

Introduction to **Livestock**



**Pennsylvania
Grazing Lands
Coalition**

Glossary *of Grazing Terms*

A

Accessibility

(n) The ease with which an area of vegetation can be accessed for grazing.

Acre

(n) A unit of land area equal to 4,840 square yards and 0.405 hectare.

Agroforestry

(n) Land use system that combines forestry production and crop or animal agriculture on the same ground at the same time.

Animal Class

(n) The age or sex group an animal belongs to.

Animal Unit (AU)

(n) A standardized measurement expressing the feed requirements of different kinds of livestock. Used to calculate forage needs. Different for each species.

Annual Crop / Plant

(n) A crop plant type that completes its life cycle within one year and dies. Must be replanted each year.

Annual Range

(n) Range of which principle forage plants are self-perpetuating annual, herbaceous species.

B

Bare Ground

(n) Land surface not covered by vegetation, rock, or litter.

Body Condition Score (BCS)

(n) A useful management tool for determining nutritional needs of livestock. Uses a numeric score to estimate overall health and body energy reserves to choose supplemental feeding.

Browse

(n) Leaf and twig growth of non-herbaceous vegetation available for animal consumption; such as shrubs, woody vines, and trees.

(v) To search for, or consume, browse.

C

Carrying Capacity

(n) The maximum stocking rate possible for a pasture that can be sustained over a defined period without long-term damage to vegetation or other land resources. May vary from year to year.

Cropland

(n) Land devoted to the cultivation of crops. See also Forage Crop.

D

Dry Matter

(n) Everything contained in a feed sample except water; this includes protein, fiber, fat, minerals, etc. In practice, this is the total weight of feed minus the weight of water in the feed.

F

Feed Supplement

(n) Food stuffs with particular nutritive value that are added to a basic diet, such as forage, to supplement its deficiencies. Includes trace elements and macro feeds, such as protein supplements.

Forage

(n) Plants other than separated grains, which can be consumed by grazing animals or harvested for feeding. See also browse, herbage, mass.

(v) To search for, or to consume forage.

Forage Allowance

(n) A forage-to-animal relationship: the weight of forage dry matter per unit area, and the number of animal nits or forage intake units at any one time point in time. The inverse of grazing pressure.

Forage Crop

(n) A crop of cultivated plants produced to be grazed or mechanically harvested as feed for animals. Does not include separated grains.

Forage Mass

(n) The total dry weight of forage per unit area of land, usually above ground level and at a defined reference level.

Forb

(n) Any herbaceous broadleaf plant that is not a grass and is not grass-like.

G

Grass

(n) Plant species that are members of the plant family Fabaceae.

Grass-like

(v) Describes vegetation that is similar to grass in appearance but does not belong in the Fabaceae family. Usually members of the plant family Cyperaceae or Juncaceae.

Graze

(v) To search for, or to consume forage.

Grazing Cycle

(n) The number of days from when the first paddock is grazed to when it is grazed again. A full cycle of all

the paddocks. Includes one period of rest and one period of grazing for the beginning paddock.

Grazing Land

(n) Any land with vegetation that is grazed or that has the potential to be grazed by animals.

Grazing Management Unit

(n) The grazing land area used to support a group of animals for one grazing season. Can be a single area or subdivided.

Grazing Pressure

(n) An animal-to-forage relationship. The number of animal units or forage intake units to the weight of forage dry matter per unit area at any one point in time.

Grazing Season

(n) The time period during which grazing can be practiced on a specific piece of land. Based on season, climate, and forage production.

H

Herbaceous

(adj) Non-woody vegetation.

Herbage

(n) The biomass of herbaceous plants generally above ground but also including edible tubers and roots. Does not include separated grains.

L

Land Use Plan

(n) A landowner plan for addressing the land use and conservation goals for a property. Includes an inventory of natural features and resources present and goals for resource and farm management.

Legume

(n) A pod and fruit bearing plant with nitrogen-fixing bacteria in root nodules.

M

Mast

(n) Non-herbaceous vegetation available for animal consumption; such as fruits and seeds of shrubs, woody vines, and trees.

Meadow

(n) a tract of grassland where productivity of forage is modified due to characteristics of the landscape position or hydrology.

O

Overgrazing

(n) Grazing with exceeds the recovering capacity of the available forage. Leads to pasture degradation and lower stocking rates.

P

Paddock

(n) A grazing area that is a subdivision of a grazing management unit. Is enclosed and separated from other paddocks to ensure rest time.

Prescribed Burning

(n) Intentionally applying controlled fire to a pasture to control undesirable vegetation or disease, to prepare for seeding, or to improve forage production.

R

Residue

(n) Forage remaining on land after harvest.

Rest Period

(n) A period during which pasture is relieved from all grazing pressure in order to rest and regrow quickly.

Riparian

(n) The transition area between uplands and permanent water bodies.

S

Silvopasture

(n) A production system which combines forestry and livestock

production on the same land at the same time.

Stock piling

(v) Allowing forage to accumulate for grazing at a later period, such as for autumn or winter grazing.

Stocking rates

(n) The relationship between the number of animals and the grazing management unit utilized over a specified time period.

Sward

(n) Herbaceous plants that are characterized by relatively short growth and continuous ground cover above and below the surface.

V

Vegetation

(n) Plant life in general.

Vegetative

(n) Non-reproductive parts of plants. Includes leaf and stem.
Wetlands

Y

Yield

(n) Amount of a crop that was harvested, through grazing or mechanical harvest, per unit of land area.