



Grazing Management Plan Template

Brought to you by the U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef





This document is a template to assist cattle operations in the development and evaluation of grazing management plans. This grazing management plan template is a companion resource to the Grazing Management Planning Online Module from the U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef. All documents, supporting information, links to reference materials and other relevant resources are accessible at <https://www.usrsb.org/>.

The template and accompanying resources were developed using guidance from cattle producers and experts in grazing and rangeland management.

This template is a great starting point for producers to inventory and reflect on their grazing management efforts while setting goals for improvement. It can be reviewed and updated periodically, supporting producers' and operations' continuous improvement efforts.

Consider the following:

- How often will you update your GMP?
- Who do you need to show this GMP to?
- Who else would benefit from using this?
- Who do you need to involve in completing your template?
- How might you share what you learned and accomplished with other producers?

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Operation Details

Operation Name: _____

Grazing Management Plan Owner: _____

Date Created: _____

Review Cycle: _____

Farm & Ranch Resource Inventory & Conditions

This ranch & farm resource inventory is an opportunity to take an assessment of available resources, particularly those related to grazing management. Later in this GMP is a section to inventory wildlife resources, particularly wildlife species, habitat and income generated from outdoor-recreation.

Land Resource Inventory

Total acres	Grazeable acres	Non grazeable acres	Total # of grazing units

Your operation-specific assessment may also include documentation of the bounds of each grazing unit, as well as the history, condition, productivity potentials and expectations of each unit.

Forage Resources and Inventory

Desirable forage species found in grazing units
Undesirable/invasive forage species found in grazing units
Estimated total forage production

Your operation-specific assessment may also include documentation of forage amounts and distributions for the entire operation or a per-unit basis.

Grazing Related Infrastructure

Describe the grazing related infrastructure on your operation (e.g., fencing, facilities, watering units, etc.)

Additional Farm & Ranch Inventory Considerations

Record additional inventory information most relevant for your operation.

Native plants, animals, and habitats/ecological systems	
Rare or unique plant or animal populations	
Soil health and soil erosion risk	
Water quality and water cycle evaluation	
Streamside/riparian areas and wetlands	

Your operation-specific assessment may also include documentation of

- Water resources
- Climate and weather conditions and considerations
- Human capital assets

Goals & Objectives

After reviewing key resource inventory and condition items, identify goals and objectives you would like to accomplish on your operation in relation to grazing management. Each goal will have one or more objective that provides the measurable steps or actions needed to achieve the goal.

As you are creating your goals, remember to make them SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, & Time-bound.

Goals	Objectives

Stocking Rate & Pasture Utilization

The stocking rate is one of the most important decisions grazing managers will make because it directly affects animal performance and ecological resources. Each operation calculates and determines stocking rate differently. Use this space to define how stocking rates are determined for your operation and what factors are considered when adjusting rates.

Total Operation Grazing Acreage	Animal Unit (AU) Capacity	Current AU	Method for determining stocking rate	Stocking Rate	Factors that will be used to adjust stocking rates <i>Such as: climate, soil, riparian, forage species, and unit elevation factors.</i>

Operation-wide methods for calculating stocking rate.
<i>What methods are used to calculate stocking rates? For additional resources related to stocking rate calculations, go here.</i>

Operation-wide methods for determining grazing utilization. (How it's determined when to start a unit, move animals, rest a unit, etc.,)
<i>How will it be determined when to start grazing a unit, when to move animals, when to rest a unit, etc.? How often will forage utilization be monitored?</i>

Evaluation of Pasture Utilization

On a scale of 1 to 10, how well are you currently utilizing your pastures?	
<i>(1 being under-utilized, 10 being over-utilized)</i>	



What are you currently doing to improve your utilization performance?
What does success look like regarding pasture utilization in:
1 Year:
5 Years:
10 Years:

Your operation-specific grazing management plan may also include plans for individual pasture units. Utilize this table, or if additional space is needed, create a separate one to evaluate and plan next steps for specific units.

Pasture Unit	Acres	Stocking Rate	Monitoring plans	Pasture Utilization factors to observe



Pasture Management

Pasture management plans include management actions related pasture establishment, application of inputs, grazing infrastructure, water, and prescribed burning (if applicable). Use the following sections as relevant to your operation to consider pasture management actions.

Pasture Establishment and Renovation

Management tasks during utilization	Off-Season Management tasks

Application of Inputs: includes fertilizer, pesticides, etc.

Management tasks during utilization	Off-Season Management tasks

Grazing Infrastructure: includes fencing, cattle guards, access roads, shelters, etc.

Management tasks during utilization	Off-Season Management tasks



Water Resources

Management tasks during utilization	Off-Season Management tasks

Prescribed Burning

Timing	
Equipment Needs	
Personnel and Partners	
Regulatory Considerations	
Safety Priorities	
Special Considerations	

Wildlife Resource Inventory & Management

Wildlife resource inventory and management plans include an assessment of potential for wildlife resources. This element of the GMP also identifies important factors to manage to achieve desired/optimal wildlife resource conditions.

	Current State	Potential Future State	Management Strategies
Native plant community composition and structure			
Native fish and wildlife populations (game, nongame, and rare or unique)			
Habitat conditions			
Income from wildlife-based recreation (e.g., hunting, fishing), mitigation credit sales, and other marketable ecosystem services			

Contingency Plan

A contingency plan is a tool to assist land managers to adjust grazing prescriptions to ensure proper resource management and economic feasibility without resource degradation.

Risk Area	Special Criteria	Actions	Resources Needed
<i>The general name of the area of risk.</i>	<i>Additional detail about the situation which may trigger various actions.</i>	<i>A list of the primary actions in response to the crisis or problem.</i>	<i>Resources needed to implement the actions.</i>