West Virginia Pasture Management

Watering Facilities

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for W.Va. Grassland Limited Resource Farmer Program

What
Providing a means to supply water to livestock to better use available forage in pastures.

Why
This practice will provide a potential to:
1. Improve the quality of water available to livestock
2. Improve topography of pasture land
3. Improve animal performance
4. Improve quality of available pasture to livestock
5. Improve grazing habits of livestock

How
Water can be developed and supplied with a trough from the following sources:
1. Ponds
2. Springs
3. Streams
4. Wells
5. Public Water System

Kinds of Troughs to Use
Many different items have been used by farmers to serve as watering troughs. The following list is not exhaustive but is probably the most common.
1. Self-poured concrete troughs (round or rectangular)
2. Pre-cast concrete troughs (round or rectangular)
3. Metal troughs
4. Rubber tire troughs (made from large used heavy equipment tires)

Ways to get Water to Trough
Water can be moved from its developed source in the following ways:
1. Gravity flow
2. Hydro-ram pump
3. Electric pump

Importance of Developed Water
When water sources are developed throughout a pasture the following usually occurs:
1. Animals gain weight better since they do not have to travel long distances for water between grazing periods.
2. Cleaner, better-quality water increases water intake and potentially improves animal health and performance.
3. Overall pasture quality improves as more sources of water are developed due to more uniform grazing. The improved pasture quality also adds to improved animal performance.

**Summary**

Water is a critical element for any pasture grazing program. Its availability, quality and distribution should be carefully planned when developing a management plan for the entire farm. There are a variety of combinations that can be used to provide water to livestock. Plan what you need, seek technical assistance when you need it, and implement your plans.

**Where to Get Help**

For more information about watering facilities, contact your local office of the Soil Conservation Service or the West Virginia University Extension Service. They are listed in the telephone directory under "U.S. Government" and "West Virginia," respectively.

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Rachel B. Tompkins, Director, Morgantown, West Virginia. Published in Furtherance of Acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914.

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