

Pasture Management



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Vs.





Major Issues with Pasturing Horses

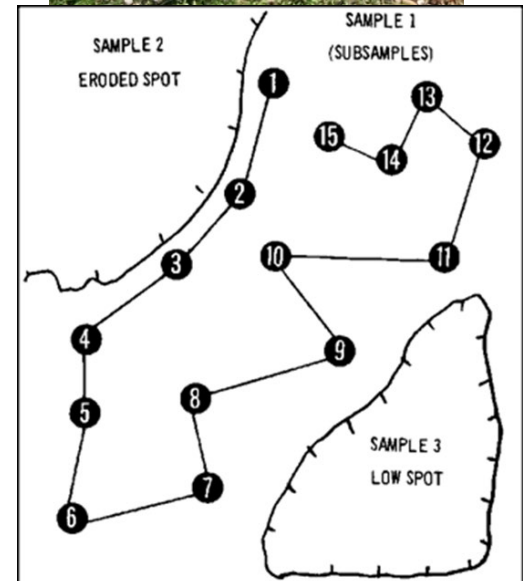
- Insufficient land (overgrazing)
- Poor soil fertility
 - Soil pH
 - Nutrient deficiency
- Grazing Pressure (ignoring resting period)
- Ununiform seasonal pasture growth



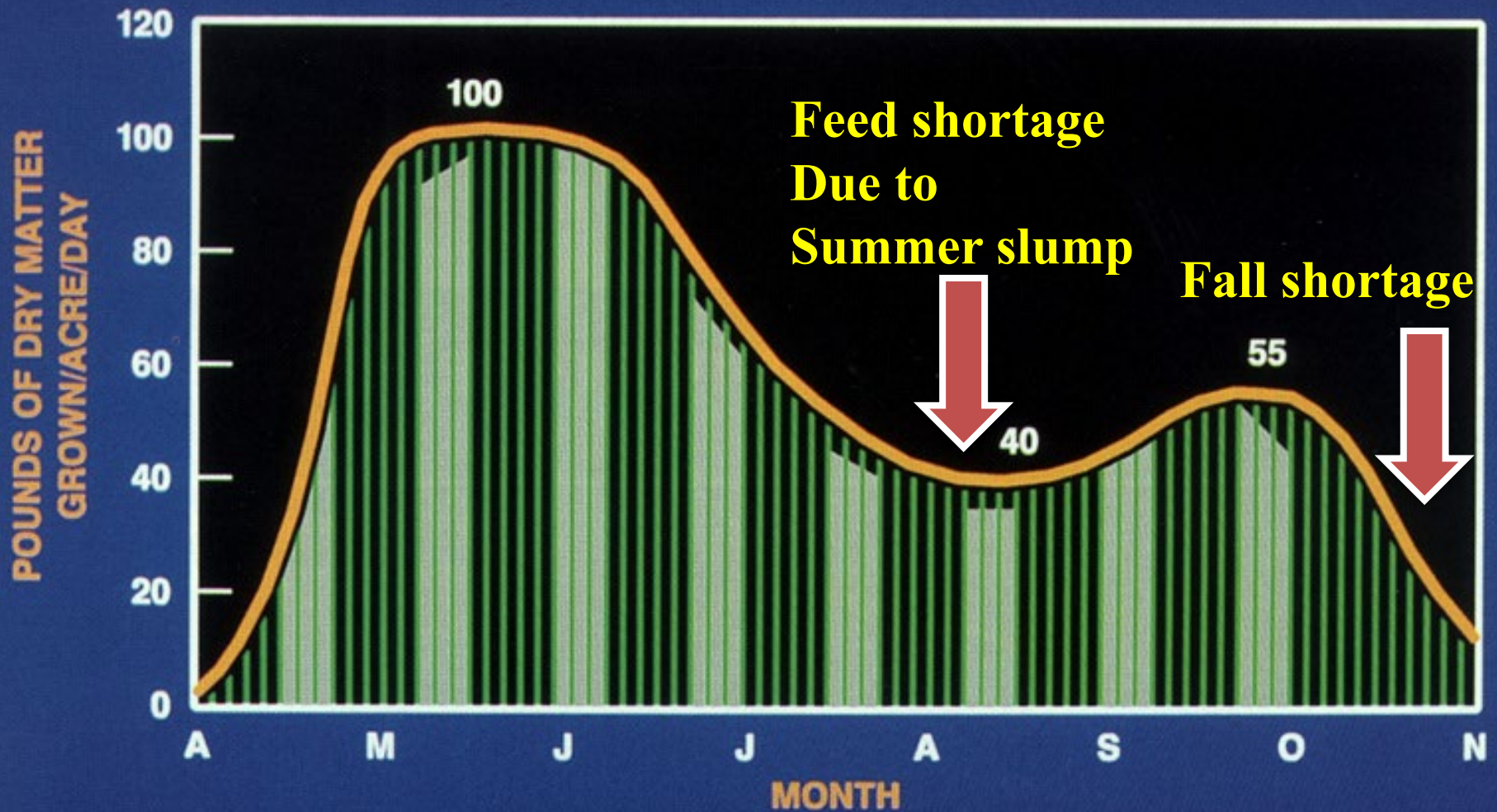
Have you tested your soil?

Sampling Soil for Meaningful Results

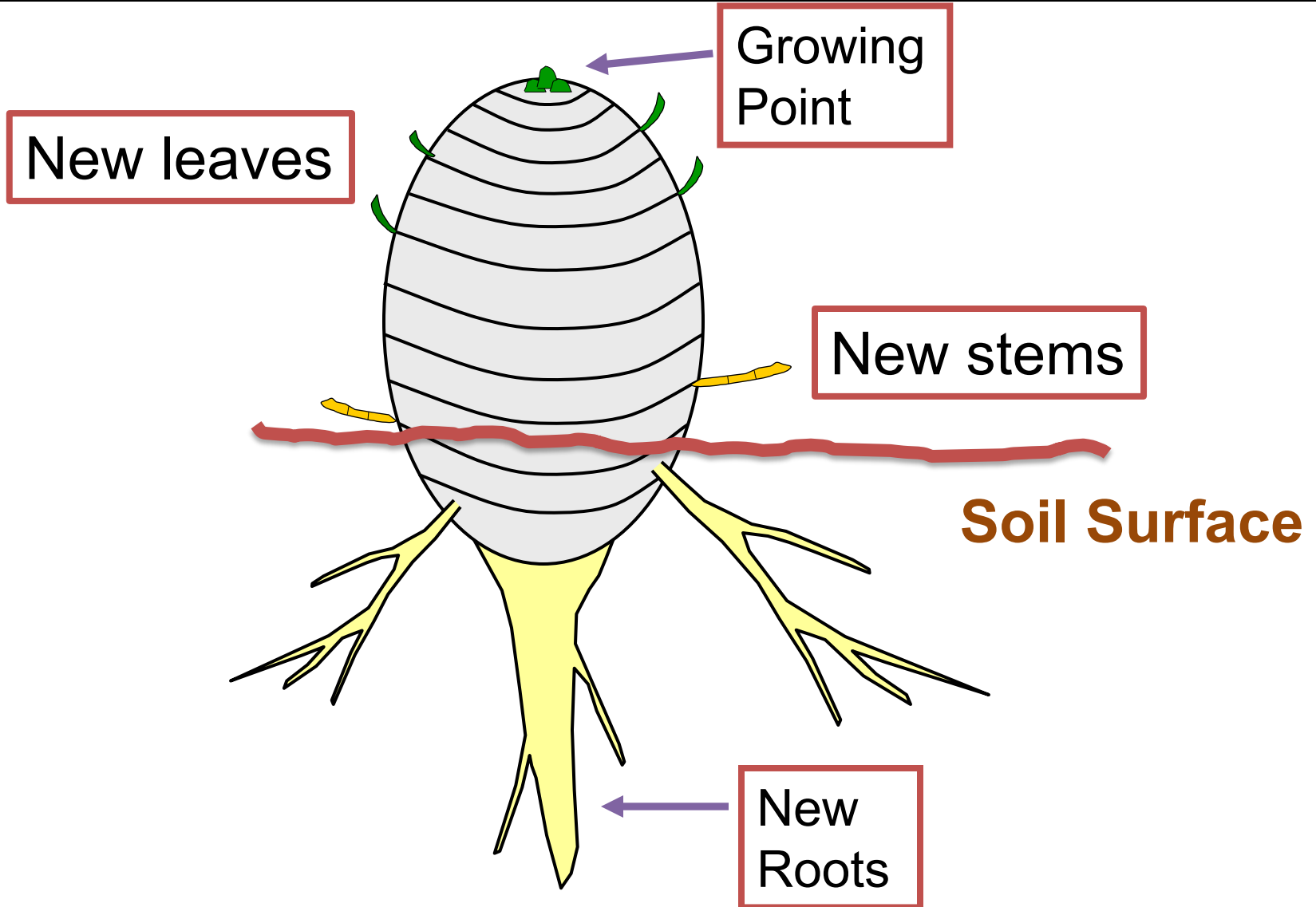
- Take soil samples every 2-3 years
- Use a soil augur (soil probe)
- Go as deep as 4"
- Take 20-25 sub-samples, mix, and send only a cup of soil in a Ziplock bag to the testing lab
- Follow the lab recommendations for fertilizer and lime application rate



PASTURE GROWTH RATE OVER TIME

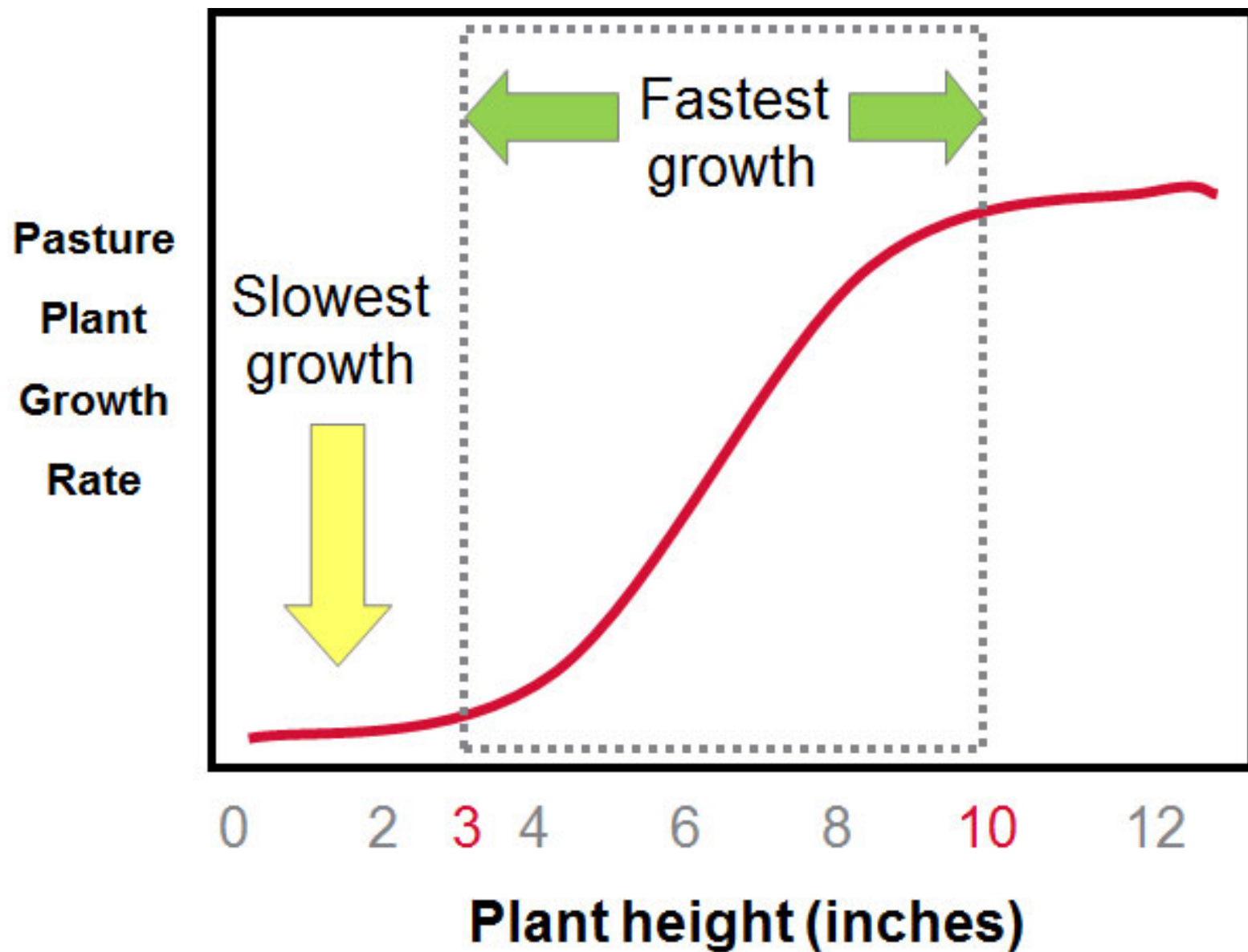


Grass Crown









Day 1

(24 hours after clipping)

1" Continuous 3.5" Rotational



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Day 2

1" Continuous 3.5" Rotational



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Day 3

1" Continuous 3.5" Rotational



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Day 4

1" Continuous 3.5" Rotational



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Day 5

1" Continuous 3.5" Rotational



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Day 6

1" Continuous 3.5" Rotational



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Typical Recovery Period in New England

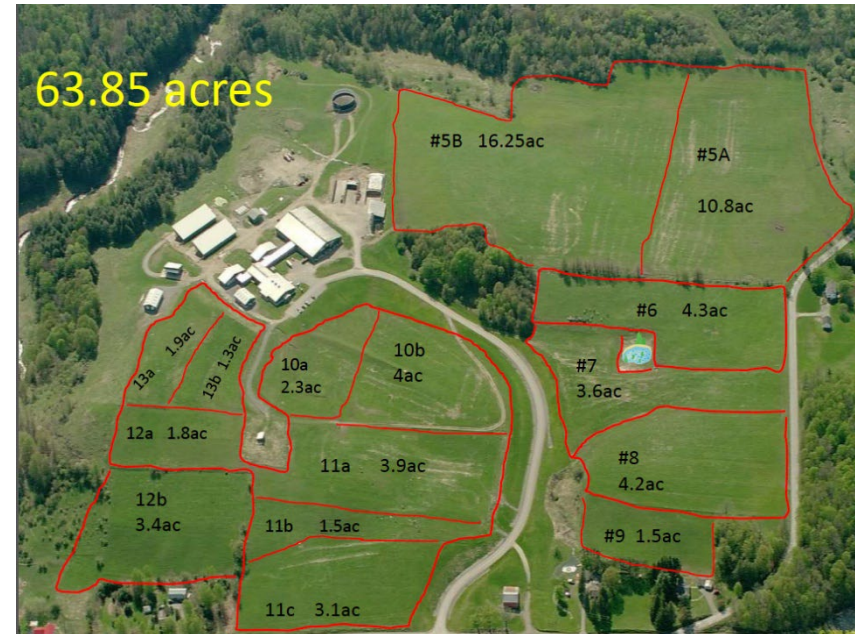
12 to 15 days in late April to early May
18 days by May 31
24 days by July 1
30 days by August 1
36 days by September 1
42 days (and longer) by October 1

Overgrazing Pastures is the sin of all sins!

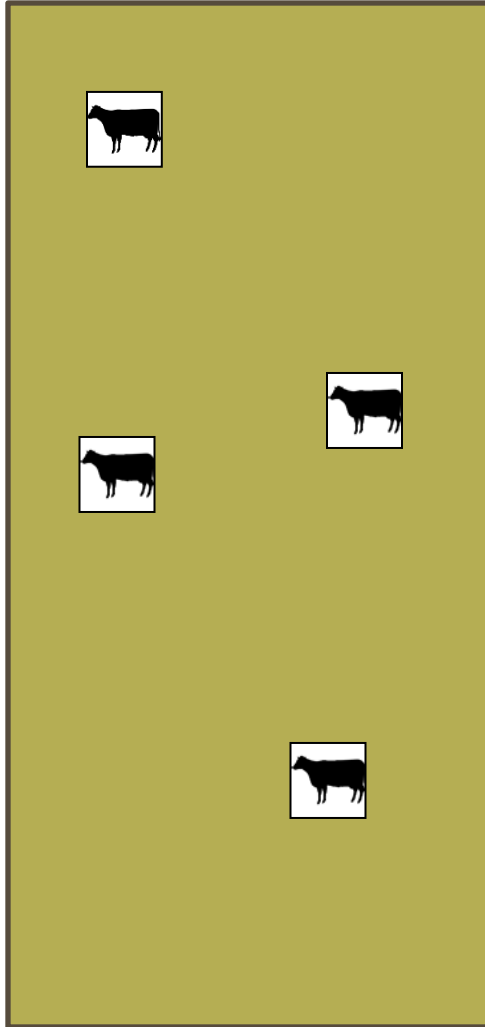


Rotational Grazing

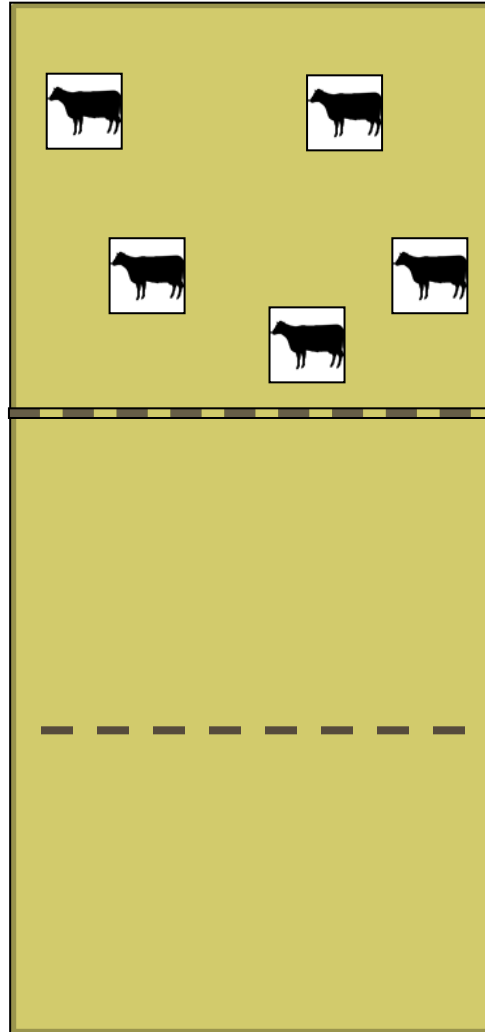
- Pastures are subdivided into smaller paddocks
- One paddock is grazed at a time, the remainder “rests”
- Resting allows plants to renew food reserves, deepen root system



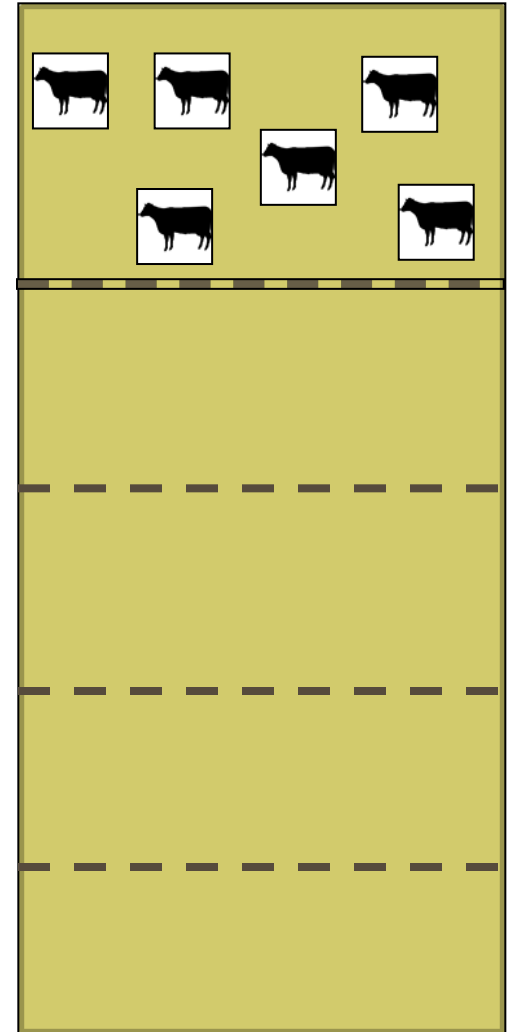
Rotations: Pasture Grazing Systems



Continuous

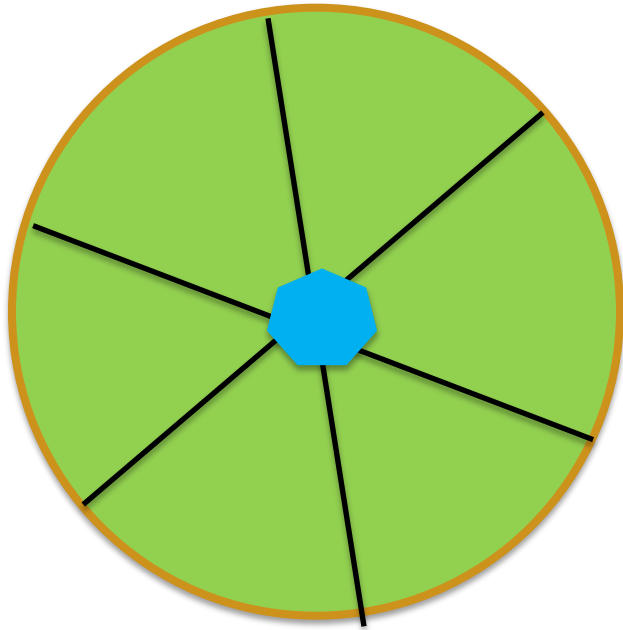


Simple Rotation

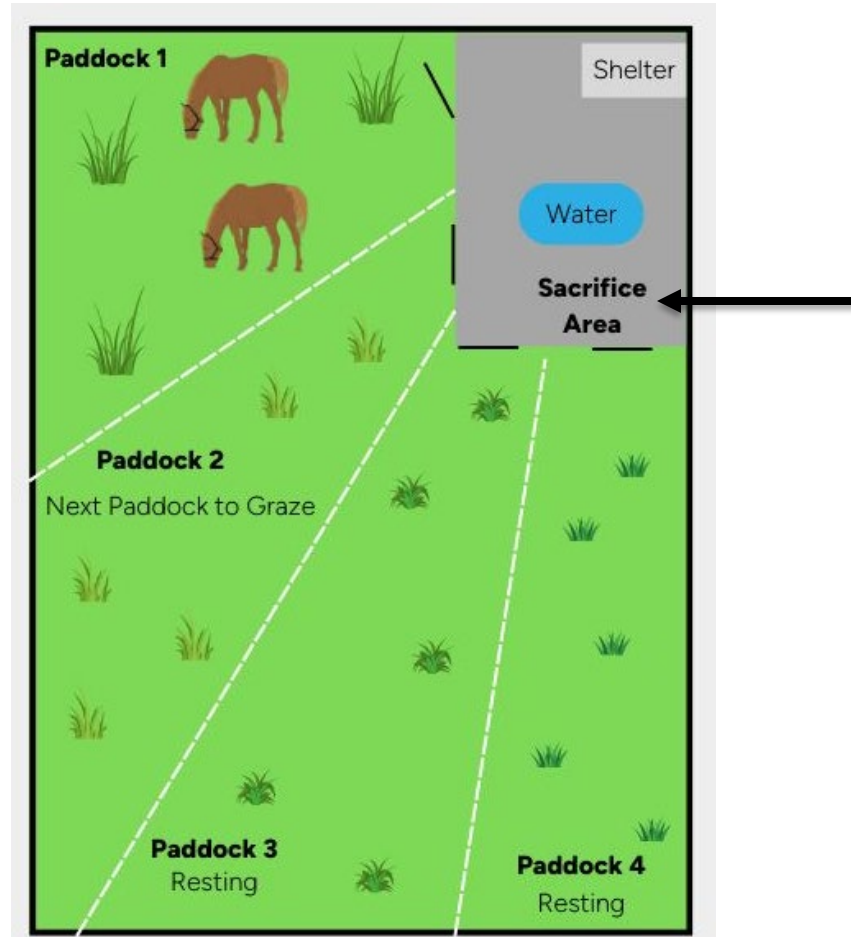


IMG

Simple Rotational Grazing



6-day grazing,
30-day recovery



30 days recovery might be short, long, or just right.

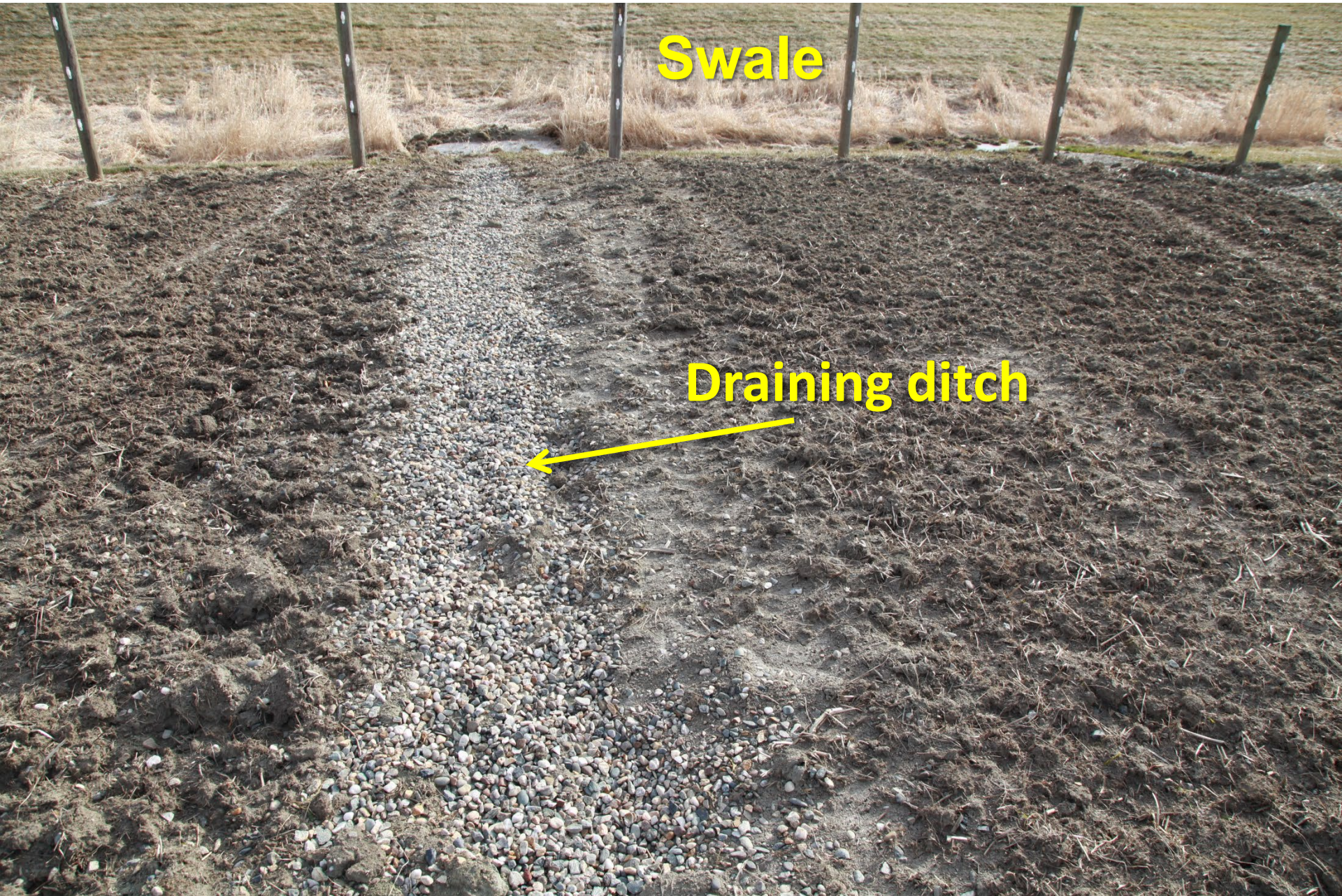
Sacrifice lots

- Is a major component of pasture management
- You are sacrificing a small area of land for the benefit of rest of the pasture
- Because it is called a sacrifice lot, it doesn't mean it can be neglected!
- Use of proper footing prevents mud



Swale

Draining ditch





Gravel on top of
geotextile fabric



Grazing Calculations

How much feed do you have? (inventory)

- 1 inch of a medium pasture in an acre = 250 lb DM
- So, 8" available pasture = 2,000 lb DM/acre
- Let's assume your pasture is 10" tall and your ponies graze the pasture down to 4", until you move them to another paddock
- Therefore, you have $(10" - 4") = 6"$ available forage
- $6" \times 250 \text{ lb DM/acre} = \underline{\underline{1500}} \text{ lb DM/ac}$

Forage Need

How much forage do you need?

- A pony needs 2.5% of its body weight/day + 1% for trampling = 3.5%
- Let's assume a pony is 500lb
- $500 \times 3.5/100 = 17.5$ lb DM/day/pony
- You have 3 ponies: so, $17.5 \times 3 = \sim \underline{53 \text{ lb DM/day}}$
- If you decide to rotate your ponies every 5 days, then you need $53 \times 5 = \underline{265}$ lb DM per rotation
- So: $1500 \div 265 = \underline{3}$ ponies can graze on 1 acre for 5 days.

A wide-angle photograph of a vibrant green field, possibly a meadow or pasture, filled with tall grass and some small wildflowers. In the background, a dense line of green trees stretches across the horizon under a clear blue sky with a few wispy clouds. A white fence is visible in the distance, separating the field from the trees.

**Thank you
Questions?**