



PASTURE PRACTICE STANDARD

USDA NATIONAL ORGANIC PROGRAM

7 CFR §205.240 PASTURE PRACTICE STANDARD

BILL STONEMAN, INDEPENDENT ORGANIC INSPECTOR

608-712-4916 email: bill.stoneman@gmail.com



PASTURE PRACTICE STANDARD

- 7 CFR § 205.240

...to annually provide a minimum of 30 percent of a ruminant's dry matter intake (DMI), on average, over the course of the grazing season(s); ...to minimize the occurrence and spread of diseases and parasites; and ...to refrain from putting soil or water quality at risk.

PASTURE PRACTICE STANDARD



- To be considered organic under the standards ruminants must receive at least 30% of dry matter intake from pasture during the grazing season(s) (minimum of 120 days).

This includes all dairy calves over 6 months of age.

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- Grain finished ruminant slaughter stock must still have access to pasture during the growing season, but may receive less than 30% of their dry matter requirements from pasture during a defined finishing period.
- Producers of organic ruminant livestock must provide sufficient information about pasture and pasture management in their Organic Systems Plans (OSPs) and keep records sufficient to prove compliance with the standard.

PASTURE PRACTICE STANDARD



The pasture plan for an operation must include a description of the:

- (1) Types of pasture provided to ensure that the feed requirements of the Livestock Feed Standard are being met.
- (2) Cultural and management practices to be used to ensure pasture of a sufficient quality and quantity is available to graze throughout the grazing season and to provide all ruminants under the organic systems plan, except exempted classes identified in the Livestock Living Conditions Standard with an average of not less than 30 percent of their dry matter intake from grazing throughout the grazing season.
- (3) Grazing season for the livestock operation's regional location.

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The pasture plan for an operation must include a description of the:

- (4) Location and size of pastures, including maps giving each pasture its own identification.
- (5) The types of grazing methods to be used in the pasture system.
- (6) Location and types of fences, except for temporary fences, and the location and source of shade and the location and source of water.
- (7) Soil fertility and seeding systems.
- (8) Erosion control and protection of natural wetlands and riparian areas practices.

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- The Pasture Practice Standard went into effect as of June 17th, 2010.

All ruminant livestock operations must comply with the rule in order to seek or maintain their organic status.

SO, WHY THE PASTURE PRACTICE STANDARD



- Access to the outdoors was the previous rule. Often this was limited to small pastures and paddocks and woodlot or ravine pastures.



SO, WHY THE PASTURE PRACTICE STANDARD



- Significant environmental damage can occur with over grazing small woodlots and ravines. Stream damage is also common.
- Now, with the Pasture Practice Standard, producers must manage pasture in order to maximize production and to protect the environment.

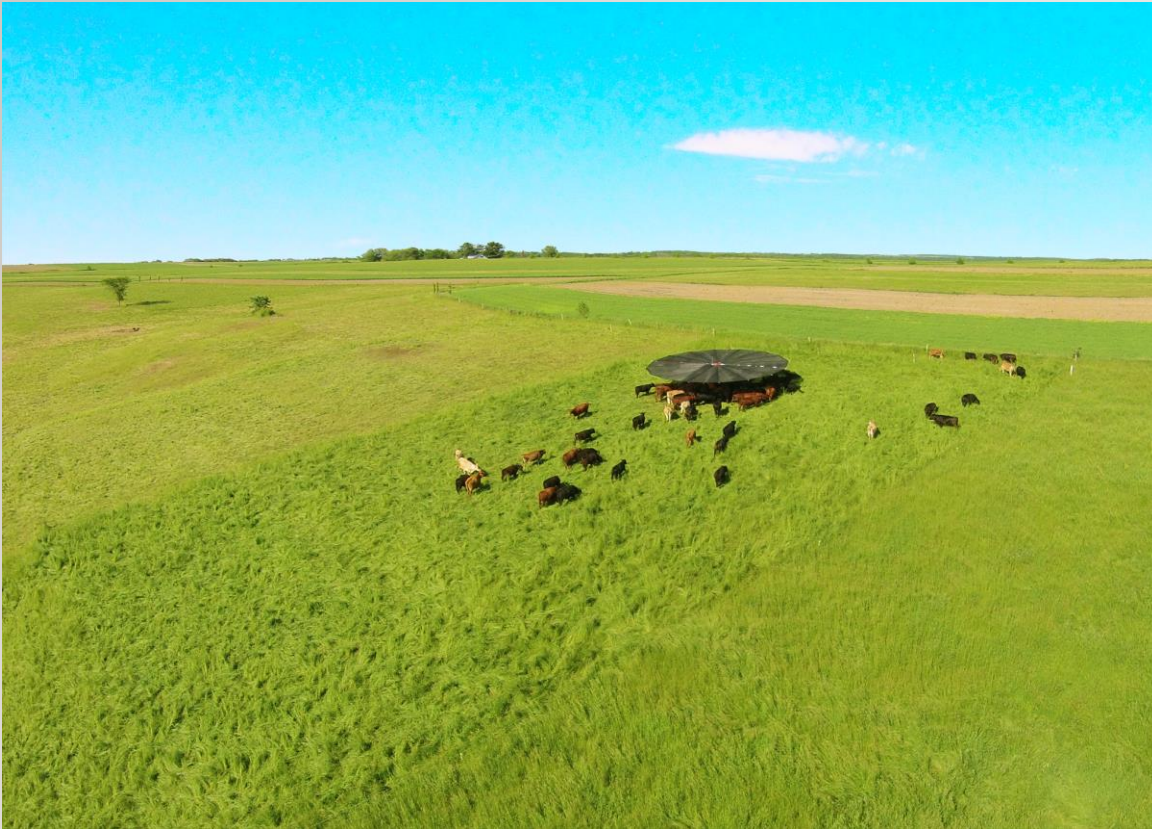
SO, WHY THE PASTURE PRACTICE STANDARD



- There was considerable concern over what was considered “pasturing”, particularly on large western dairy farms.

The pasture rule and the required 30% DMI requirement should level the “playing field” for Midwestern organic farms.

SO, WHY THE PASTURE PRACTICE STANDARD



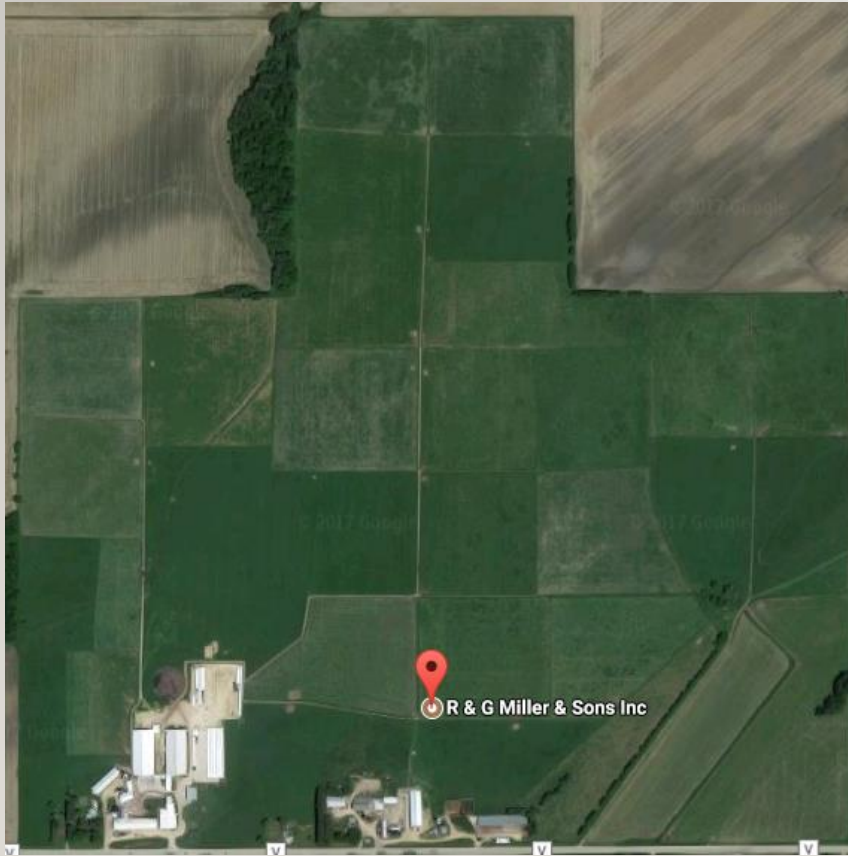
- The Pasture Practice Standard and rotational grazing has improved organic ruminant production dramatically and makes better use of cropland on organic livestock farms. It is environmentally sound and regenerative.

WITHOUT THE PASTURE PRACTICE STANDARD



- Without a pasture rule on non-organic farms livestock are not living as nature and human intervention in ruminant development intended.
 - Limited access to the outdoors
 - Feed must be harvested and hauled to the livestock location
 - Often cattle may produce more volume of milk, but are not more productive or efficient.
 - Waste management becomes a real issue and may be more environmentally damaging.

SO, WHY THE PASTURE PRACTICE STANDARD



- The Pasture Rule has made major improvement in farm management and pasturing on organic farms.
 - Improved animal health & productivity
 - Soil and water benefits
 - Reduced environmental impacts of farming operations.



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