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A voluntary  
partnership  
with private  
landowners

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Cover Photo Courtesy of NRCS

# GLCI News



## Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative

Animal scientist Temple Grandin drew standing room only during her low-stress livestock handling workshop at 3NCGL. For more about Grandin's philosophies visit [www.grandin.com](http://www.grandin.com).

## Grazing Ideas Shared In St. Louis

The Third National Conference on Grazing Lands brought landowners and industries together to discuss the importance of America's range and pasture lands.

By Kindra Gordon

Their were dairy, beef and sheep producers, equine enthusiasts and even landowners who raise buffalo, reindeer and goats represented at the Third National Conference on Grazing Lands Dec. 10-13 in St. Louis, MO. Participants and speakers came from across the country, but in spite of the diverse backgrounds, those in attendance had one important thing in common – a desire to enhance and care for America's grazing lands.

And that is exactly the reason GLCI hosts the national conference every three years – as an opportunity for land owners, agency and university personnel, and livestock industries to gather and share ideas and information about grazing management and new technology.

The conference included nearly 250 speakers, a trade-show and research poster presentations.

Time and again, throughout the three-day event, GLCI was complimented for its efforts to bring organizations together to create education and funding opportunities for grazing

practices on private lands. In his keynote address to attendees, NRCS Chief Arlen Lancaster said, "GLCI embodies a sustainable approach to conservation. We need to continue this voluntary approach where technical assistance is first and foremost."

Another common theme emphasized by speakers throughout the conference is the increasing importance of grazing lands and open space in the future because of the benefits of air and water quality, wildlife habitat, and land sustainability that it provides to society. To that end, Lancaster encouraged landowners to "Tell their story about the economic and environmental benefits that properly managed grazing lands provide."



NRCS Chief  
Arlen Lancaster



## Extension Adds Rangelands & Grassland Program

Jim Dobrowolski provided a brief update on the new national Rangelands and Grasslands program within the Cooperative Extension Service during the Third National Conference on Grazing Lands. Dobrowolski, who provides national leadership for the program, anticipates that the new effort will help further educate land managers and the general public about the positive benefits of properly managed grazinglands. As well, the new program will focus on rangeland watershed management and restoration efforts.



Through its youth programs, Dobrowolski is also hopeful the Extension program will have a role in helping recruit students to the field of grazing management as a career choice.

If you'd like to visit with Dobrowolski about the Extension Rangelands and Grasslands program, contact him at [jdobrowolski@csreex.usda.gov](mailto:jdobrowolski@csreex.usda.gov) or phone 202-401-5016.

## Teach young heifers to graze



If you want cows to be good, efficient grazers, start training them as heifers, says Bernie VanDalfsen, Reeds, MO. Soon after weaning, calves on

this seasonal dairy get introduced to grass. Although the bulk of their nutrients comes from grain, young heifers are given a small portion of a paddock to graze and remain on that area until it is thoroughly grazed. Then, the fence is moved to give them another strip of grass. By August, the now six-month-old calves get about 70% of their nutrients from grazing and only receive about 3 pounds of grain per day.

If you give heifers more grass before the paddock is thoroughly grazed, you teach them that they don't have to graze it short and clean it up, he says. However, if you always make them properly graze the paddock — the same as you would expect of your cows — then by the time they freshen, they will be good, efficient grazers.

*Source: Dairy Herd Management newsletter*

## Using Livestock as "Weed Managers"

Grazing consultant Kathy Voth garnered a great deal of attention during her presentation at the Third National Conference on Grazing Lands titled "Turning Cows Into Weed Managers." Voth has conducted research in Montana and California in training cattle to eat everything from leafy spurge and spotted knapweed to Italian thistle. She says with a little bit of training it is possible to get cattle to eat just about any type of forage. For more about Voth's methods visit [www.LivestockforLandscapes.com](http://www.LivestockforLandscapes.com) or [www.behave.net](http://www.behave.net).

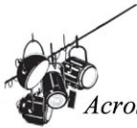
Other workshop sessions during 3NCGL included information on marketing grass-fed beef, grass-based dairy operations, targeted grazing, grazing management for equine operations, and many more. A full proceedings is available from the conference. For more information e-mail GLCI administrative assistant Monti Golla at [grazinglands@verizon.net](mailto:grazinglands@verizon.net).

### 2007 Upcoming Events

- Jan. 24-25 Heart Of America Grazing Conference, Mount Vernon, IL. Contact Garry Lacefield at 270-365-7541, ext. 202, or [glacefie@uky.edu](mailto:glacefie@uky.edu).
- Jan. 25-27 American Sheep Industry Convention, San Antonio, TX
- Jan. 31-Feb. 3 National Cattlemen's Beef Association Annual Convention & Trade Show, Nashville, TN
- February 4-7 National Association of Conservation Districts Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, CA
- Feb. 10-16 Society For Range Management 60th Annual Meeting, Reno, NV.
- Feb. 28-March 2 National Grassfed Beef Conference, Grantville, PA. Contact John Comerford at 814-863-3661 or [jxc555@gmail.com](mailto:jxc555@gmail.com).
- Aug. 7-8 Nebraska Grazing Conference, Kearney, NE. For more information visit: [www.grassland.unl.edu/grazeconf.htm](http://www.grassland.unl.edu/grazeconf.htm)



The 3NCGL included an industry trade show with several booths providing information about GLCI efforts in different states, as well as booths from grass seed companies, federal agencies and universities, and private industry.



## GLCI State Spotlights

Across the country GLCI efforts are geared toward educating private landowners about grazing management practices.

### New York to host “GRAZE-A-PALOOZA”



With a name like “GRAZE-A-PALOOZA,” one might think of a concert of singing graziers, but instead this conference is a celebration of healthy grass-based farming, food and families. The GRAZE-A-PALOOZA conference is set for March 31, 2007 at the White Eagle Conference Center in Hamilton, New York. It is being sponsored by the Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District, the Graze-NY Program and its regional partners.

Highlighting the program will be **Dr. Kate Clancy**, senior scientist and consultant from the Union of Concerned Scientists. She has authored *Greener Pastures: How grass-fed beef and milk contribute to healthy eating*. Her interests are in pasture-raised animal systems, policies related to agriculture, farmland preservation, farm viability and food systems planning.

Also on the program will be **Jerry Burnett**, author, speaker and founder of Agri-Dynamics whose focus is on preserving our soils, our health, our families and our communities utilizing grassland ethics; and **Susan Beal**, DVM, Big Run Healing Arts who specializes in homeopathic medicine and herbal remedies for pets, horses and livestock.

Topics on soil life, stocking rates and paddock designs, tree crops, dairy and livestock grazing strategies, grassland birds, biomass usages and starting custom grazing operations will round out the conference.

For more information about the event, contact Troy Bishopp with the Madison Co. Soil and Water District at 315 824-9849.

### Environmental Stewards Sought

The 17th Annual Environmental Stewardship Award Program (ESAP) is seeking nominees for 2007. The program has nationally recognized the outstanding stewardship practices and conservation achievements of U.S. cattle producers since 1991. Regional and national award winners are honored for their commitment to protecting the environment and improving fish and wildlife habitats while operating profitable cattle operations.



Nominations can be submitted by any organization, group, or individual on behalf of a U.S. cattle producer. In the past, nominations have been submitted by a diverse mix of organizations. A partial list includes: The Nature Conservancy, USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Society for Range Management, state government services, universities, wildlife organizations, and livestock groups.

ESAP was established in 1991 by the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA) and is made possible by the generous support of Dow AgroSciences, LLC, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service. The deadline for 2007 ESAP applications is March 17, 2007. Visit [www.beefusa.org/esap](http://www.beefusa.org/esap) or contact NCBA’s Washington, D.C. to request a copy of the application at (202) 347-0228.

### Texas Teaches Management With Fire

Using a drip torch for a prescribed burn is more art than science. Mark Moseley left, Range Management Specialist, San Antonio helps Charlotte Albrecht, right, to develop her skills in fire ignition. This past fall, the Menard County Prescribed Burn Association received a grant from the Texas Grazing Coalition to conduct



educational events on prescribed burning. Billy Kniffen, Menard County Extension Agent-Agriculture and Charles Anderson, NRCS Range Management Specialist, San Angelo organized and conducted the field workshop to teach prescribed burning techniques. Kniffen, Anderson, and Moseley also made presentations on plant ID, drought planning, and the importance of setting proper stocking rates.



# THE CHAIR'S CORNER



**Bob Drake**

## Thank You For Partnering With GLCI

A huge thank you to everyone who participated in the Third National Conference on Grazing Lands held Dec. 10-13 in St. Louis. We appreciate the efforts of those who did the planning behind the scenes, the speakers who made the program so superb, and most importantly, those who took the time to attend and learn more about enhancing America's privately owned grazing lands for generations to come.

An extra thank you to John Peterson, John Spain, Monti Golla, Kim Stine, Ann Harris, members of the national GLCI steering committee, and all of the GLCI regional specialists for their time and talent in planning this extraordinary event.

In its 15-year history, the strength of GLCI has always been the partnership among the nine member organizations that believe in stewardship and technical assistance for private grazing lands. The 3NCGL is a great example of what our efforts can accomplish.

The National GLCI Steering Committee will also continue to carry the important message of technical grazing support for private landowners to our nation's policy makers when we hold our annual spring meeting in Washington, D.C. on Feb. 26. Thank you again for everyone who supports GLCI and all the best in the year ahead.

Bob Drake, Chairman  
National GLCI Steering Committee

## *Another Thank You*

With this issue, we'd also like to thank Dan Caudle for his many years of service to GLCI and NRCS. Dan, who was stationed in Fort Worth, TX, retired from his NRCS career at the end of December. He was instrumental in the success of GLCI and getting grazing information and management practices in the hands of the people on the land. Dan, you leave big shoes to fill! Thank you for your dedicated career to grazing lands.

To have your GLCI activities or upcoming events highlighted in this newsletter, contact Kindra Gordon at phone 605-722-7699 or [kindras@gordonresources.com](mailto:kindras@gordonresources.com)

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**Dairy Industry**  
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