Patch Burn Grazing: How To Burn While Grazing
How do we graze and burn?

Livestock grazing happens on more acres in US than any other land use.

How do we burn without removing livestock?

Patch Burn Grazing
What is Patch Burn Grazing?

• Burn only a portion of the pasture
• Regrowth after fire is preferred by cattle, they will spend 75% of their time on recently burned area
• Unburned areas are rested from grazing and allowed to accumulate fuel
• Burn next patch to move livestock around pasture
Change Grazing Distribution – Patch burning

- Cattle concentrate use on the burn the year of burn

- Allows rest and greater fuel accumulation in other patches
Why do cows like burned patches?

Crude protein is highest in the first 150 days after fire.

Grazing immediately following fire provides:
• Best forage
• Rest to unburned areas
Patch-burn grazing (PBG) as a livestock management alternative for fire-prone ecosystems of North America

J.D. Scasta\textsuperscript{1}, E.T. Thacker\textsuperscript{2}, T.J. Hovick\textsuperscript{3}, D.M. Engle\textsuperscript{4}, B.W. Allred\textsuperscript{5}, S.D. Fuhlendorf\textsuperscript{6} and J.R. Weir\textsuperscript{4}

2020
• Over 130 studies from 96 sites
• Spanning 50 years
• Effects of patch burn grazing on
  • Livestock
  • Plants
  • Pollinators
  • Water & soil
  • Wildlife
• https://www.theprairieproject.org/project-information/solutions/
Patch burn – Livestock Production

Increased:
• forage productivity
• forage quality
• weight gains

Reduced:
• winter supplementation needs
• effects of drought because of stockpiled forage
• horn flies
• ticks

Other benefits:
• No additional interior fencing needed
• Animals move grazing around pasture with no additional labor other than prescribed fire
Stockers Gained More Weight on Patch Burn Pastures than Unburned Pastures

- **Study Length:** 10 Years
- **Grazing period:** Mar. 15 – Sept. 15
- **Stocking Rate:** 1.5 acres/steer/month or 9 acres/steer/6 months
Patch burn – Ecological benefits

- Increase plant diversity
- Stimulates above/below ground grass biomass
- Increased nutrient cycling
- Reduced livestock use of stream areas
- Reduced wildfire spread and intensity
- Benefit pollinators
- Increased grassland bird habitat

Plant structure and plant species differ in each patch.
How Do I Patch Burn?

1. **Burn part of your pasture**
   a. Number of patches = fire return interval
      (If I want the whole pasture burned after 3 years, pick three patches and burn 1 patch/year.)
   b. Use natural fire breaks like creeks and ranch roads

3. **Allow livestock to graze entire pasture immediately following burn.**

4. **Use stocking rate calculated for whole pasture**

5. **Burn another patch to move livestock to next area**
Socials:
@PrairieRestored : Facebook, Twitter, Instagram

Website:
https://www.theprairieproject.org/project-information/solutions/patch-burn-grazing

Resources:
https://extension.okstate.edu/fact-sheets/patch-burning-integrating-fire-and-grazing-to-promote-heterogeneity.html

Videos:
• https://youtu.be/o4d6-e_Tfnk
• https://youtu.be/jFU1nbSmJzM