

CONTROLLED GRAZING SYSTEMS

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WHAT IS CONTROLLED GRAZING ?

Controlled grazing systems (C.G.S.) are rotational grazing systems employing high stocking rates of animals (sheep or cattle) to quickly and evenly graze restricted areas of pasture.

C.G.S. allows for optimum management of stock and pastures to maximise production of both. Surplus pasture can be converted into hay or silage to be fed out in times of feed shortage.

Other terms applied to C.G.S. have been Cell Grazing, Rotational Mob Stocking etc.

AUSTRALIAN EXPERIENCE

Tasmanian farmers are by far the most experienced in Australia with C.G.S. Graziers have quickly adopted and modified the technique for beef cattle, wool and lamb production.

Sheepmen in Victoria's Gippsland and Western District areas are now into their third and fourth years of C.G.S., all with excellent results.

C.G.S. has not been adopted as widely in other states. However, several farmers in the Walcha district on the Northern Tablelands of NSW have had good results with sheep (ewes and wethers) on improved pasture.

Strong interest has been shown by irrigation farmers. (flood, centre pivot, lateral and spray) for controlled grazing systems to maximise animal production on irrigated permanent pastures.

OVERSEAS EXPERIENCE

New Zealand through the efforts of Ministry for Agriculture and Fisheries research and advisory officers in collaboration with farmers has a very high level of acceptance for C.G.S. They are "grass farming" and some stocking rates observed have been up to 2000 sheep per acre, with daily shifts.

UK, USA, France, South Africa, Argentina etc. have developed systems to suit a wide range of climatic, soil type, pasture, livestock and management regimes.

ROLE OF ELECTRIC FENCING IN C.G.S.

To effectively manage large numbers of animals in small areas, subdivision, temporary and even portable electric fencing is required.

The role of electric fencing has been proven in C.G.S. systems around the world for sheep and cattle utilising mains power, battery or solar and battery energisers.

A full range of electric fencing material and accessories are available to the grazier to enable setting up for this system of intensive livestock and pasture management.