

Best Management practices



Growing for a better future.

GRAZING and Riparian Management

Our soil, and the plants that grow in it, are key tools in combating greenhouse gasses (GHGs). They are "carbon sinks" – trapping and holding CO₂ from the atmosphere (see fact sheet Soil Conservation). Opportunity also exists to influence the GHG equation on livestock farms by making improvements to grazing management.

By employing Best Management Practices to livestock grazing, pasturelands can serve as effective carbon sinks. Effective grazing management also brings wider benefits for the environment and economic benefits for the producer.

Much of the land presently in pasture is marginal for crop production. Using this land as well-managed pastures is a benefit to the producer, as well as society at large. Dividing the grazing area into paddocks/pastures and moving the herd from one to another is a BMP called rotational grazing. Each paddock/pasture is intensively grazed for a short period, then allowed to rest and recover before being grazed again. Producers deliberately select the number of cattle in the paddocks, seed

paddocks with appropriate grass and legume species, and carefully manage native grass pastures which can reduce greenhouse gas emissions while improving the profitability of their farms.

Riparian zones are areas along natural watercourses. Careful management of livestock grazing around these areas will:

- conserve the soil along the watercourse stream banks, reduce bank erosion
- preserve habitat for wildlife and protect fish stocks
- protect water quality for livestock and people.
- help to prevent stream channels from becoming wider and shallower

Riparian Management can also be a useful practice on farms without livestock since this riparian area acts as a buffer between fields and water courses which protects the water course from potential pesticide, herbicide and nutrient run-off. The added vegetation in the riparian areas also contributes to carbon sequestration since the grasses, shrubs or trees planted store carbon.



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