



AEM Tier 2 Worksheet

Pasture Management

Glossary

Constructed Stone Crossing: A stabilized area that allows livestock to ford a stream in a controlled manner. The structure controls bank and streambed erosion. This practice is subject to the specifications of NRCS Standard 575, Animal Trails and Walkways.

Floodplain: Flat land adjacent to a stream or river over which water spreads in time of flooding.

Laneways: A travel facility for livestock that provides passage through difficult or ecologically-sensitive terrain.

Prescribed Grazing Management: The controlled harvest of vegetation by grazing or browsing animals managed with the intent to achieve a specific objective. Often the objective is to maximize livestock production on a per-animal basis or on a per-unit of forage basis.

Seasonal Watercourse: Any area of a seasonal nature where water concentrates and flows to a waterbody.

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Background

New York State is located in the center of what is agriculturally considered the hay and pasture region of the United States. Characteristics of the region's climate, soil and topography are extremely favorable for the production and utilization of grasses and legumes for livestock production.

Well-managed pasture is an excellent land use, capable of producing a high-quality feed that can be very cost-effective to utilize. Well-managed pasture can also protect water quality by reducing erosion and runoff and enhancing wildlife habitat. However, overgrazing and livestock access to watercourses can lead to environmental concerns. There are certain planning and management decisions that promote the production of high quality feed and its efficient utilization by livestock. Good planning and management decisions will also reduce the risk of water quality degradation.

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Agricultural Water Quality Principle:

Livestock grazing areas should be managed to ensure optimum forage production, not only for the economic well-being of the agricultural operation, but for the prevention of soil erosion and water quality problems as well. Conservation practices such as a filter strip, fencing or alternative water supply should be used to keep livestock away from waterbodies. Plant nutrients should be applied so that rate, timing and method of application enhances optimum economic returns while protecting water quality.

Glossary Continued...

Vegetative Buffer: A permanent strip of dense, vigorous perennial vegetation of at least 20 feet in width established and maintained along a watercourse or stream. See NRCS Standards NY 393s (Filter Strip), NY 390 (Riparian Herbaceous Buffer), and NY 391 (Riparian Forest Buffer).

Waterbody: A lake, reservoir, pond, river, continuously-flowing stream, continuously-flowing spring, wetland, estuary or bay.

Watercourse: Water flowing over a non-vegetated channel to a waterbody.

Background Continued...

Prescribed grazing management is a systematic planning procedure for pasture used to develop a site-specific grazing plan that can:

- promote an alternative to using machinery to manage the quality, quantity and structure of vegetation on a pasture;
- reduce soil erosion by converting highly-erodible lands in row crop production to year-round vegetative coverage: pasture; and
- protect water quality by managing livestock access to streams and other waterbodies.

AEM Tier 2 Worksheet: Pasture Management		Potential Concern		
Factors Needing Assessment:	Lower 1	2	3	Higher 4
What is the condition of pasture vegetation?	Pasture is very well-managed and all areas are fully vegetated.	Pasture is well-managed and fully vegetated, except in minor areas of heavier animal traffic.	Pasture is over-grazed and included bare and weedy areas.	Pasture has little vegetation and shows evidence of runoff and erosion.
What is the condition of pasture laneways?	Laneways are either fully vegetated or well-developed with stone, gravel, etc. There are no visible gullies.	Laneways are partially vegetated and/or partially developed.	Laneways are not developed. Areas are bare of vegetation and have evidence of runoff, erosion or ponding.	There is no laneway development. Lanes go up and down slopes, have visible gullies and no vegetation. Water flows along them to watercourses.
How are pastures on floodplains managed?	Livestock are fenced out of the floodplain area. OR No floodplain is located in the pasture.	The floodplain is part of a well-managed pasture system. AND The water source for livestock is not the stream. The water source is located out of the floodplain area, along with salt and shade.	Pasture water sources are located both in and out of the floodplain. OR Salt and shade are located both in and out of the floodplain.	Livestock are allowed full access to the floodplain and vegetation on it has been destroyed. OR The only water, salt and shade are located within the floodplain (high animal concentrations).
How is livestock managed around streams?	If livestock need to cross the stream, they do so over a constructed laneway complete with a culvert and gates at both ends (limited access). The stream is fenced. OR Livestock do not cross the stream.	If livestock need to cross the stream, they do so over a constructed stone crossing with gates at both ends (limited access). OR The stream is fenced, with limited access for watering.	Livestock are not fenced out of the stream. The stream is crossed in many places and is used as a water source for livestock.	Livestock are not fenced out of the stream and have denuded the vegetation or damaged the streambank.

AEM Tier 2 Worksheet: Pasture Management Continued		Potential Concern		
Factors Needing Assessment:	Lower 1	2	3	Higher 4
How are seasonal watercourses in the pasture managed?	Seasonal watercourses are fully-vegetated and livestock are fenced out during wet periods.	Livestock have full access during the grazing season. The watercourses are fully-vegetated.	Livestock have full access to seasonal watercourses, which have limited vegetation, but the water flows into a vegetated area (i.e. wetland) before entering a stream or other waterbody.	Livestock have full access to seasonal watercourses which have little or no vegetation, and which outlet into streams or other waterbodies.

Other

1. Do livestock have access to woodlands?
2. Do livestock have access to wetlands/
3. Are cattle allowed to congregate in the laneway?

Additional Comments: