

Managing Grazing for Better Pastures

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Facts of Productive Pasture

- Grass makes more grass.
- Grass is the cheapest source of feed you will find!
- Livestock can graze, and they enjoy it.
- Prevents erosion, runoff, and weeds.

What is ideal?



What is NOT productive?



Buying hay all year....



The tipping point?



There is ground cover, but calling this pasture “productive” is a stretch.



Managing Bahiagrass

Livestock can be rough on grass!

What are the controllable variables vs. Non-controllable?

Past a point, there is no coming back from over-stocked pastures.

Stocking Recommendations:

Horses- 1 horse/ 2-5 acres

Cows- 1 Cow/ 1.5-4 acres

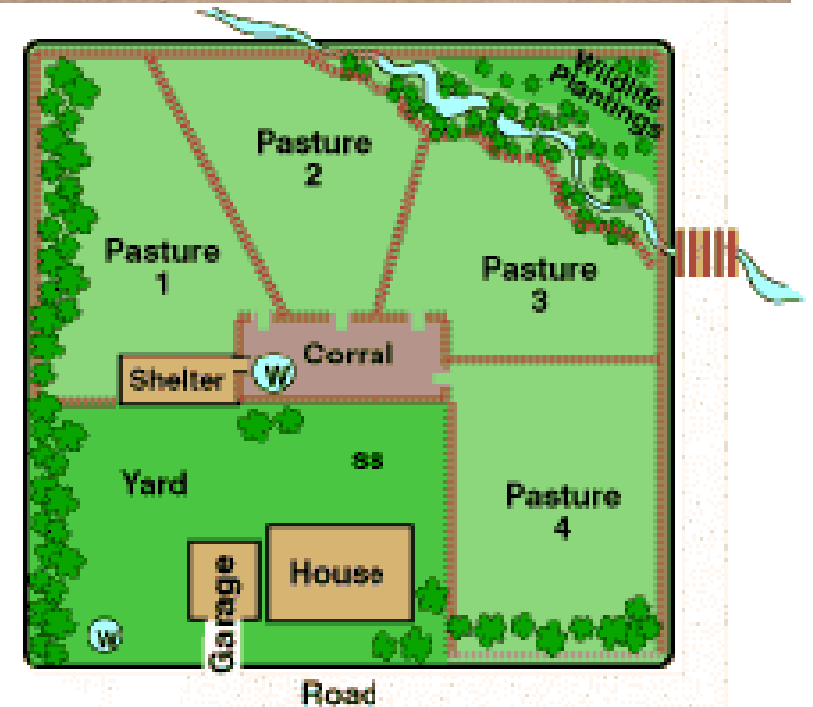
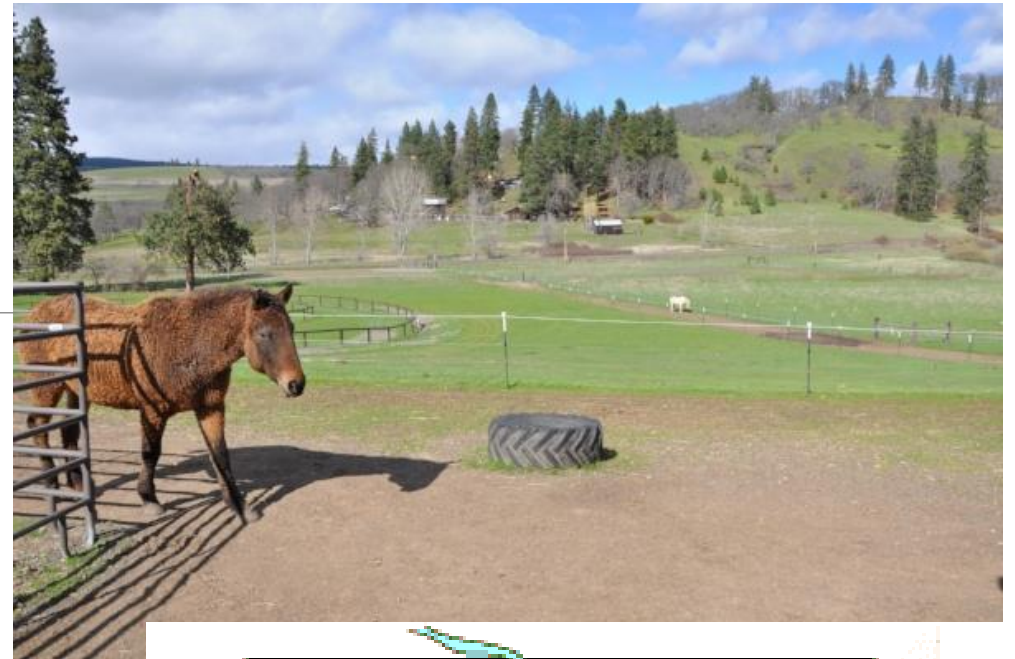
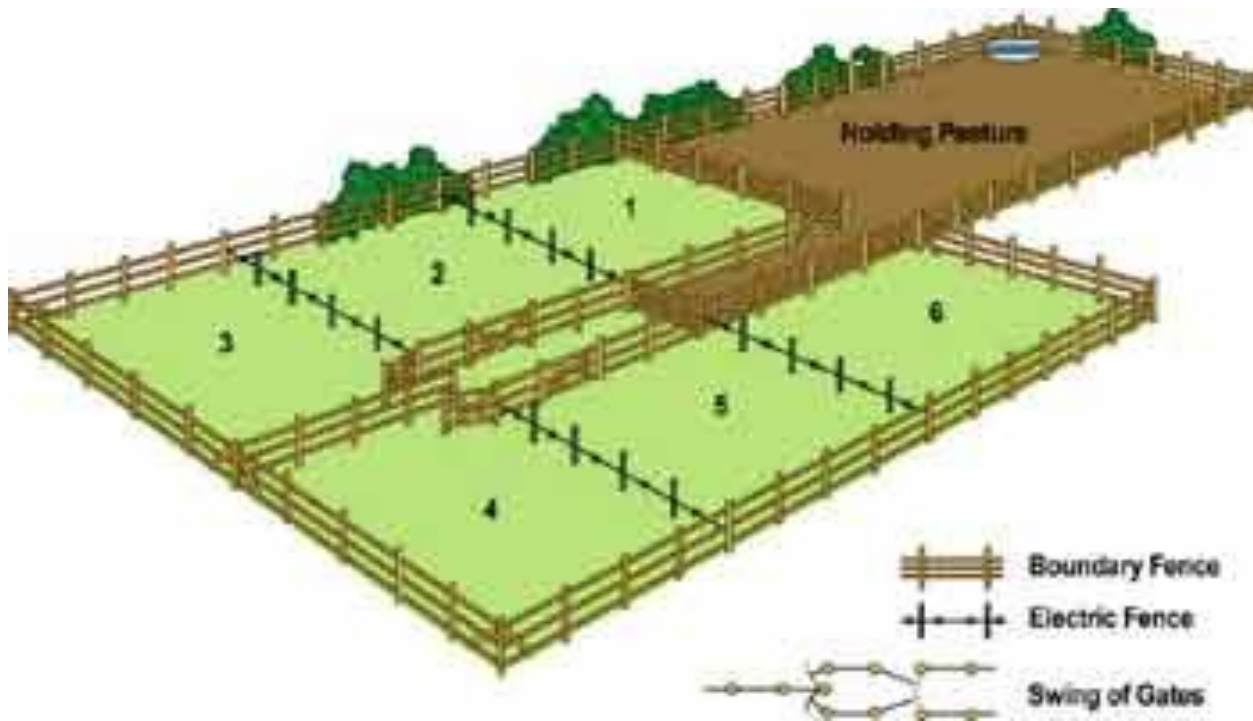
Grazing Management

- Carrying Capacity, Stocking Rate, # of animals
- Rotational vs. Continuous grazing
- Sacrifice areas- Could be the tipping point for your horse operation.
- Turn-out schedules (Horses)
- Plant cool-season annuals

How many animals can you carry?

- How much forage can your pasture produce?
- How much of that should be used?
- What planning is needed throughout the year?

Grazing Management



Continuous Grazing Vs. Rotational Grazing

- Grass makes MORE grass! Best method to achieve this??
- Keeping your grass in its vegetative state is key.
- Use the 8" and 3" rule for Bahia.
- ***How long should the rest period be for a pasture?***
- Grass quality is better in the vegetative state.
- Tend to have greater forage production with rotational grazing.



Small scale equine operations (<20 acres)

- Rotational grazing is favorable- space is usually a limiting factor.
- Careful not to limit your rotational success by making too many small paddocks.
- The higher your stocking rate, the less time each paddock can be grazed appropriately, and the less time each paddock will have for a rest period.
- Rotational grazing will not FIX an overstocked pasture- it is only a strategy to alleviate stress to a point.

A good plan will save you &

- Plan for your pasture's needs before anything else- unless you like spending all your money on hay!
- Determine the best way to achieve your grazing plan.
 - Temporary fencing-a GREAT tool!!
 - Sacrifice areas
 - Turnout plans
 - Perhaps lowering the number of animals
- Ask for help!!

Questions?

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