

# Keeping animals on an acreage

One reason many people choose to live on an acreage is so they can raise or keep animals. If you are one of those people, there are several things that you need to consider before you begin that will make your experience more enjoyable and worthwhile. The two most important considerations are, (1) do you have the time and resources to properly care for them? and (2) why do you want to raise them?

Whether you are raising animals for enjoyment and companionship or for profit, keeping animals, especially large animals, requires a major commitment of time and resources and it is best to know before you start how much of an investment of time and money it would take. It is also important to determine whether or not your acreage is well suited for the type of animal you intend to keep. To be well suited, the acreage needs to be able to supply the animals' basic needs of food, water and shelter. It is also important to consider

whether or not there is adequate space for the type of animals you intend to raise.

In deciding whether or not your acreage is well suited for the type of animals you intend to raise you need to determine how



many animals your acreage will support. Will your acreage provide all of the feed you need for your animals or will you need to buy feed? If you will be grazing animals, do you have an adequate fence to keep them from getting out? And is there a

place where the animals can stay when it's too wet to graze? You also need to be certain that there is fresh water and shelter for the animals. Finally, if you plan on raising exotic animals, be sure they are adapted to our climate.

While knowing why you want to raise animals, what it will cost and whether your acreage will provide their basic needs are probably the most important considerations, there are several other things you should consider before you invest in animals for your acreage. For example, does the county have zoning regulations that limit the number and type of animals you can keep? Do you have a way to dispose of the manure? What impact will your operation have on your neighbor? And, if you plan to sell the animals or a product they produce, is there a market for your product?

Raising animals on an acreage can be an enjoyable and rewarding experience if you take the time to do a little homework prior to making the investment. (SCB)

## “Part-time Farming” video still available

Whether you have just purchased an acreage or are just looking for ways to make some additional income from your acreage, the “Part-time Farming” video may be just what you’re looking for. The “Part-time Farming” video was developed by the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension to help acreage owners and small-scale farmers make better use of their resources. The hour-long video consists of five parts that focus on: (1) field crops; (2) farm management; (3) specialty enterprises; (4) haylands and pastures; and (5) livestock, poultry and horses. The topics are presented in a down-to-earth

fashion that everyone can relate to and provide numerous tips that will save you costly mistakes and precious time. To obtain your copy of the video,

contact the Lancaster County Extension Office at 441-7180. Cost of the video is \$15.95 plus tax. (SCB)



## HELP! Your input is needed.

In order to make the Acreage Section of the NEBLINE more responsive to your needs, we would like to know what articles or topics you would like to see in this section. We are also considering including a question and answer feature where we will try to find answers to your questions and print them in a future issue of the NEBLINE. Please send your comments, suggestions or questions to the NEBLINE Acreage Editor, Lancaster County Extension Office, 444 Cherrycreek Rd., Lincoln, NE 68528-1507, or call 441-7180. Thanks for your help. (SCB)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Comments, suggestions, or questions \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## Acreage Insights



## Fertilizing grasses

March is here and warmer temperatures signal the approach of spring. Pastures will soon green-up and we should begin thinking about fertilizing.

Grass growth is stimulated by fertilizer just like other crops. But recent studies on the economics of pasture fertilizer suggests that extra production does not always lead to more profits, especially when nitrogen is expensive like this spring.

The key to profitable fertilizing of pastures is to combine fertilizer with efficient harvest of the extra growth. Would you fertilize your corn fields and then drive your tractor through the field just before combining? Of course not—you’d knock down and lose much of the grain.

But that’s just about what you’re doing when you fertilize pastures in spring, and then let your animals graze continuously on one pasture throughout the growing season. They trample some of the grass, manure and foul some of the grass, bed down on some of the grass, and simply refuse to eat some of the grass. So when all is said and done, less than one-third of the grass your pasture produced will end up in the mouth and stomach of your livestock. It’s pretty hard to make fertilizer pay like that.

But you can make fertilizer pay if you manage grazing so that more of what you grow actually gets eaten. This will happen if you subdivide your pastures with some cross-fences and control when and where your animals graze. Give animals access to no more than one-fourth of your pasture at a time, and then graze off about one-half of the growth before moving to another subdivision. More of your pasture growth will be eaten, and more profits will come from fertilizer and pastures. (WS)

## New Acreage Owner's Guide available

A new guide for acreage owners entitled “A Place in the Country: The Acreage Owner’s Guide” is available. The guide was developed by a team of Extension educators to answer many of the commonly asked questions regarding buying and living on an acreage. The booklet is divided into 12 color coded sections covering a variety of topics ranging from “Assessing the Rural Life” and “Knowing Your Responsibilities” to “Handling Waste Water,” “Controlling Pests” and “Living with Wildlife”. It also includes a section on things you should know as a Nebraska landowner and who you should contact for more information. If you would like a copy of the guide, contact the Lancaster County Extension Office. Cost of the publication is \$1.00 plus postage. (SCB)

## Learn at your convenience

—24 hours a day, 7 days a week—



### NUFACTS (audio) Information Center

NUFACTS audio message center offers fast, convenient information. In the Lincoln area call 441-7188; for the rest of Nebraska call 1-800-832-5441. When directed, enter the 3-digit number of the message you wish to hear.



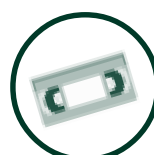
### Acreage & Small Farm Insights Web Site

Visit our Internet web site at: <http://ianrwww.unl.edu/ianr/lanco/ag/acreage> to learn about Extension programs, publications and links to other acreage and small farm information.



### NUFACTS (faxback) Information Center

NUFACTS faxback document center offers fast, convenient information. In the Lincoln area call 441-7188; for the rest of Nebraska call 1-800-832-5441. When directed, enter the 4-digit number of the document you wish to receive.



### “Part-time Farming” video

“Part-time Farming” will help effectively develop your country environment and improve your quality of life. Just one hour of “Part-time Farming” provides numerous tips that will save you costly mistakes and precious time. Call 402-441-7180 to order your copy.