Managing Grazing Lands Effectively

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Definitions…Other Terms

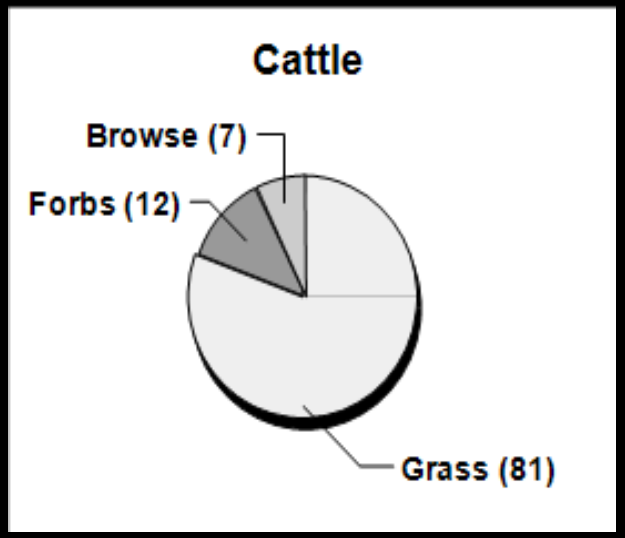
- Managed Grazing…
- Prescribed Grazing…
- Rotational Grazing…
- Rational Grazing
- Multi-Paddock Adaptive Grazing…
- All boil down to managing the interactions between plants, soils, and **grazing** animals.

Context Always Matters

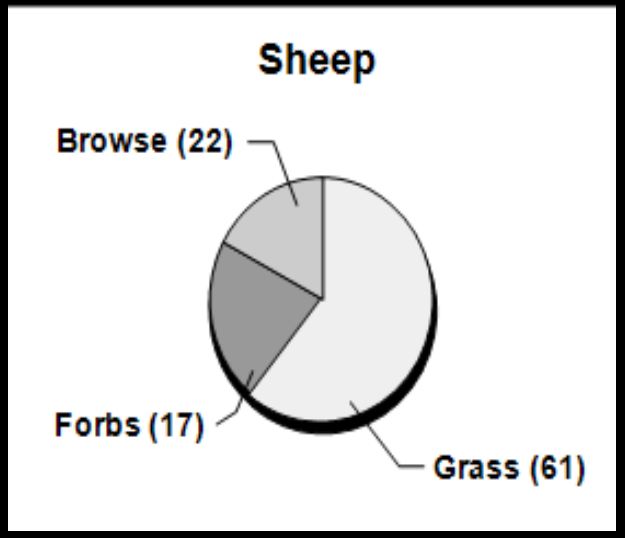
- Full Time Operator or Part Time Operator
  - What one wants to achieve and can achieve is usually different between the two
- Land Capability Class
  - Class I land is usually going to be more inherently more fertile and much easier to manage than Class III, Class IV…
- Legacy management decisions matter
  - Past erosion from row crop production, past fertility management
- How you view your operation – Is your crop beef? Or Is your crop Forage?
  - Influences interest in and willingness to apply grazing management
- Other operational characteristics…mix of forages, equipment available, skills, etc.

Animal - Grazing Height / Diet Preference

Can graze to about ½ inch height

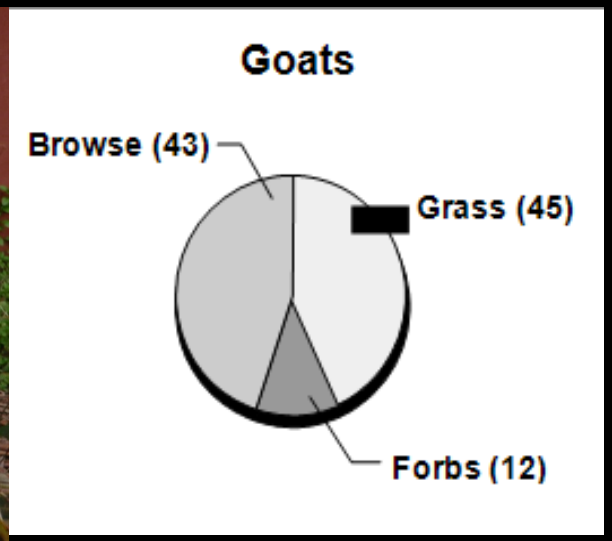


Can graze lower than half inch. Can bite to soil surface.

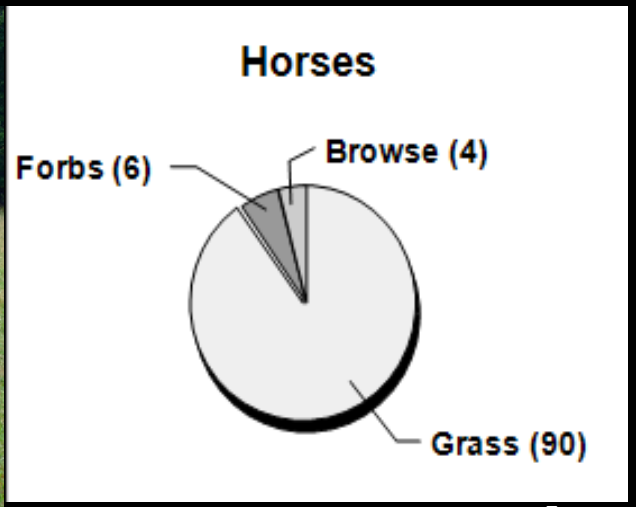


Animal - Grazing Height / Diet Preference

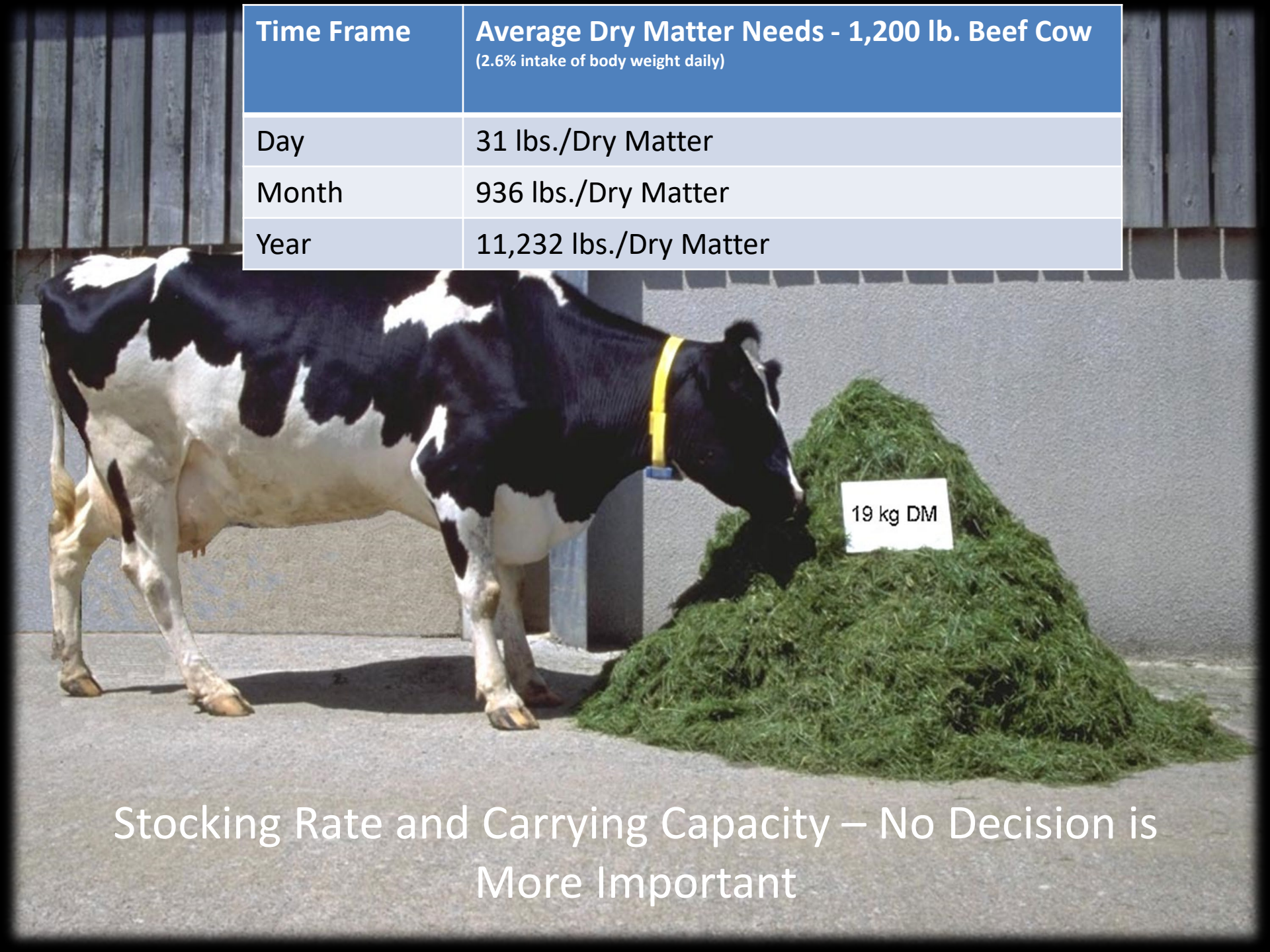
Narrow muzzle.
Helps with browsing.
Top down grazers.
Will leave more stubble if they have a choice.



Can graze to about 1/3 of an inch

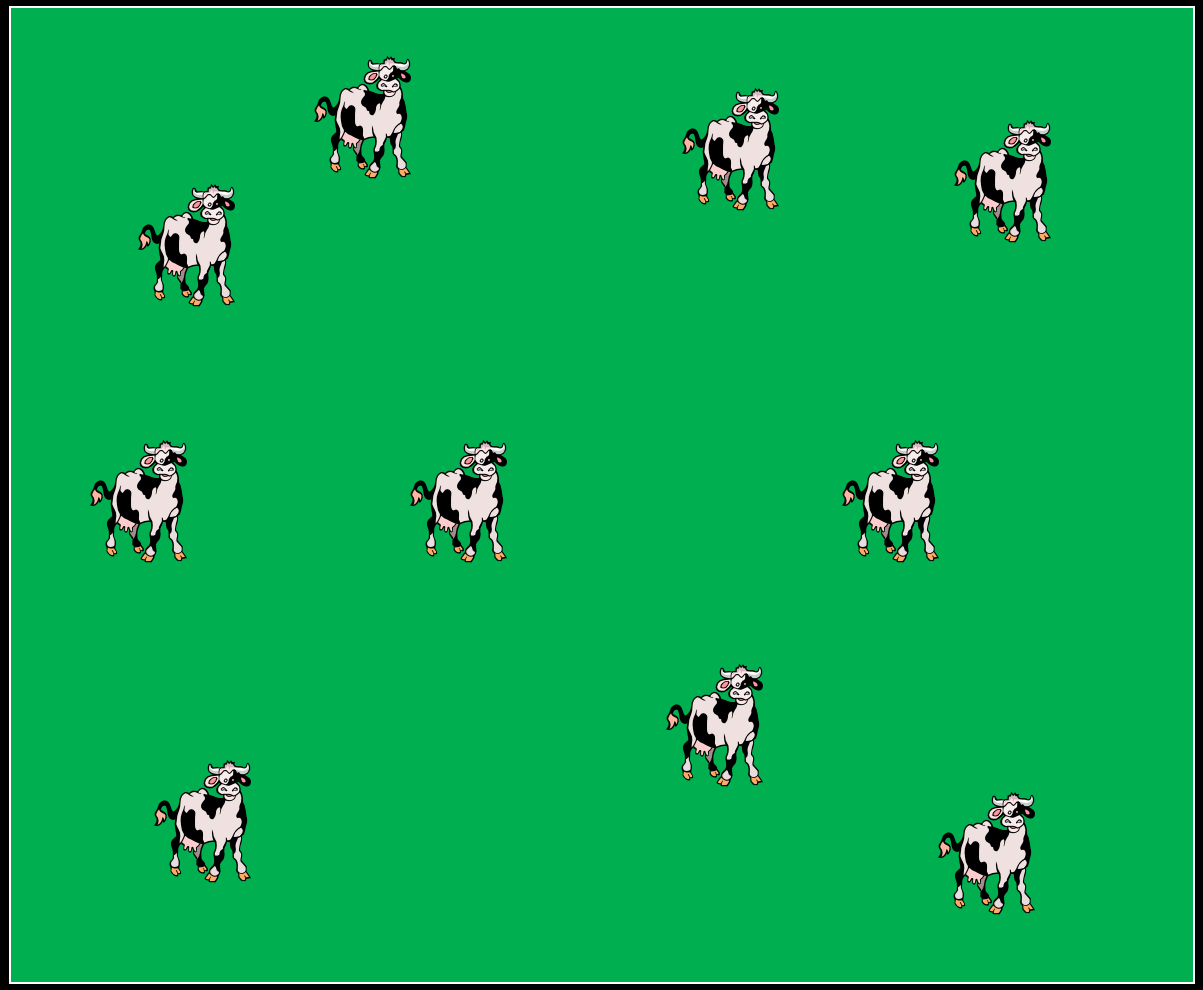


Time Frame	Average Dry Matter Needs - 1,200 lb. Beef Cow (2.6% intake of body weight daily)
Day	31 lbs./Dry Matter
Month	936 lbs./Dry Matter
Year	11,232 lbs./Dry Matter

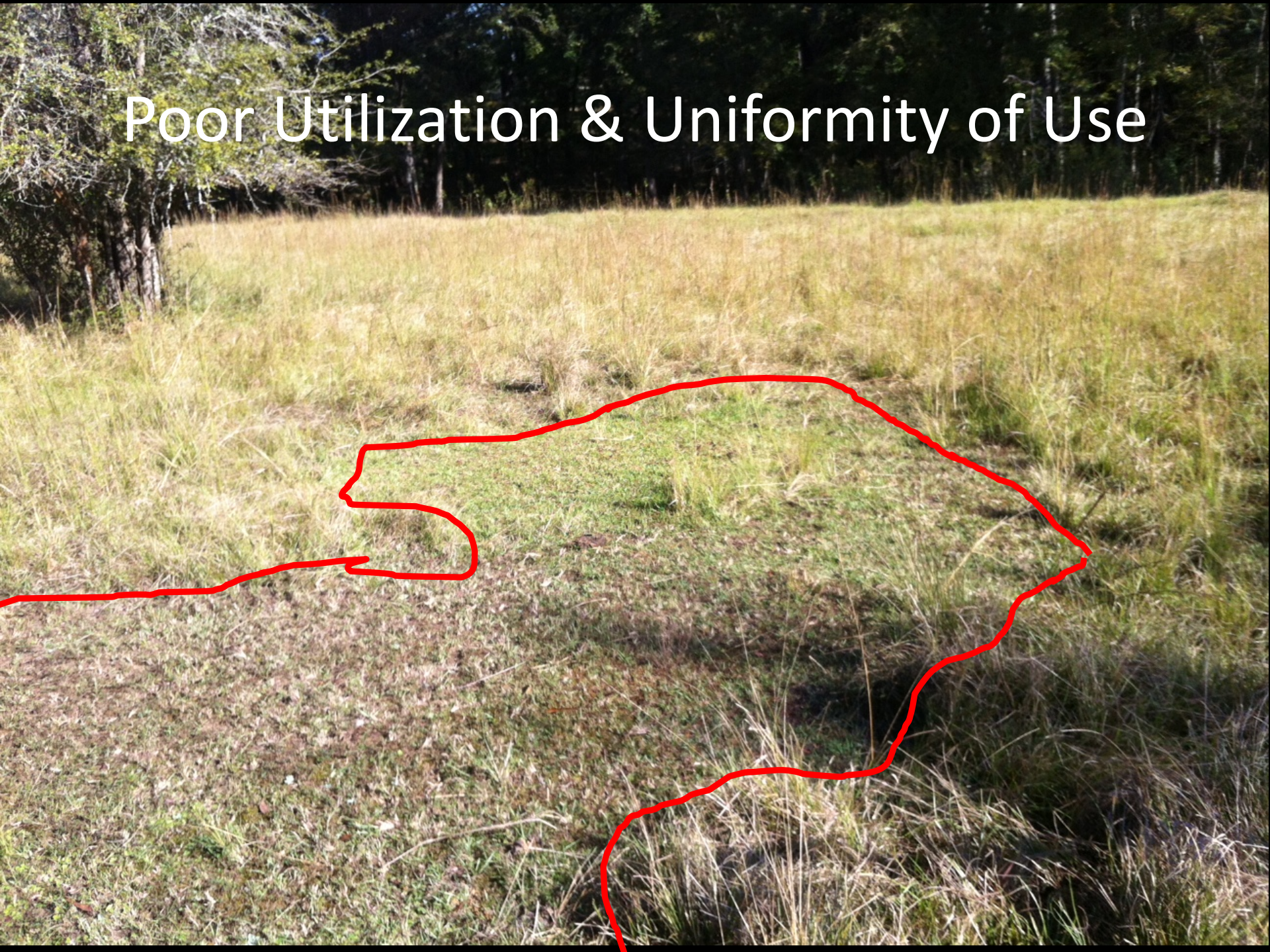


Stocking Rate and Carrying Capacity – No Decision is More Important

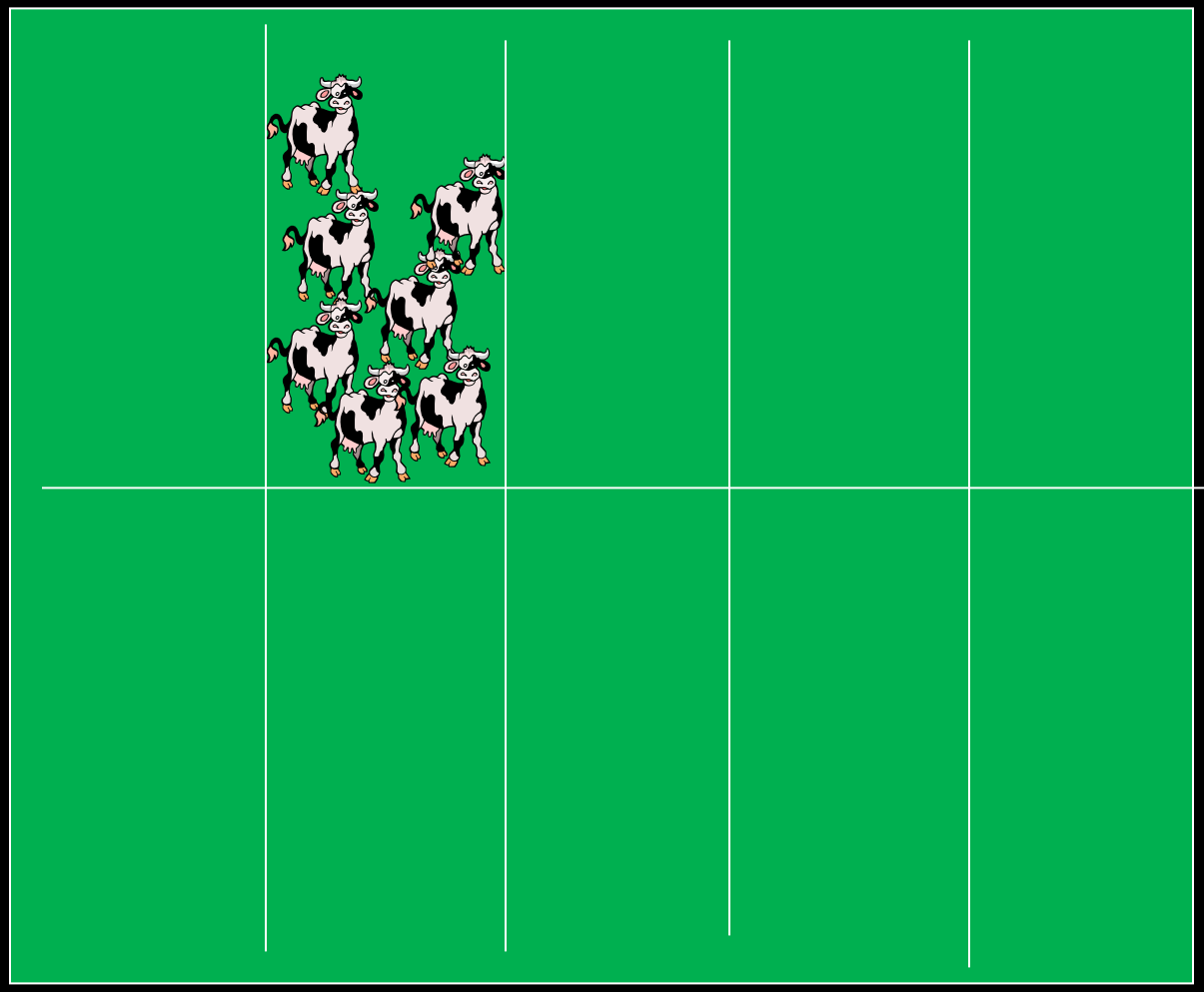
So what are we really trying to do with grazing management….



Poor Utilization & Uniformity of Use



Extreme Over-Utilization



Increased Utilization & Improved Uniformity of Use

Increased Utilization & Improved Uniformity of Use

Utilization Rate

Grazing System / Method	% Utilization of Yield Potential
Continuous Stocking	30 - 40
Moderate Rotational Stocking (5-6 Pastures/Paddocks)	45 - 55
Intense Rotational Stocking / Management Intensive Grazing	60
Strip Grazing Technique	70

Impacts of Grazing Management on Root Systems……

Facilitating Practices – Affect Stock Density which Affects: forage utilization, dunging distribution, occupancy length, recovery period, soil health, etc.

Livestock Water

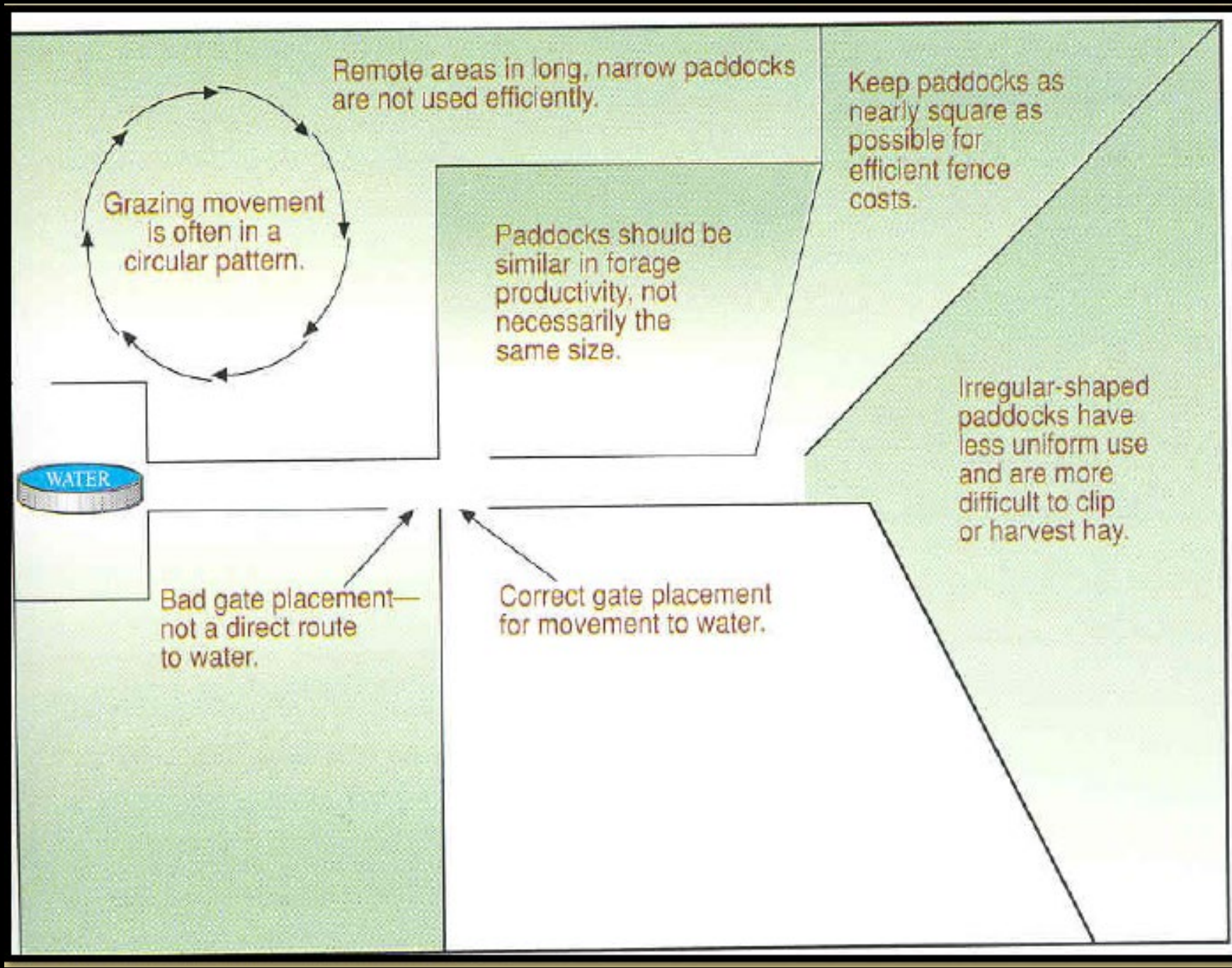
Providing Water

- Water Location
  - Centralized
    - Allows for easier subdivision and better animal distribution
  - Ideally all pasture would be within 800 feet of a water source
  - Away from shade and mineral feeder

- Think flexibility related to further subdivision. Whether temporary or permanent

Fencing…

Woven Wire

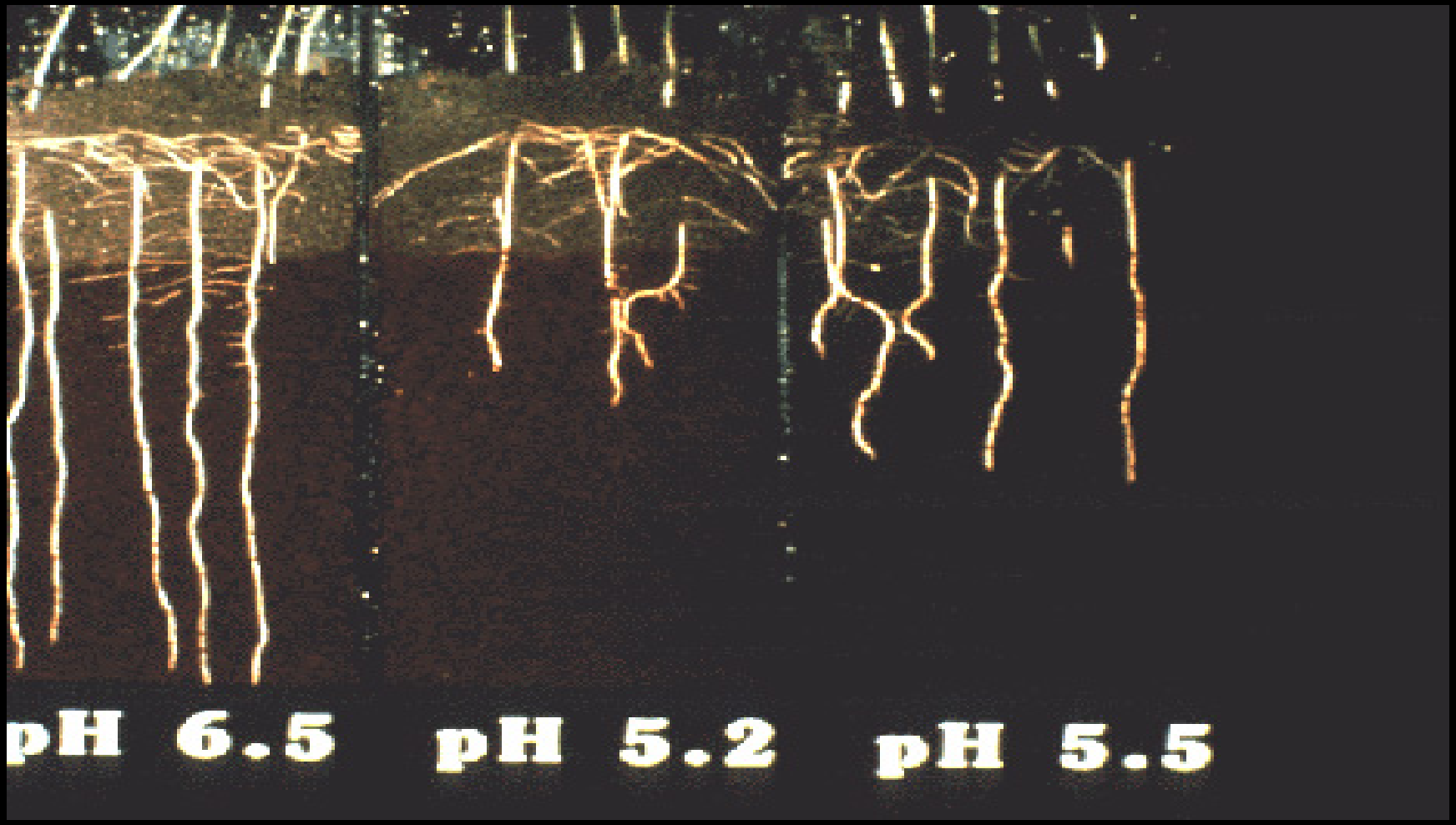

Remote areas in long, narrow paddocks are not used efficiently.
Keep paddocks as nearly square as possible for efficient fence costs.
Grazing movement is often in a circular pattern.
Paddocks should be similar in forage productivity, not necessarily the same size.
Irregular-shaped paddocks have less uniform use and are more difficult to clip or harvest hay.
WATER
Bad gate placement—not a direct route to water.
Correct gate placement for movement to water.

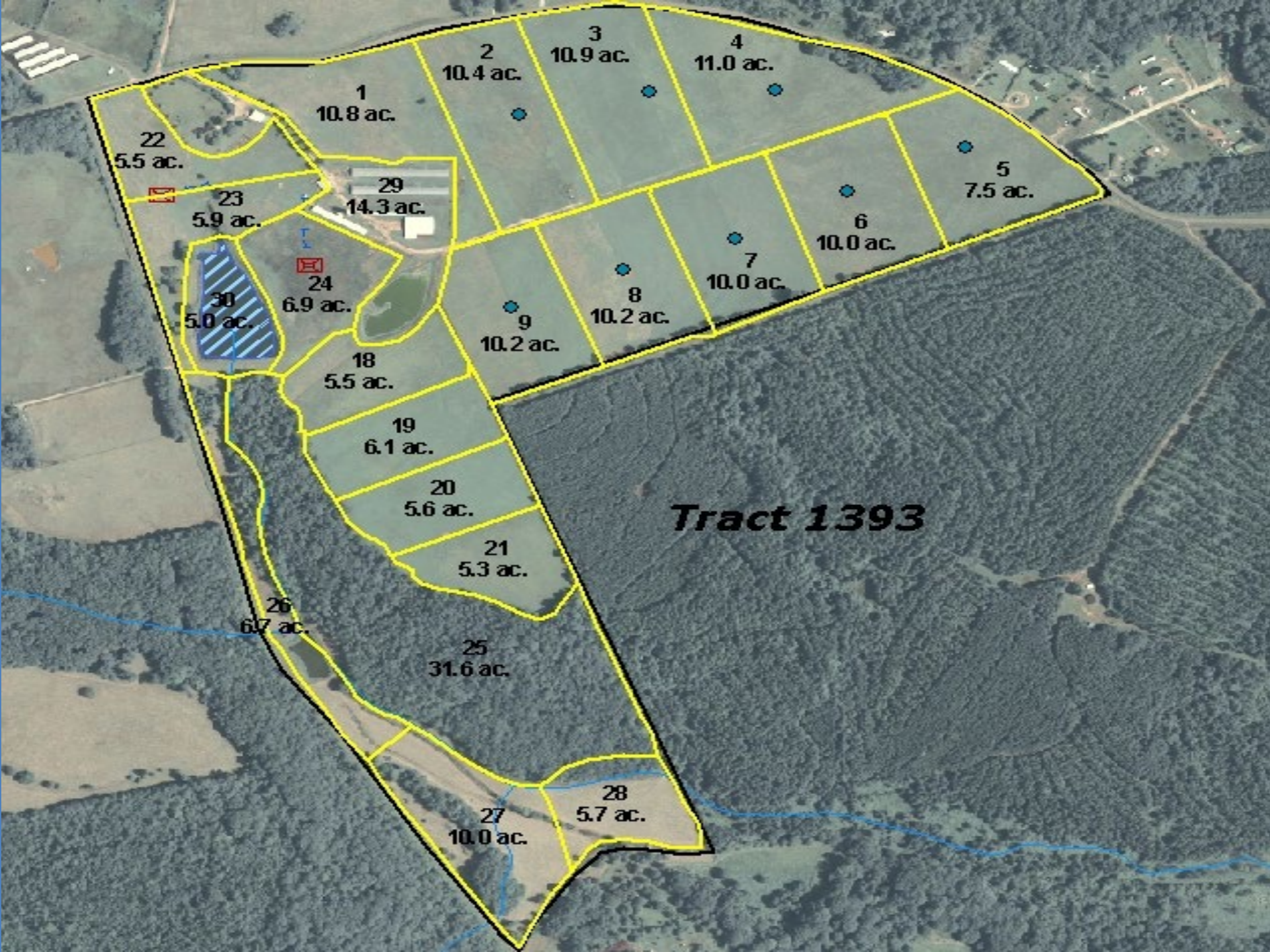
Temporary Electric Fence

- Can be incorporated with any fencing type
- Adds tremendous flexibility with regard to management options

Fertility -Know what you need in order to get the desired results

pH and Root Growth

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5.3 ac.
26
6.7 ac.
25
31.6 ac.
27
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5.7 ac.
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Monitoring

- Track what happens as you make management decisions and implement various strategies.
- Economics
- Pasture Condition
- Hay Feeding versus Grazing Days
- And Grazing Days per Acre

Have a Contingency Plan

- What If…
  - Drought
  - Excessive moisture
  - The well goes out

Questions?

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