

PASTURE MANAGEMENT

IRRIGATION

Either sprinklers or the border check method may be used. The important point to remember is that irrigated pasture does not root deeper than three to four feet and consequently this area must be kept well supplied with water. This may mean applying water every five to seven days during hot weather. Of course, less frequent irrigation is required during cool weather or during the winter months. Generally speaking, irrigated pasture requires about six to seven acre feet of water per acre per year.

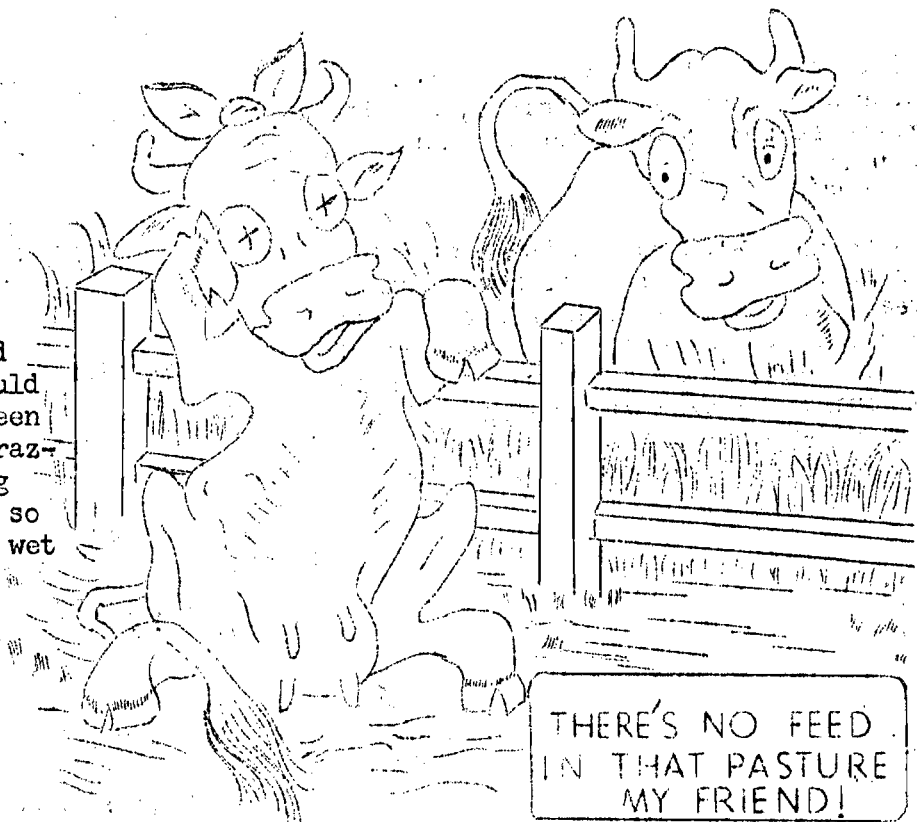
For border check irrigation, use 300 to 600 foot runs with 15 to 30 feet between the borders. Heavy soils can use longer runs and wider checks than sandy soils. The amount of water that can be turned on at one time also determines size of the check. Slope of the runs should be from four to six inches per hundred feet.

Sprinklers have the advantages of more uniform distribution of the water and consequent savings in amount of water, and also require less land leveling. Generally sprinklers require more labor and higher investment per acre.

ROTATION GRAZING

Yield measurements have shown 86% more pasture obtained where 5 weeks are allowed between grazing as compared to 2 weeks between grazing. Close grazing also results in more difficulty with animal parasites. If five lots are provided each would be grazed seven days and would have 28 days of growth between grazings. This system of grazing needs to be worked along with a system of irrigation so that livestock are not on a wet pasture.

"DON'T MAKE YOUR
PASTURE A CORRAL"



FERTILIZER

The application of barnyard manure at the rate of six to eight tons per acre during the fall and winter months is a recommended practice. Frequently the use of additional nitrogen or phosphate fertilizers during the growing season may be advisable. Two hundred pounds of ammonium sulphate per acre applied in the spring just ahead of an irrigation generally is an excellent stimulant to grasses. In some cases legumes will respond to the application of 200 pounds of treble superphosphate per acre. Both of these fertilizers should be tried on small test plots before applying to the entire field. Cattle droppings should frequently be scattered with a harrow to fully utilize their fertilizer value and prevent coarse unpalatable clumps of grass.

MOWING

Mowing to control weeds and eliminate tall clumps of mature grass should be done whenever it is necessary. If the pasture is ahead of the livestock during the flush growing season it can be mowed for hay.