

# Managing Forages for Stockers

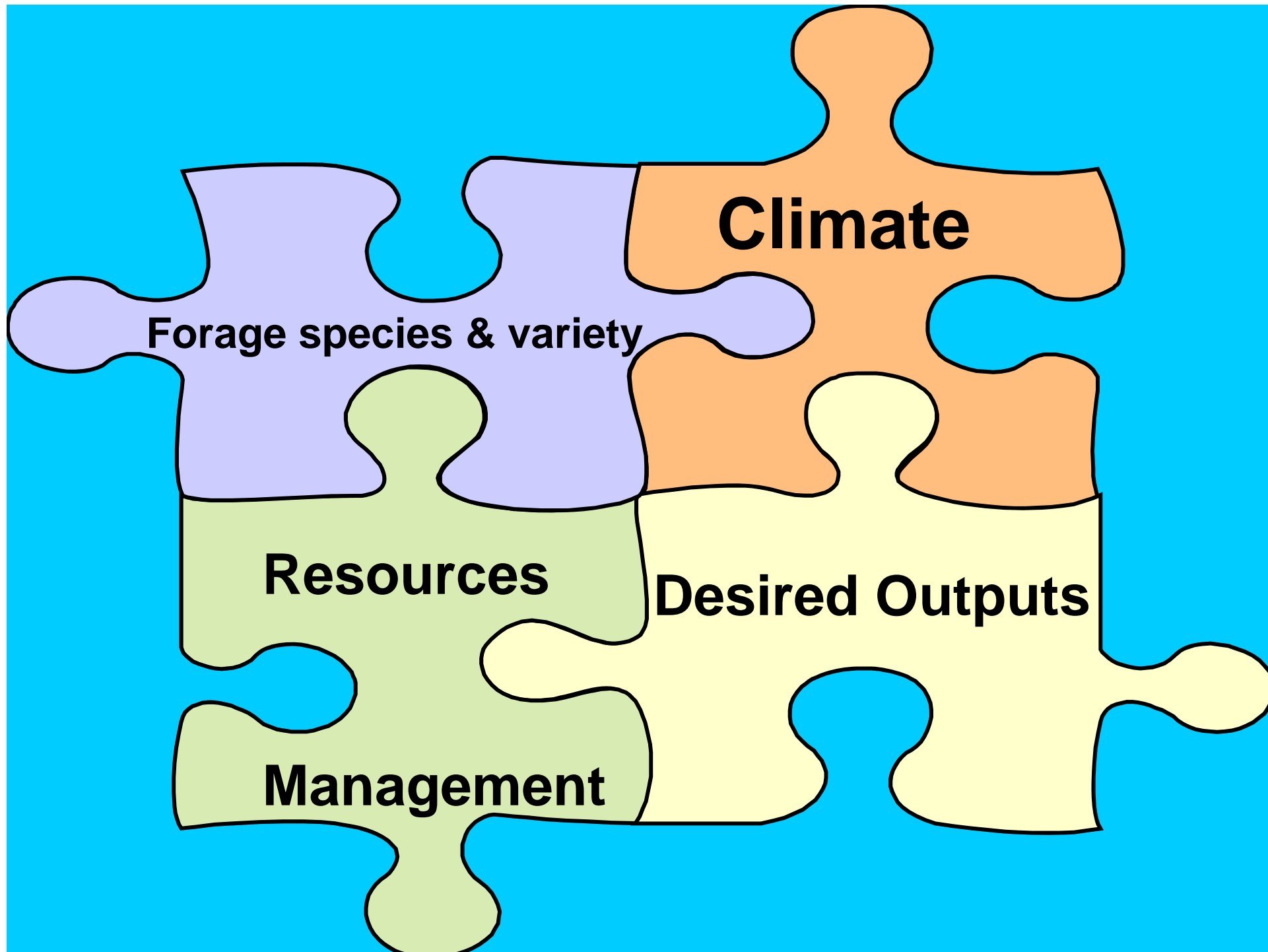
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**Extension Beef Specialist**  
**Virginia Tech**



# Forage / Grazing Goals

- Low cost gain
- Maximize grazing over hay feeding
- Minimum inputs
- Persistent





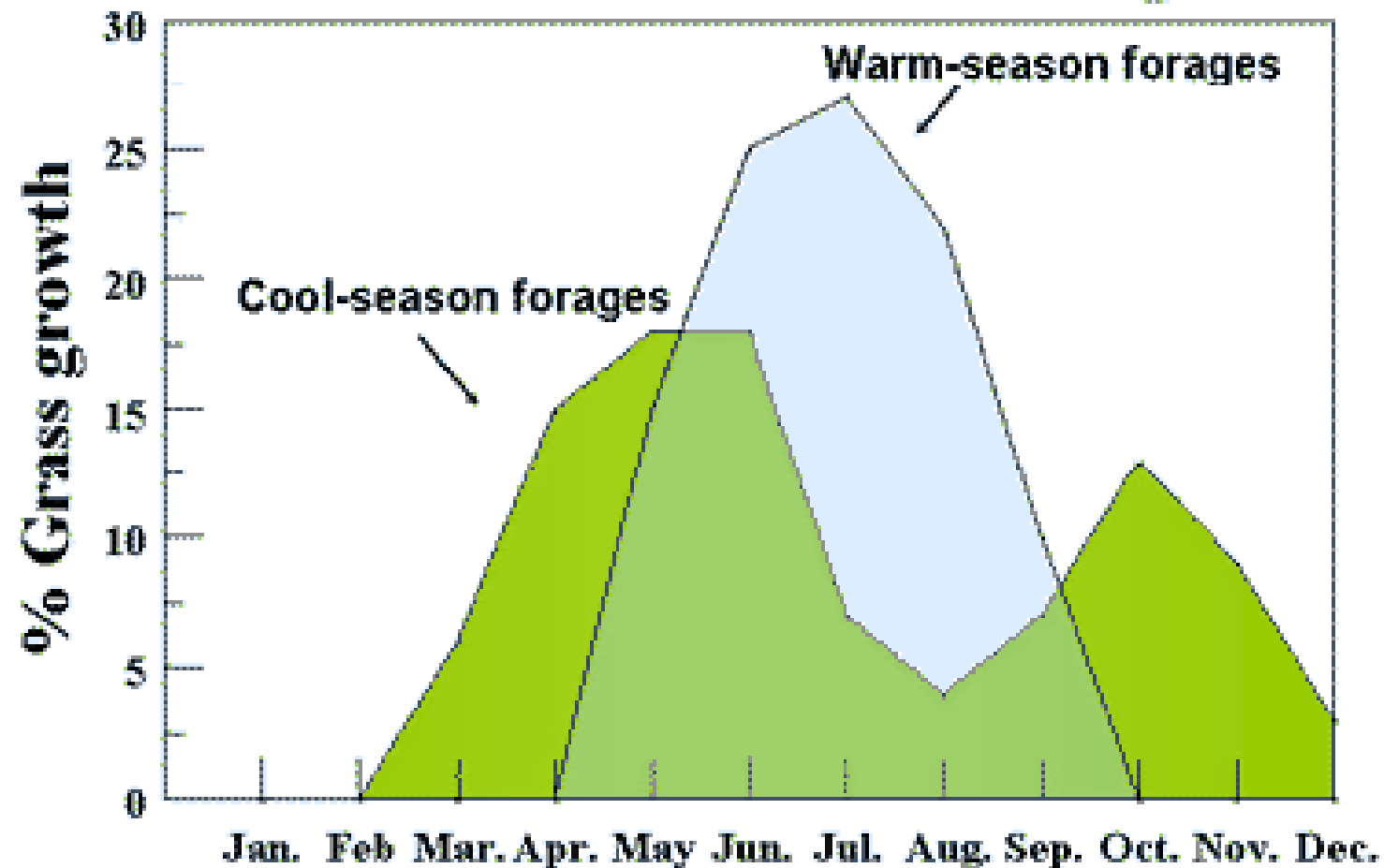


# Decisions

- Season-fall, spring, summer
- Forage variety base
- Stocking rate
- Clover
- Supplement or not
- Grazing management



## Complementary Growth Patterns of Cool- and Warm-Season Forages



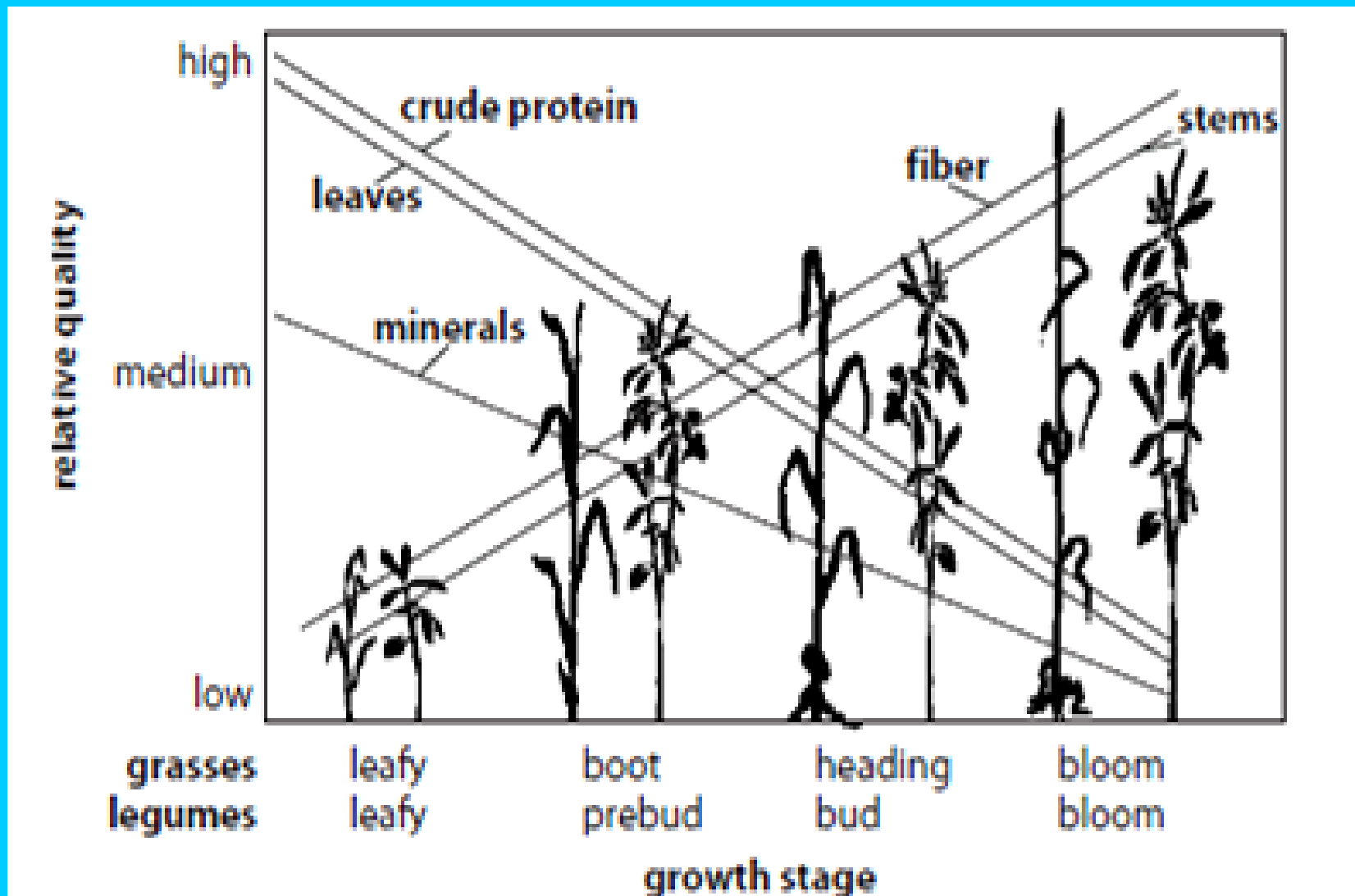
# Cattle Performance- what drives the train?



RailPictures.Net - Image Copyright © Severin Fennel

**Nutrient Intake= (Amt Forage Consumed) x (Nutrient Content)**

# Forage Quality vs Maturity



# Orchardgrass- date of harvest impact on quality

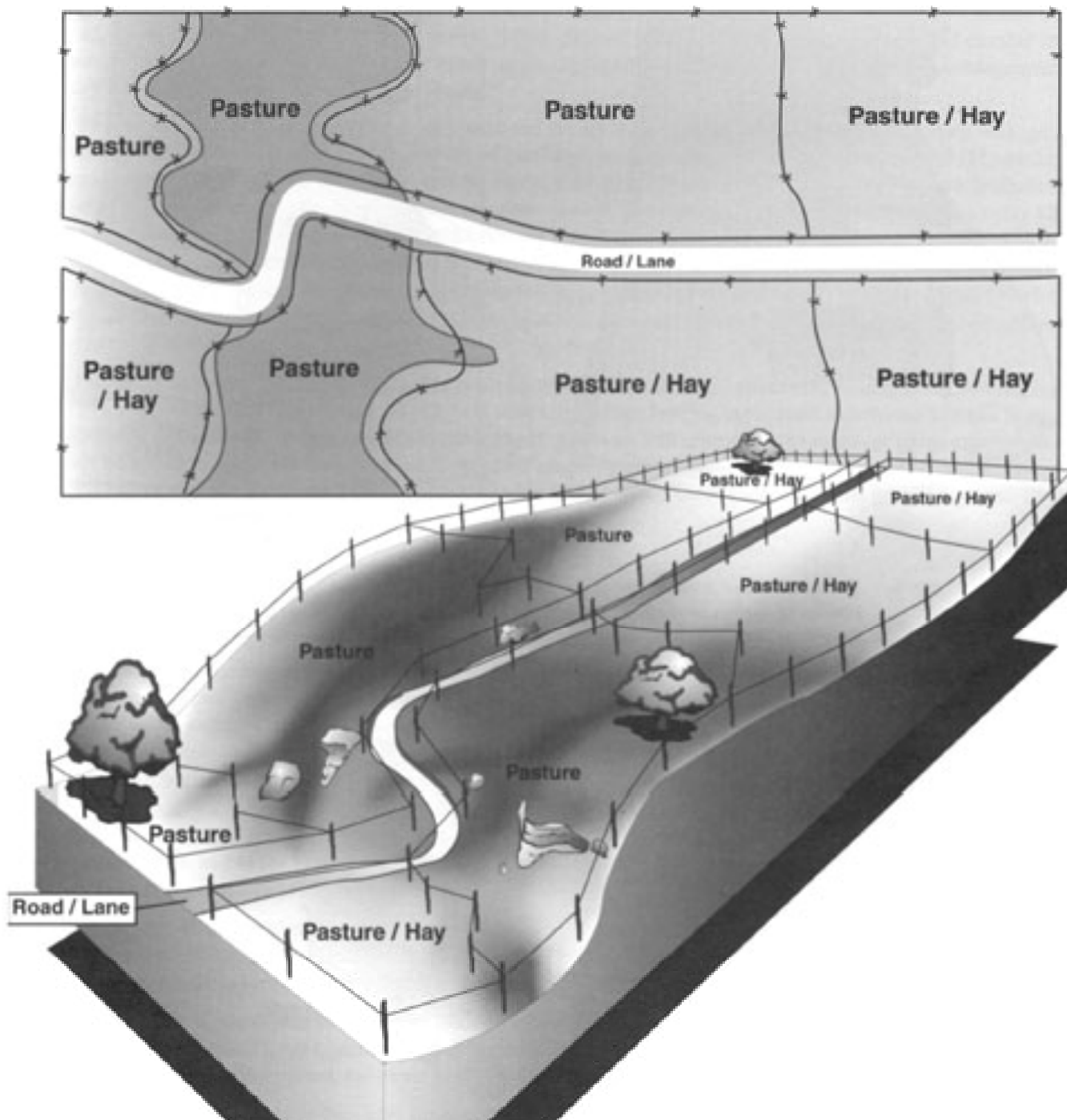
The effect of date of harvest on the quality of orchardgrass forage (Reid et al., 1966).

Date	Maturity	DMI	DDM	CP	ADF	NDF	Lig.
		% Body wt.	% Dry matter				
May 5-9	veg.	2.7	77	17	29	51	2.4
May 20-24	boot-e.h.	2.0	71	13	34	60	3.9
June 6-10	l.h.-e.b.	1.9	65	9	38	65	4.9
Jul 15-19	veg	2.6	67	14	31	57	4.1
Jul 27-31	veg	2.7	66	12	35	59	4.3
Aug 9-13	veg	2.9	61	10	38	65	4.3



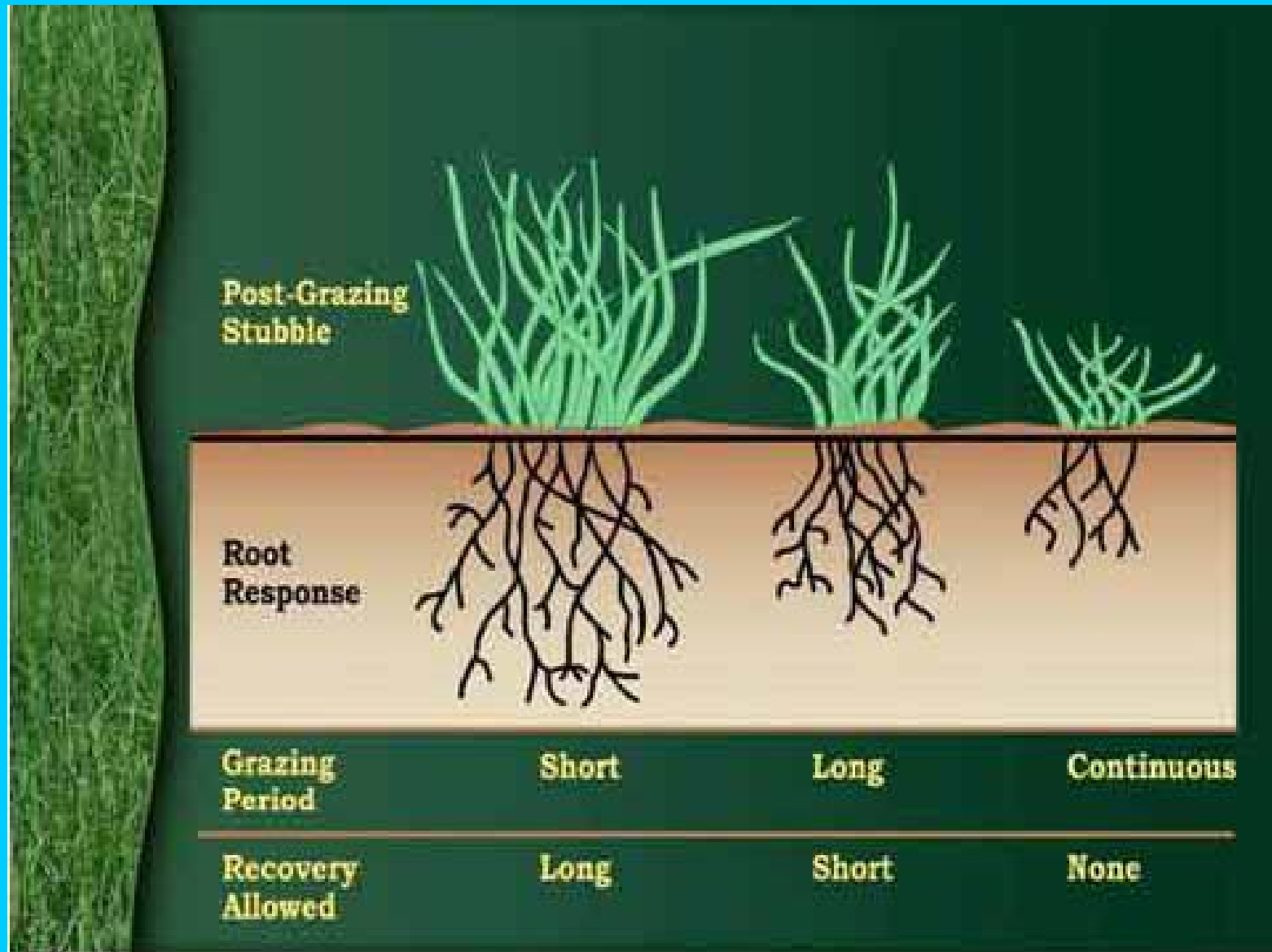
# Grazing Tools

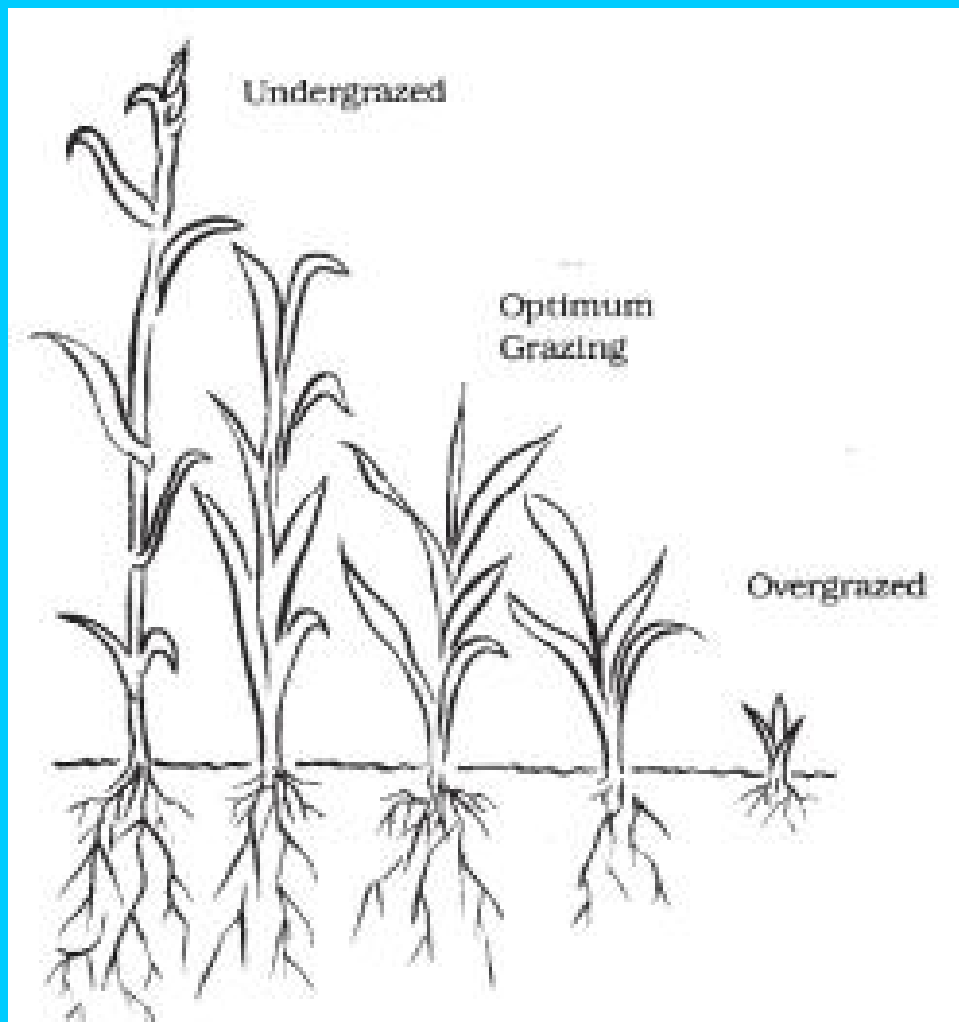




# Rotational Grazing

# Impact of Rest Period on Forage Vigor





*Figure 1. Grazing stages of the plant.*

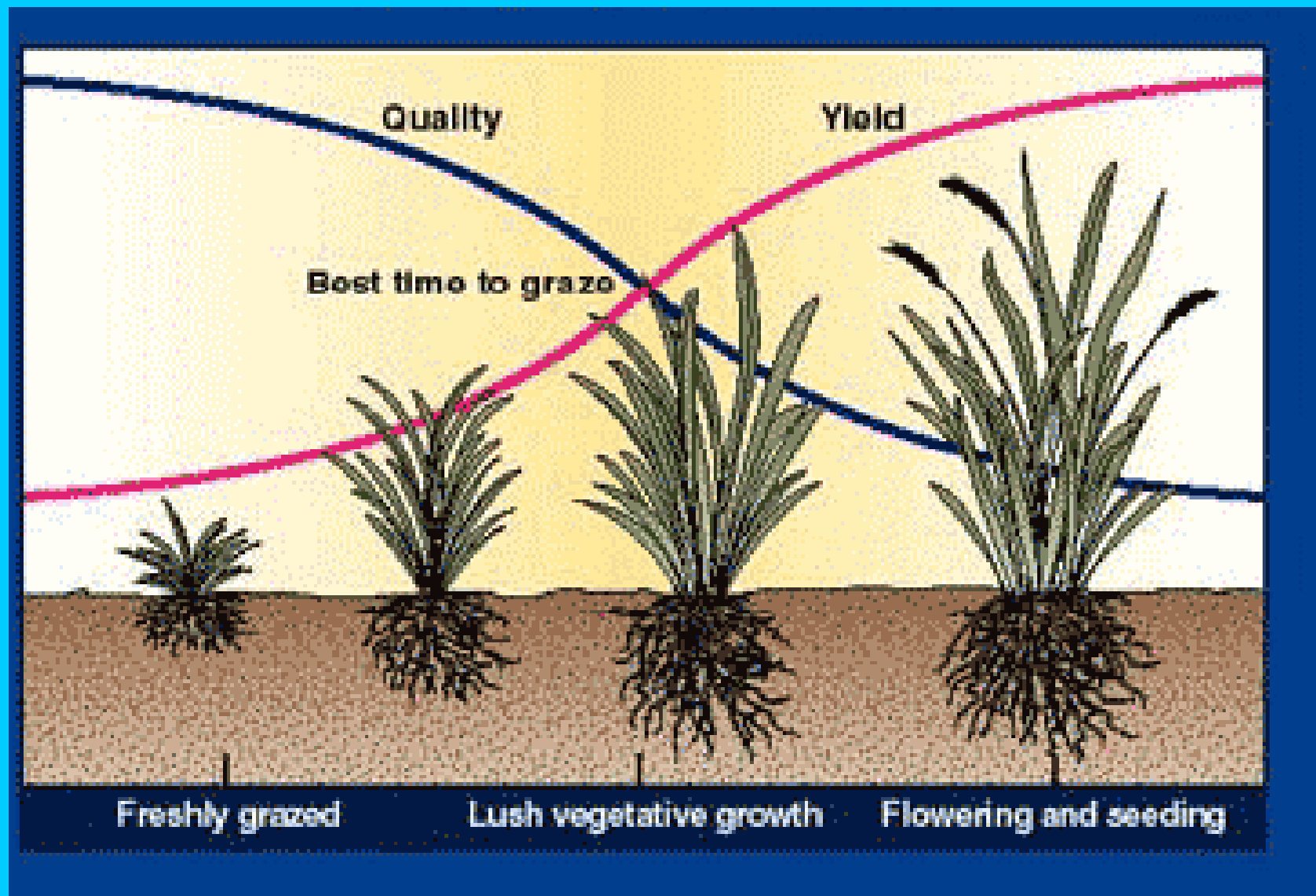




## Grazing Nutrition

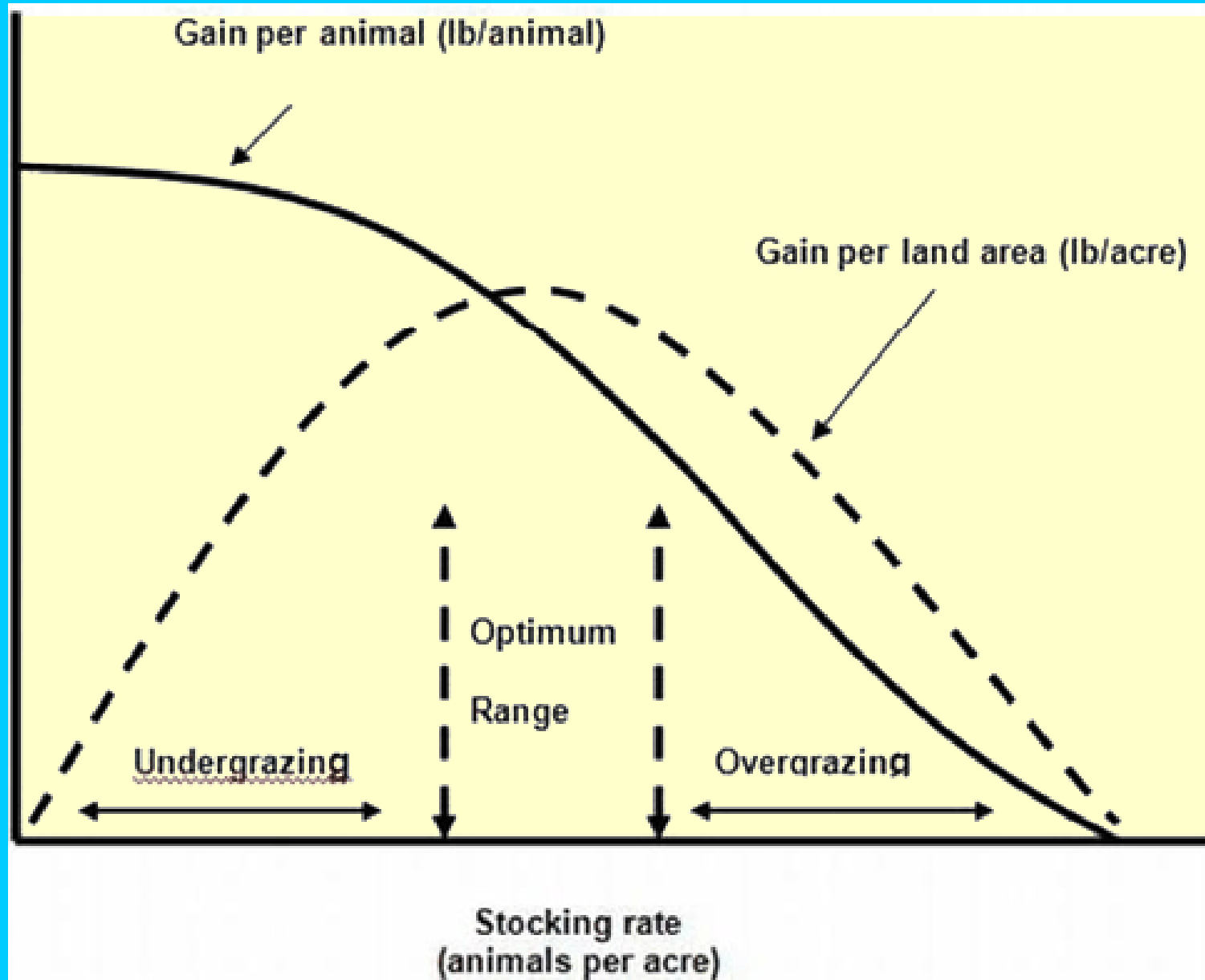
Bite size, # bites, nutrients

# Forage Growth Curve





# Mott's Curve

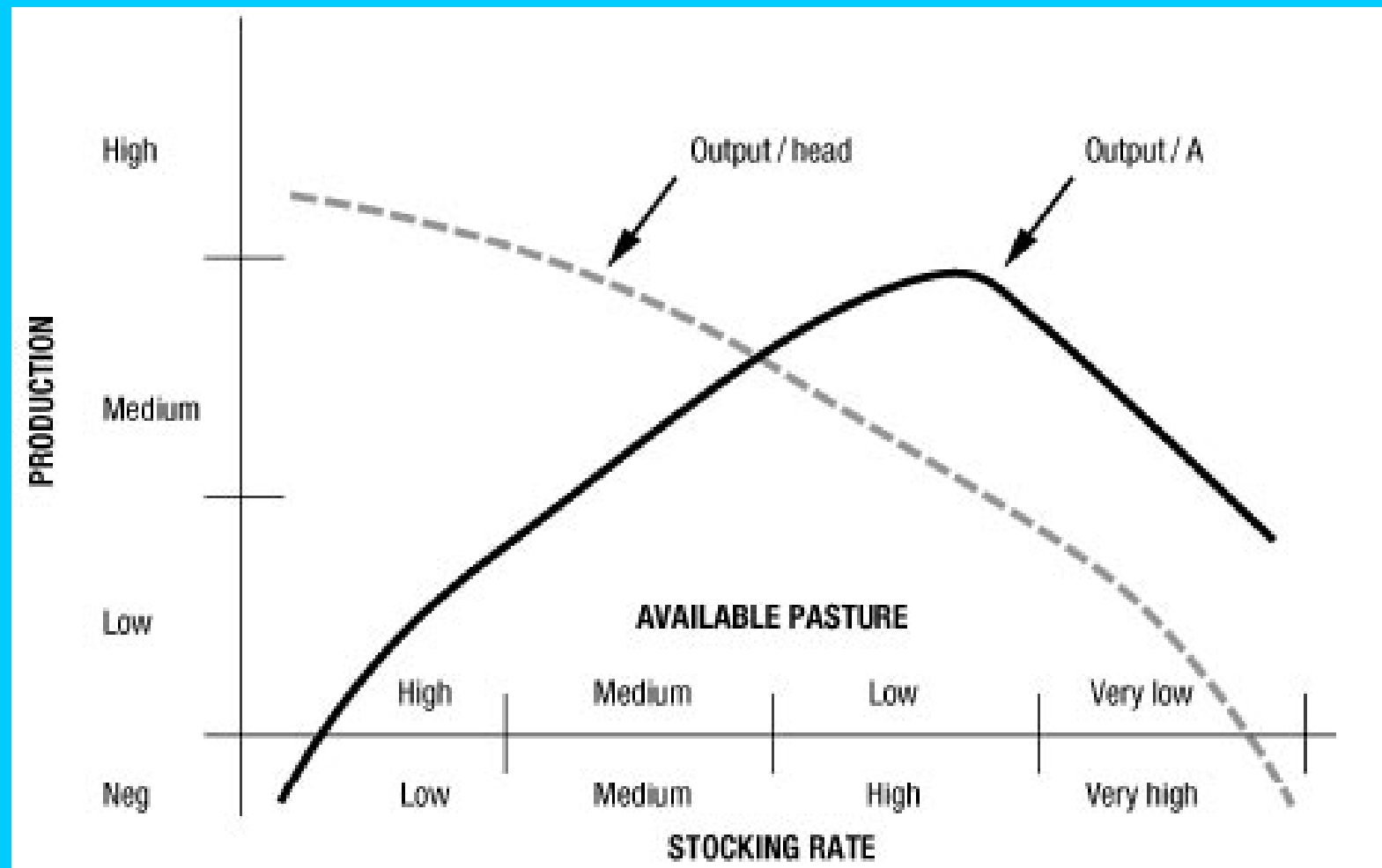


# **Animal selectivity**

**Ability to out perform expectations  
based on forage quality**



# Effect of Grazing Pressure on Production per Animal & per Acre





**Stocker tips**

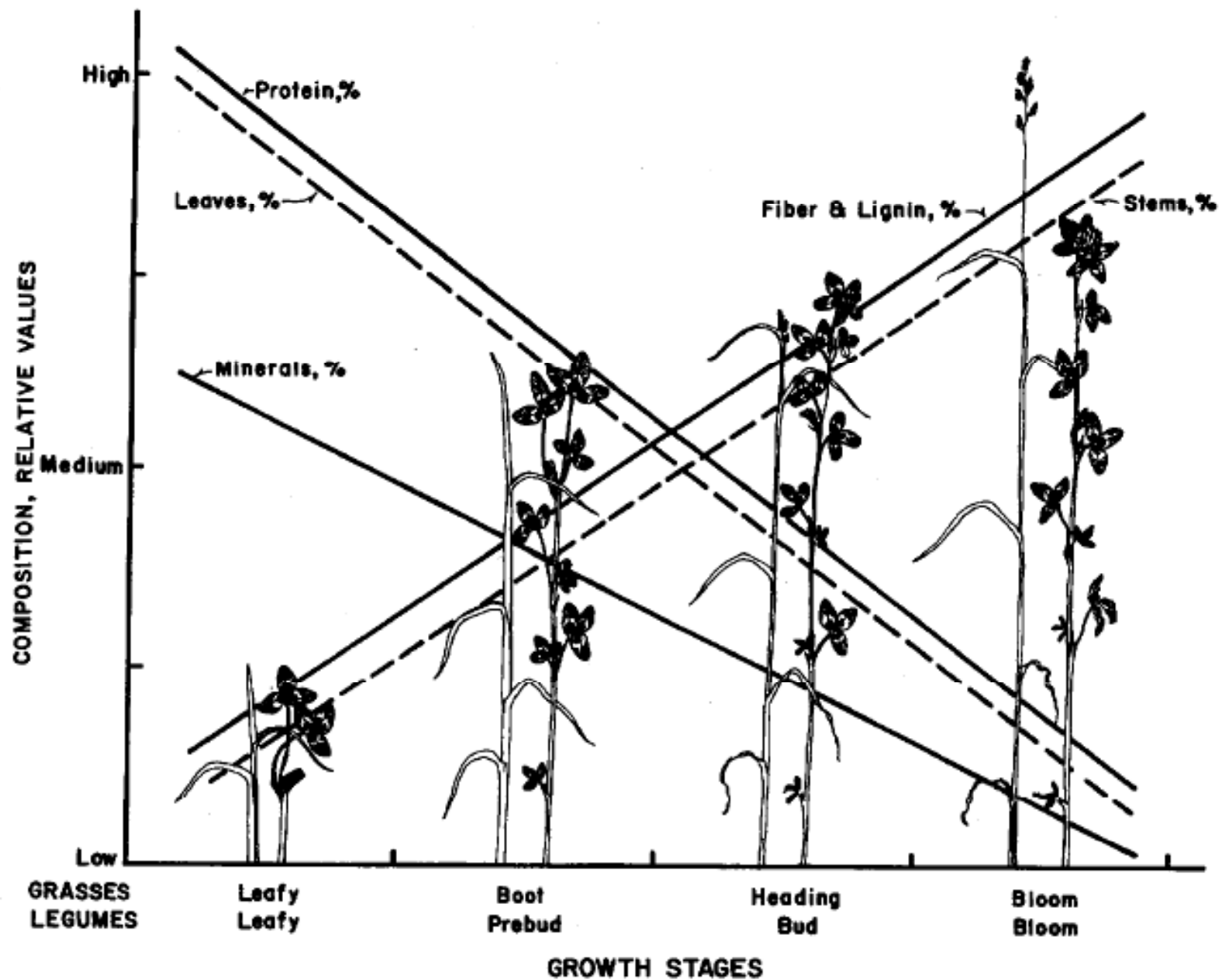


## Tip # 1 Manage spring growth yearlings vs calves



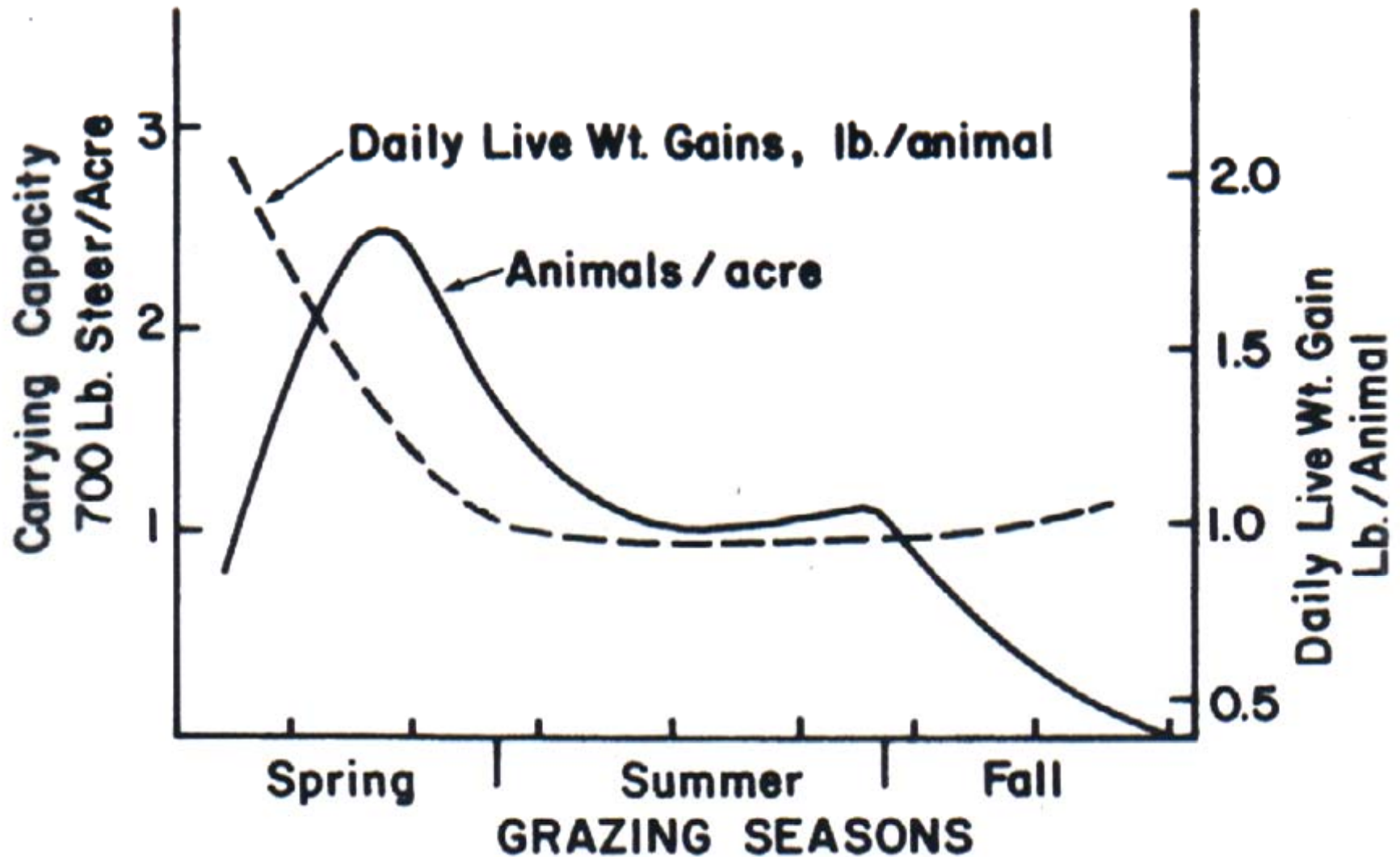


# Forage Composition and Growth Stages





# Expectations of Cattle & Forage



# Tip #2 Maintain Legumes in Pastures



- Nitrogen
- Forage quality & digestibility
- Red clover>  
Ladino>  
Intermediate>  
Dutch

# **Approximate pounds of nitrogen annually fixed per acre by various legumes.**

**(Source: Don Ball, Auburn University)**

<b>Legume Species</b>	<b>Annual lbs N/Acre</b>	<b>N value at \$.40 per lb.</b>
Alfalfa	200-300	\$80-120
Red clover	100-200	\$40-80
White clover	100-150	\$40-60

# **Stocker gains of cattle grazing fescue interseeded with two white clover varieties**

**2-acre paddocks grazed at Eatonton, GA from 3/28- 6/14, 2002**

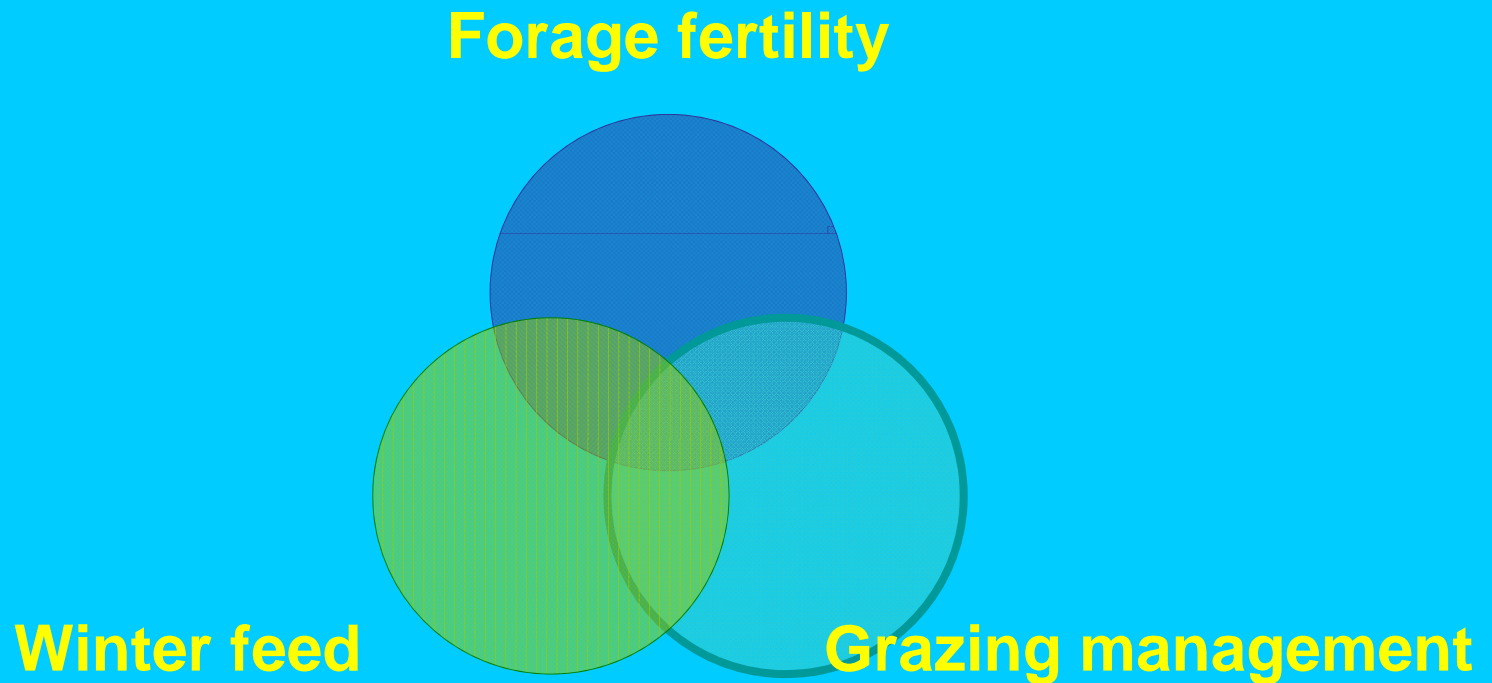
<b>Pasture species</b>	<b>Average daily gain , lbs</b>	<b>Gain/acre, lbs</b>
<b>Toxic tall fescue</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>187</b>
<b>Fescue + Durana white clover</b>	<b>1.79</b>	<b>296</b>
<b>Fescue + Regal white clover</b>	<b>0.89</b>	<b>136</b>

**Clover seeded fall 1998.**

# Impact of grazing height on legume growth



# Stocking Rate





# Overstocking pastures



# Impact of Grazing Pressure and Management on Steers Grazing Orchardgrass Pastures

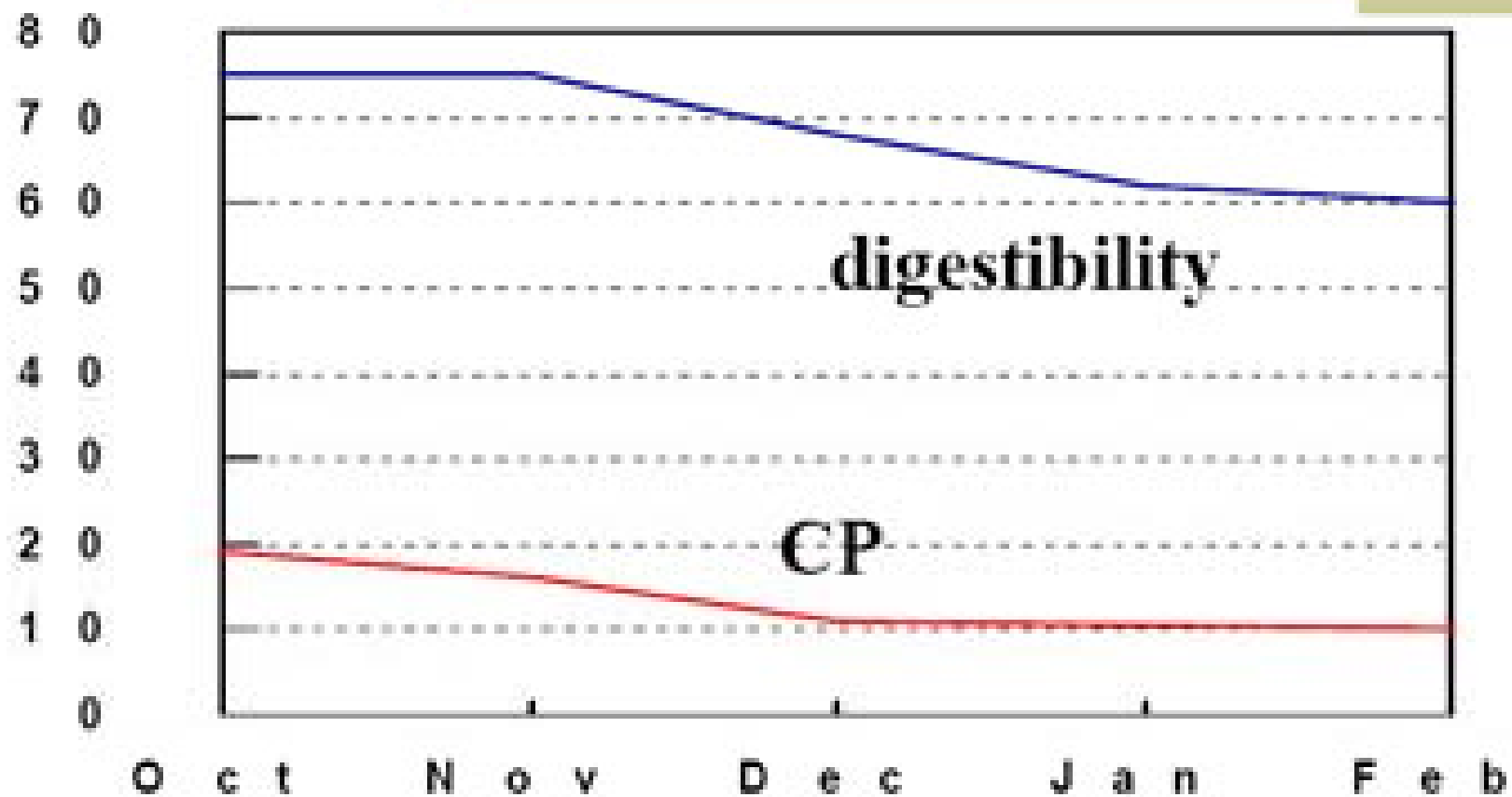
	Light	Medium	Heavy
<b>Continuous</b>			
Available forage, lbs DM/ac	1200-1600	600-1200	200-500
Grass height, in	4 - 6	3 - 5	2 - 3
ADG, lb/d	1.5	1.2	.73
<b>Rotational</b>			
Available forage, lbs DM/ac	1200-1800	600-1200	200-600
Grass height, in	4 - 6	3 - 5	2 - 3
ADG, lb/d	1.5	1.1	.81

Hammond,1970

# Tip -Stockpile Fescue



# Quality of Stockpiled Tall Fescue



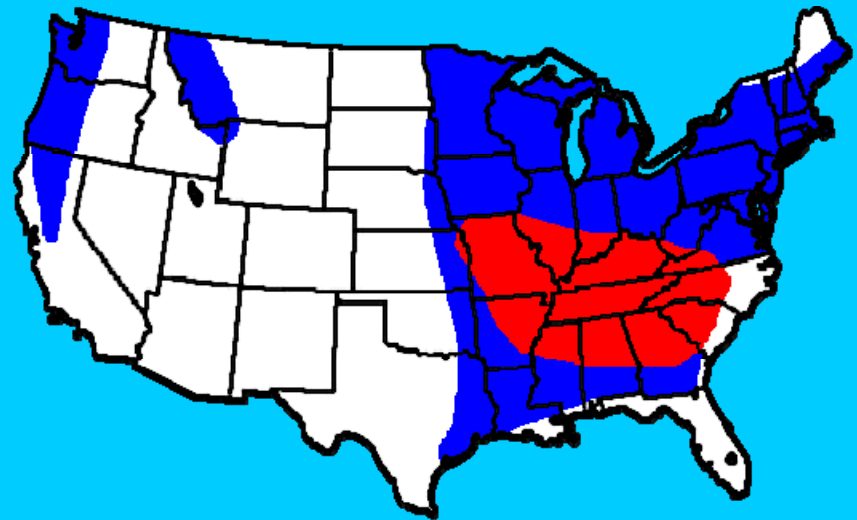
Ross and Reynolds, 1979

# Strip Grazing



# Tall Fescue

- ✓ pasture and hay
- ✗ 90% of tall fescue fields in southeastern U.S. infected by wild-type “toxic” fungus
- ✗ Consumed by cattle, horses, sheep

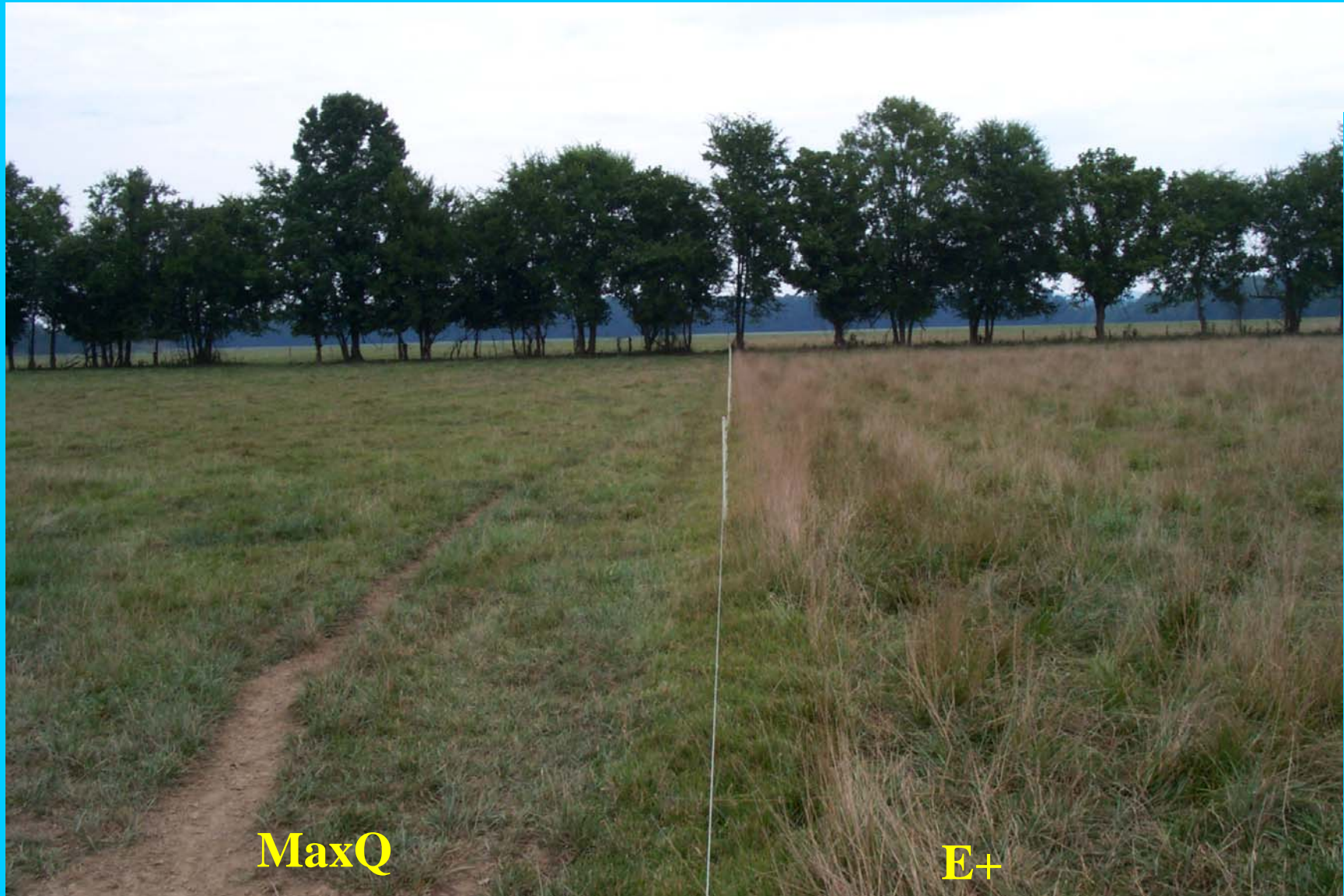






# Tall Fescue Solutions

- Dilution
- Conversion



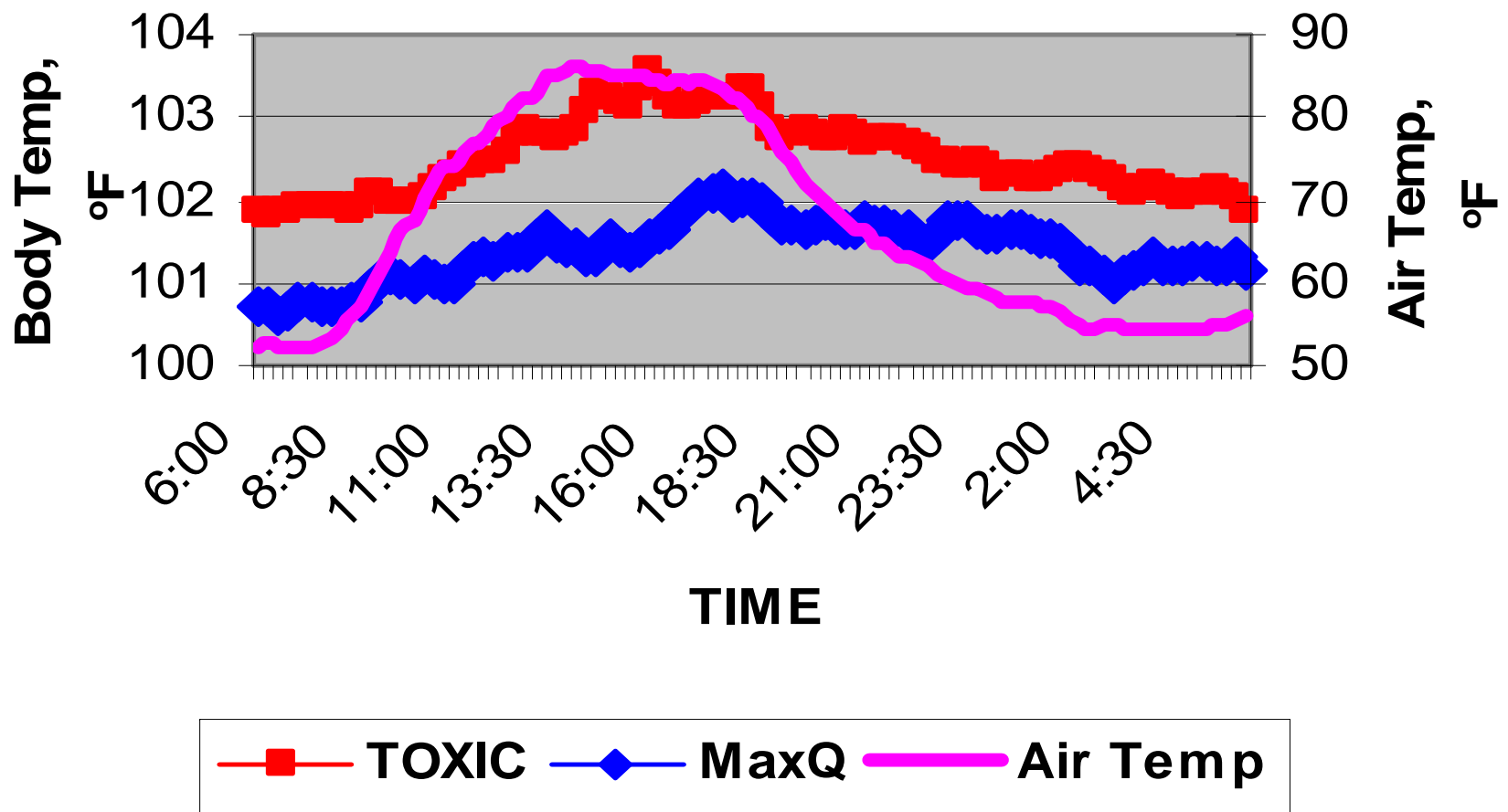
**Cattle Paddocks**  
**Calhoun GA, Spring 2001**

# Temperature Data Loggers



## IN SUMMER HEAT:

### Body Temperatures of Cattle Grazing MaxQ or Toxic Tall Fescue during Summer



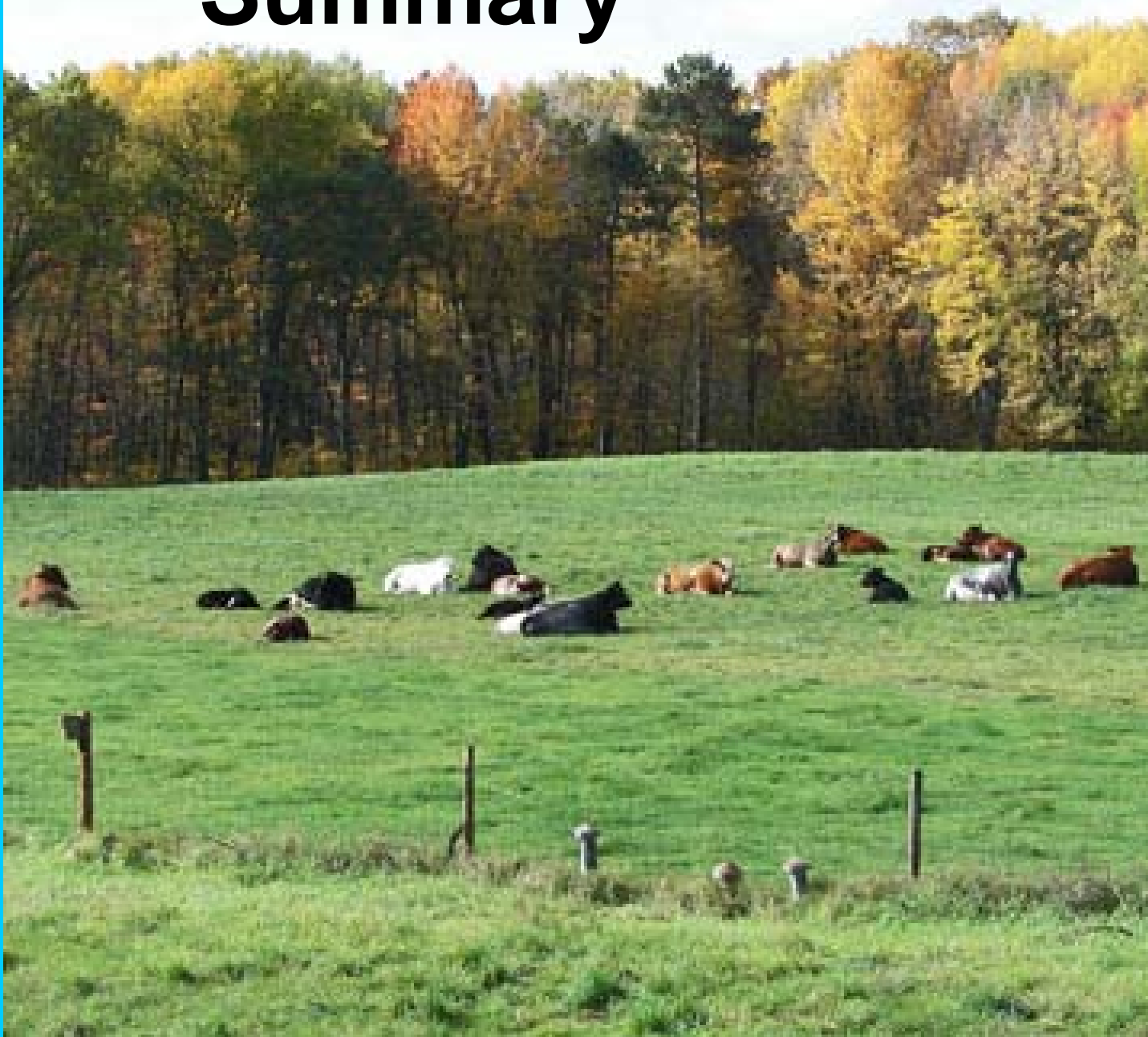
R. Watson, J. Parish, M. McCann, C. Hoveland, and J. Bouton, The University of Georgia



# Tip - lonophores



# Summary







**Excuses- who is responsible**





**Questions?**

