Pasture, Rangeland, Forage Stocking Rate

When are the stocking rate and livestock records required to be provided?

The stocking rate and livestock records are required only upon request, in accordance with Section 8 of the PRF Crop Provisions and Exhibit 6 of the RI Handbook.

What type of livestock records can be provided to meet the stocking rate requirements?

The producer must provide verifiable records supporting the livestock numbers and stocking rate upon request. Examples of livestock records are, but not limited to, purchase receipts, veterinarian records, pregnancy check records, financial records, or other examples listed in section 8 of the PRF CP. Records should include a descriptive service/record for the type of livestock.

Who is responsible for identifying the forage type for the insured acreage?

The producer is responsible for identifying and selecting the forage type that is most representative of the insured acreage.

If there are multiple planting periods with different stocking rates for the same forage type, how should a producer choose the stocking rate?

The producer may use the information on the FSA-578 or select the stocking rate that is most representative of the insured acreage.

Can the FSA-578 be used as documentation to support the forage type selected by the producer?

Yes. The FSA-578 can be used to support the forage type selected by the producer.

What happens if the FSA-578 differs from the forage type selected by the producer?

If the FSA-578 and the actual forage type differ, the producer must determine the correct forage type for the insured acreage. The FSA-578 may be used as supporting documentation, but it does not replace the producer’s responsibility to identify the correct forage type.

Who is responsible for identifying and verifying forage type for insured pasture?

The producer is responsible. FSA county offices may provide helpful acreage data. Agents and AIPs can rely on producer self-certification but may conduct additional verification if desired. The FSA-578 can be used to support the forage type; if the 578 and actual forage differ, the producer must determine the correct type. If acres aren’t certified with FSA, other records (state/federal leases, NRCS) may be used.

How should multiple forage types or split acreage be reported?

RMA does not require forage types to be reported; livestock and stocking rates are reviewed only upon request. Acreage need not be split unless the producer identifies different forage types, in which case stocking rates should be calculated for each.

What happens if there is a dispute about forage type?

Disputes are handled according to policy guidelines.

Who calculates and verifies the 25% stocking rate?

The producer works with their agent to determine the stocking rate and livestock required; AIPs may verify when those records are requested. Stocking rates are not reported to RMA but must be available for review.

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Producers must be aware of the 25% stocking rate when signing up and must be able to provide records of the required number of livestock that were on the insured acres during the crop year.

Are stocking rates calculated separately for different states, counties, grids, forage types, shares, or leases?

Yes, stocking rates are calculated separately for each.

When are livestock records required?

Records are provided only upon request as stated in Section 8 of the PRF Crop Provisions.

What happens if errors or shortfalls are discovered after the acreage reporting date?

The producer must still meet the 25% rate. Failure means no indemnity is due and full premium is owed.

Can the same livestock documents be used for multiple policies if there is a sufficient number of livestock?

Yes, but livestock cannot be counted twice. Records must show enough livestock to cover all insured acres.

Who conducts reviews and inventory inspections?

Reviews may be completed by the AIP or RMA. Inventory records from the current or previous crop year are acceptable.

What records prove livestock actually grazed insured acres?

Livestock records must show insurable interest. Field visits may be conducted during reviews.

When must livestock physically graze insured acres?

Livestock must graze insured acres at any time during the crop year.

Is documentation required for rotational grazing or temporary absence?

Producers need only enough livestock records to meet the requirement. Only natural causes are valid for not meeting the requirement; management decisions are not covered.

What qualifies as livestock?

Livestock are domesticated animals used in agricultural operations.

How are cow/calf pairs and AU charts handled?

Cow/calf pairs are considered one AU until the calf is weaned. The handbook’s AU chart is used unless a state/federal lease provides its own.

How are allotments and grazing associations treated?

Each allotee must have 25% of their allotted AUs; eligibility is based on their share.

Who determines livestock weights for AU calculation?

The producer establishes stocking rates and provides records upon request. If weights are unknown, average estimates may be used.

Are there penalties for overgrazing?

No.

Must the FSA NCT rate always be used if the county is listed?

Yes, the FSA NCT must be used unless the producer has a state or federal lease. The producer has the option of using either the state or federal lease or the stocking rate listed on the FSA NCT.

How does destocking relief apply?

Producers can maintain their coverage if natural causes force the producer to destock or lower the number of livestock grazing the insured acreage. Records of

disposition can be used to support their stocking rate livestock requirements.

For contiguous acreage spanning multiple counties with different published stocking rates, which rate should be used for compliance?

The producer must choose the stocking rate based on the county where the acres are located and that is most representative of the insured acres, considering the forage types present.

How should significant disparities between adjacent acreage stocking rates be handled?

The producer selects the most representative stocking rate for insured acres and forage types. The policy does not require using state or federal lease rates; the FSA National Crop Table rate may be used for all acreage.

If livestock are moved between insured locations during the crop year, must the 25% requirement be met at each location?

The stocking rate is determined for each land piece based on forage type and location. Producers only need livestock records showing at least 25% of total Animal Units for all insured acreage.

Should published grazing days be used in stocking rate calculations from the FSA National Crop Table?

The FSA crop table already reflects Animal Units; grazing period info may help choose the best rate, but no conversion is required.

What happens if a crop-year authorization reduces use acres to zero after application?

This would depend on whether the authorization granted use of the acreage for the crop year consistent with 6(d)(3)(ii) of the RI Basics and 4(e)(2) of the PRF Crop Provisions. If those requirements were met, then section 6(h)(2) of the RI Basics would apply.

What if county-specific stocking rates aren’t available from the FSA National Crop Table?

If no county rate is available, the PRF crop provisions allow using stocking rates from another federal agency such as NRCS.

How can a cow-calf producer document their livestock numbers to meet the 25% stocking rate when there isn’t documentation of the cows?

Cow-calf producers can utilize calf records from the current or previous crop year to show livestock records for the number of cows in the herd. In addition, other records such as purchase or sale records of breeding stock and vet records would also be acceptable.

For example, a 100 head cow-calf operation sells 70 calves each year and that is the main source of their livestock records. The marketing record of the 70 calves can be treated as the representative record for the cow/calf pair which is 1 AU.