

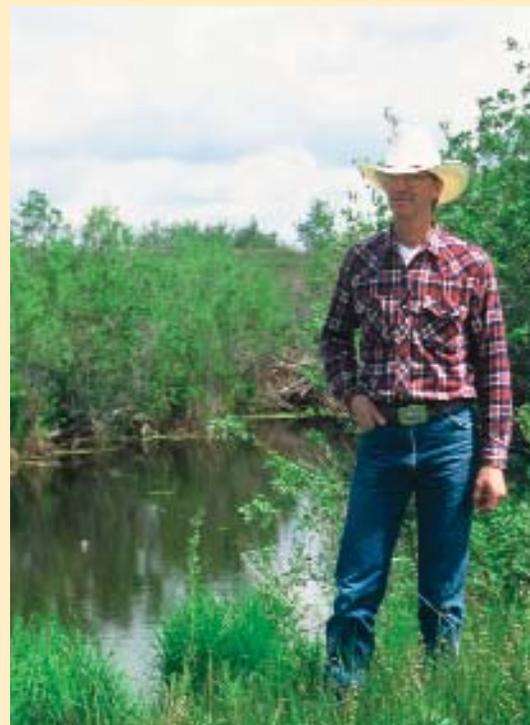


## Riparian Pasture - Graminae Red Angus Ranch

Lyle Voegtlin has applied a riparian pasture strategy on a portion of Amisk Creek, near Tofield, since 1985. About 120 acres are fenced on topographic boundaries forming a pasture composed of some upland, but mostly riparian bottomland. Animals are held on hayland early in the year, deferring use of the riparian pasture and providing growing season rest in May. The earliest cattle are put in the pasture is June 1 and the latest they are held is September 30, but the entry and exit dates are variable based on observations of pasture condition. If the spring is dry, livestock are held later on hayland. Pasture readiness is assessed based on moisture and growth. Multiple entry points are used to aid distribution and to ensure the sequence of pasture use changes from year to year. Utilization levels are monitored to ensure there will be litter reserves to conserve moisture and recycle nutrients. Animals are removed early enough to allow late season regrowth and to minimize browse use of woody plants.

There are several instructive things about management on this ranch:

- ◆ year to year variation in moisture and growing conditions is recognized;
- ◆ annual management is based on grass available rather than on average stocking rates;
- ◆ growing season rest is provided both early and late;
- ◆ the sequence of grazing use is based on moisture availability and pasture readiness;
- ◆ the riparian area is drier when grazing begins and there is less hoof damage and compaction; and
- ◆ there is a high degree of involvement in observing and assessing the pasture before, during and after grazing.



Riparian pasture management has produced a very healthy pasture and riparian area capable of sustaining livestock use. Cattle water from three preferred sites that have solid footing. Additional off-stream water development is planned to enhance livestock gain, improve better distribution and conserve water.

*Riparian pastures provide effective control of grazing and allow riparian areas to maintain health and productivity*