundable)**

**Late/Door Registration: \$40 individual Includes: Dinner and Refreshments**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to:** Osage County SWCD • 1315 E. Main Street • Linn, MO 65051

**Make checks payable to:** Osage County SWCD

For more information: Megan Rudroff (megan.rudroff@mo.usda.gov) or Cindy DeOrnellis (cindy.deornellis@swcd.mo.gov)  
at 573-897-3797 ext. 3

<http://extension.missouri.edu/grazingconf/home.aspx>



The University of Missouri is an  
equal opportunity/ADA institution.



Soil & Water Conservation Districts  
in Central Missouri

PROGRAM  
SPONSORS



NRCS is an equal opportunity provider & employer.

**Morgan County SWCD FY2019  
July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019—Allocations**

2019 has been an incredibly busy year for us. Since July 1st 2018 we have allocated all of our allocation and are working on projects for next year. We are also taking sign ups for next year's projects. If you are interested in doing a project, please come in and sign up as soon as possible. If you are not sure if you are on our list, please check with us.

**Permanent Vegetative Cover Establishment**

1 Practice – 40 acres – Cost \$7733.51                      800 tons of soil saved

**Terrace System**

1 Practice – 1605 linear feet – Cost \$3177.90

**Terrace System w/Tile**

2 Practices – 7775 linear feet – Cost \$33,705.66  
(One practice had soil loss 25 ton to the acre – Post erosion estimate is 5 tons to the acre)

**Grazing System Water Development (Wells)**

4 Contracts – Cost \$17,071.60                      323.6 acres served

**Grazing System Water Distribution**

6 Contracts - \$37,638.41                      369.08 acres served

**Grazing System Fence**

4 Contracts - \$24,368                      356.2 acres served

**Beef and Small Ruminant Waste Management**

1 Contract - \$34,402.64 – 1 Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan

**Poultry Waste Management**

2 Contracts - \$53452.33 – 2 Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans

**Cover Crops**

38 Contracts - \$87,681 – 35 Standard Soil Health Test Submitted

**Well Decommissioning**

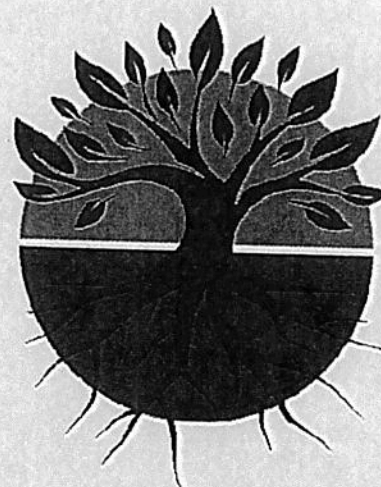
1 Contract - \$400

**Livestock Exclusion**

8 Contracts - \$29,629.56                      - 120.8 acres served

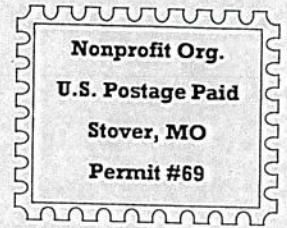
**Spring Development**

1 Contract - \$2,788.42



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100 S. Burke Street  
Versailles, MO 65084



Phone: 573-378-5822  
E-mail: patty.wittrock@swcd.mo.gov

***"Return Service Requested"***

Board of Supervisors

Brian Lehman, Chairperson  
Wayne Kanenbley, Vice Chairperson  
Josh Witte, Treasurer  
Joni Harper, University Extension  
Harold Waisner, Board Member

Personnel

Patty Wittrock, District Specialist  
Colby Lehman, District Specialist  
Ben Burnett, District Specialist  
Mike Morris, District Conservationist  
Johnetta Yeager, Soil Conservationist  
Kevin Franken, Resource Conservationist  
John Draffen, Soil Conservation Technician

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**Nutrient Management**

4 Contracts - \$2814.80 140.74 acres served

**Pest Management**

33 Contracts - \$16,556 - 1655.6 acres served

**Stream Protection**

4 Contracts - \$29,194.50 - 9750 feet of streambank protected - 1 well and tank on one contract

***Total obligated since July 1, 2018 - \$380,614.74***

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.