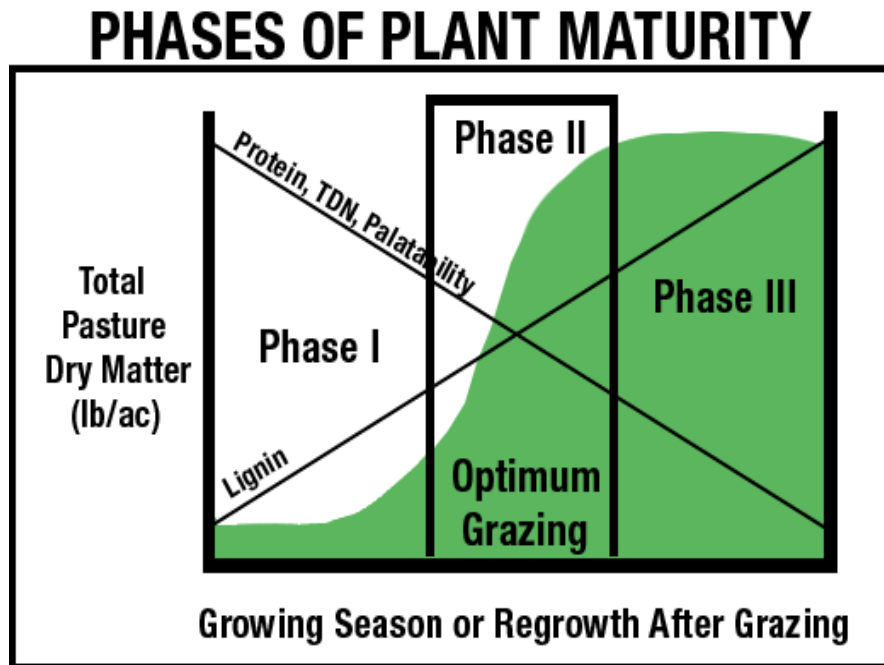


Rotational Grazing:

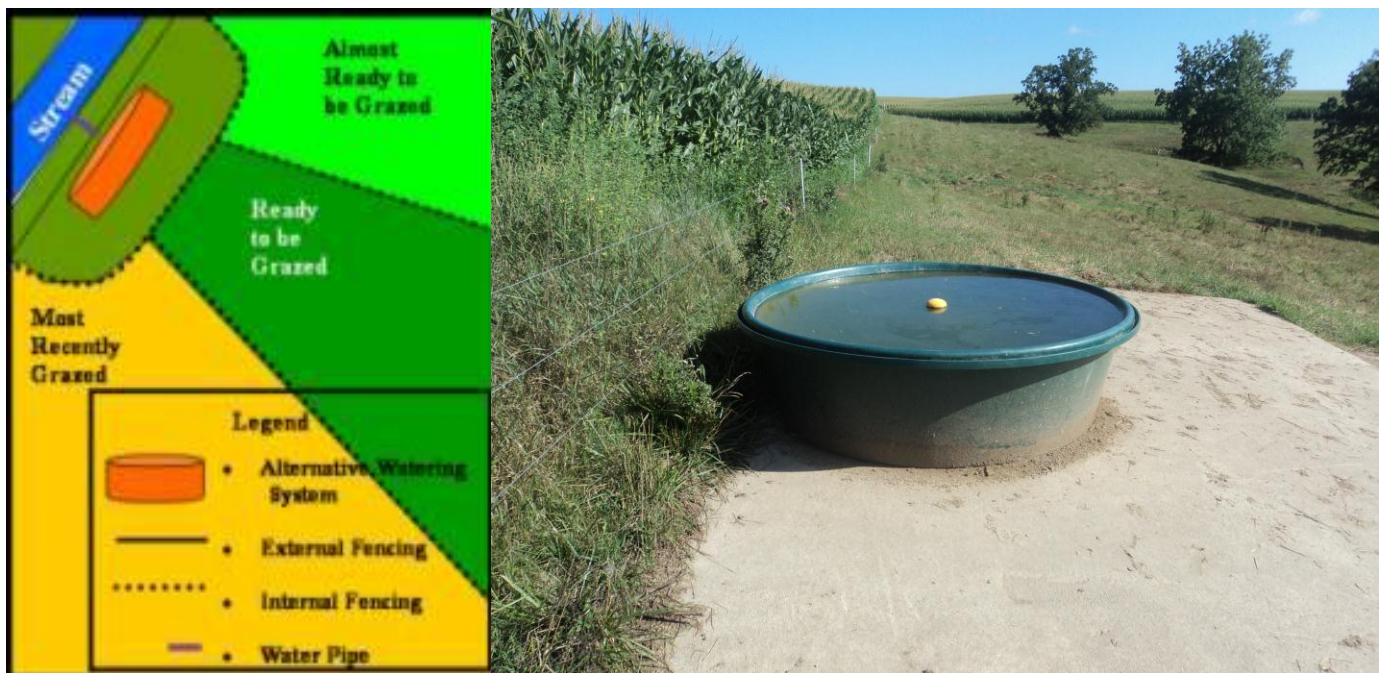
A tradeoff exists between quality and quantity of grazing forage. If the forage is too short, yield will be compromised. If the forage is too tall quality will be compromised and the ruminant will fill up on more indigestible material. One of the problems associated with traditional continuous grazing is that ruminants selectively forage and overgraze high quality areas of pasture while avoiding and under grazing other areas. They will also selectively graze certain plants.



This system fails to maximize the grazing potential of the land and furthermore changes the plant distribution over time lowering the quality of forage material.

Rotational grazing is the managed movement of cattle and other ruminants with the intent of maximizing yield without sacrificing quality. A few disadvantages do exist, such as the start up cost and the need for more active management. Fortunately, the advantages far outweigh these challenges and [cost-share programs](#) are available to help with start-up costs. Benefits of rotational grazing include a decrease in weeds, increase in plant diversity, reduction in erosion and maintenance fertilization, more uniform manure distribution, and improvements in the cost of production coupled with enhanced animal output per acre.

Access to water is an important consideration in a rotational grazing system. Well planned paddocks can take full advantage of existing water sources which can be supplemented with pipeline systems connected to wells. Strategic placement of permanent or temporary water tanks can reduce erosion due to cattle trails and minimize energy spent going to and from the water source.



^ Example of a watering system ^

More Resources

<http://www.uvm.edu/~grazing/>

[Minnesota Conservation Funding Guide for Rotational Grazing Pastures for Profit: A Guide for Rotational Grazing](#)

http://www.fillmoreswcd.org/documents/may-junnewsletter_000.pdf

Managed Grazing Video – Iowa State University

[Part 1](#) [Part 2](#) [Part 3](#) [Part 4](#) [Part 5](#)



Rotationally grazed pastures for dairy replacement heifers near Lanesboro, Minnesota