



CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

E528Q

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Use of body condition scoring for livestock on a monthly basis to keep track of herd health

Conservation Practice 528: Prescribed Grazing

APPLICABLE LAND USE: Crop (Annual and Mixed), Crop (Perennial), Pasture, Range, Forest, Associated Ag Land, Farmstead

RESOURCE CONCERN: Animals

ENHANCEMENT LIFE SPAN: 1 year

Enhancement Description

Body condition scoring (BCS) serves as a useful management tool to monitor livestock performance with respect to current and recent feeding or grazing programs. Body condition scoring is a numeric scoring system, producers can use to consistently evaluate animals' estimated body energy reserves through degree of fatness. This information can be used to adjust nutritional strategies to reach optimal BCS. Since body condition is closely associated with reproductive performance as well as feed efficiency, monitoring body condition can help producers reach production goals and increase the operation's bottom line. Knowledge and understanding of BCS will assist producers to adjust a supplemental feeding program to maintain animal health and nutrition on a-monthly-basis.

Criteria

- A written plan for matching the forage quantity and quality produced with the grazing and/or browsing demand will be followed.
- A written plan for maintaining diversity of forage plants to optimize delivery of nutrients to the animals by incorporating the intensity, frequency, timing and duration

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of grazing and/or browsing needed as determined through the planning process with: 1) Clear objectives, 2) A resource inventory including forage inventory, structural improvements and existing resource conditions, 3) Grazing schedule, and 4) All potential contingency plans.

- A written plan to monitor and document Body Condition Scores monthly using Land Grant University Scoring Guidelines.
- Supplemental feed and/or mineral will be balanced with the forage consumption to meet the desired nutritional level for the kind and class of grazing and/or browsing livestock.
- Animals must maintain ideal/Land Grant University recommended BCS for their breed, phase of production, or livestock type. (animals should not be emaciated to thin, or fat to obese).



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Documentation and Implementation Requirements

Participant will:

- Prior to implementation, acquire a Grazing Management Plan with all the following components: (provide plan to NRCS for review and approval)
 - Producer goals and objectives
 - Location and condition of structural improvements
 - Watering sites with availability, quantity and quantity
 - Forage inventory
 - Forage-animal balance sheet
 - Grazing plan for livestock movement
 - Contingency plan
 - Monitoring plan
- Prior to implementation, develop a written BCS monitoring plan
- During implementation keep a record of livestock movement and BCS of livestock type, breed and phase of production
- During implementation, keep a record of supplemental feeding
- During implementation, take photos of livestock from several representative animals. Photos should be taken of the side with the entire animal in the picture frame
- After implementation, provide the following items for review by NRCS:
 - Map of paddocks used
 - Forage-animal balance sheet
 - Records of livestock movement through paddocks
 - BCS monitoring plan with livestock photos
 - Supplemental feeding plan
 - Written modifications to grazing management plan based on results of BCS monitoring and supplemental feeding program

NRCS will:

- As needed, provide technical assistance to participant as requested
- Prior to implementation, provide and explain NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Prescribed Grazing (CPS 528) as it relates to implementing this enhancement

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- Prior to implementation, review the plan provided for livestock movement, BCS monitoring and supplemental feed plan
- After implementation, review the livestock movement plan, BCS monitoring data, and supplemental feed contingency plan (if implemented)
- After implementation, review the modifications to the grazing management plan based on results of BCS monitoring and the supplemental feeding program

NRCS Documentation Review:

I have reviewed all required participant documentation and have determined the participant has implemented the enhancement and met all criteria and requirements.

Participant Name _____ Contract Number _____

Total Amount Applied _____ Fiscal Year Completed _____

• _____
NRCS Technical Adequacy Signature _____ Date _____

*Sign and certify in the Oregon-Acknowledgment & Certification supplement below.

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OREGON SUPPLEMENT TO CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY E528Q

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Additional Documentation for Oregon:

- In addition to the documentation requirements specified in the National job sheet E528B the following additional documentation requirements apply in Oregon.
- BCS will be monitored during the grazing season (this may include dormant season grazing if grazed forage is expected to comprise the majority of the diet) and documented in “Monthly Monitoring Record” below.

Additional information and forms:

[Basics of Body Condition Scoring \(BCS\)](#)

[Influence of Body Condition on Reproductive Performance of Beef Cows Oregon State](#)

[University Body Condition Scoring Sheep](#)

[Purdue University Body Condition Scoring in Farm Animals](#)

Monitoring Plan worksheet for Body Condition Scoring

Animal Type	Month/Stage of Production	# of Animal Type	# of Animals needed to be Monitored (1 out of 5* or 1 out of 10*)	Ideal Body Condition Score
<i>Cattle</i>	<i>May / Calving</i>	<i>150</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>5</i>

*1 out of 5 animals for herds less than 100 animals, or 1 out of every 10 animals for herds greater than 100.



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Suggested Times for Body Condition Scoring:

(enter month(s) when this occurs on your operation)

Calving _____

Breeding _____

2 months prior to weaning _____

Weaning _____

Late Gestation (90 days prior to calving) _____

Circle months when animals will be monitored: Include the months from above, as well as any months when grazing will occur:

January	February	March	April	May	June
July	August	September	October	November	December

Beef BCS Recommendations (from South Dakota State University Extension)

	Ideal BCS for:		
Stage of Production	Mature Cow	Heifer	Bull
Calving	5	6	-
Breeding Season	5	6	6

Design Approvals & Acknowledgements:

Design Approval	Date	Job Approval Authority
Designed by:		
Approved by:		

Client's Acknowledgement Statement:

The client acknowledges:

- I have received a copy of the specification and understand the contents and requirements.
- It is my responsibility to obtain all necessary permits and/or rights and to comply with all ordinances and laws pertaining to the application of this practice.
- I will not begin installation of this practice until I have received appropriate approval to do so. I understand NRCS also has Federal and state laws to comply with that may take some time to address (e.g. cultural resources).

Client's Signature	Date

Certification Documentation:

	Field Evaluation: Post-treatment inventory, measurements, notes, as-built, and supporting documentation (document completion in conservation plan), as required.
	Map(s): Including field numbers, fields treated, and units treated (may document on conservation plan map), as required.
	Photos or other supporting documentation (e.g., seed tags, soil tests, receipts, invoices, spray records, fertilizer records, etc.)
Brief Description of Work Accomplished (types of equipment used, date of application, extents and quantities installed, etc.)	

Certification Statement:

The employee certifies the implementation of this conservation practice:

- Meets the purpose, general criteria, and any required additional criteria as documented in the conservation practice standard and/or enhancement sheet.
- Meets the specifications contained herein and is complete.
- Conforms to my existing Job Approval Authority controlling factors and levels.

Name	Date	Job Approval Authority

Field Level Certification – For multiple applications of this design.				
Land Unit/ Contract Item Number	Date	Unit(s)	Amount Installed	Certifier