



Mixed Grass or Established Pasture?

When a field is both grazed and has hay made from
it, what is the appropriate crop designation

By Laurel Rush March 2022 SCC Roundtable

Definitions of Pasture

- **Manure Management Manual:**
 - **Pasture – Land Used for Grazing animals that is managed:**
 1. Under a grazing plan meeting the requirements of the Natural Resources Conservation Service PA Technical Guide Practice Standard 528 for Prescribed Grazing OR
 2. By assuring that there is dense vegetation in the field during the growing season. Dense vegetation means that the pasture is managed to minimize bare spots and to keep an average vegetation height across the pasture during the growing season at least 3 inches high.

Definitions of Pasture

- NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Prescribed Grazing (528)
 - Managing the harvest of vegetation with grazing and/or browsing animals with the intent to achieve specific ecological, economic and management objectives.
- Note
 - The Purpose of applying this practice is to be part of a conservation management system to achieve specific goals.

Act 38 definitions

- **§ 83.201. Definitions.**
- *Pastures*—Crop areas managed for forage production that are harvested by livestock, or a combination of livestock and mechanical harvesting.
- *Crop management unit*—The portion of cropland, **hayland and pasture**, including a field, a portion of a field, or group of fields, on an agricultural operation that has a unique management history (same rotation and manure history), similar production capability, and that will be managed uniformly as a distinct unit.

Types of Grazing

- Continuous Grazing
- Rotational Grazing
- Intensive Rotational Grazing
- Mob Grazing
- Bale Grazing
- Multi-species Grazing
- Stock Pile Grazing
- Late Season Grazing
- Flash Grazing
- Strip Grazing
- Creep Grazing

Understanding the Hayland System

- Dry Hay
- Silage
- Baleage
- Green Chop
- Haylage
- Cool Season Grasses
- Warm Season Grasses
- Brassicas
- Legumes

How should I plan for this?

- For the purpose of Act 38 you should look at primary management (break down of days)
- Ex. #1 Hay strips have 3 cuttings taken and in a good year the animals might graze late in the season – This is a Hay field with occasional grazing.
- Ex. #2 A “hay” field that has the first cutting taken off and then is put into strip grazing for the rest of the season – This is a pasture.
- Ex. #3 A pasture field that is part of a rotational system is identified in the grazing plan as a sacrifice area in a drought year – This is a pasture with an ACA: Identify the potential ACA area on the map within the pasture, Reference the Operation and Maintenance recommended in the Grazing plan.
- Ex. #4 A pasture that has the spring thrush taken off as “hay” and then is put into grazing for the rest of the season – This is a pasture

Conclusion

- Gather as much information as possible about how these multi-use areas are managed. (Look at the big picture)
- Requires a judgement call by both the plan writer and the plan reviewer based on the information provided and experience.
- Discuss unique situations with your SCC regional coordinator.

Questions?