

Management Intensive Rotational Grazing vs. Mob Stocking


Sustainable Farming Association
Northfield, Minnesota

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Grazing Game

- 10 Volunteers Needed!!

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- Group 1 “grazed” for 10 seconds
 - Group 2 “grazed” for 30 seconds
 - How many total pieces of each kind of candy were selected for each group?
 - What do you suppose would happen to group 1 grazing behavior over time? Would selectivity increase or decrease?



Grazing Terms Defined

- Stocking Density: Weight or number of head per unit area (example: 30,000 pounds per acre)
- Stocking Rate: The relationship between the number of animals and the grazing management unit utilized over a specific time period (example: 30,000 pounds per acre per day)



Stocking Density MOB Stocking

- 100,000 #/ Acre 8 hour occupancy period

Stocking Density MIRG

- 33333#/Acre 24 hour occupancy period

Stocking Rate for the Two Was the Same!!!!

- Both were 33333 pounds of stock per acre per day
- Difference was concentration of animals.

MOB Stocking Concentration

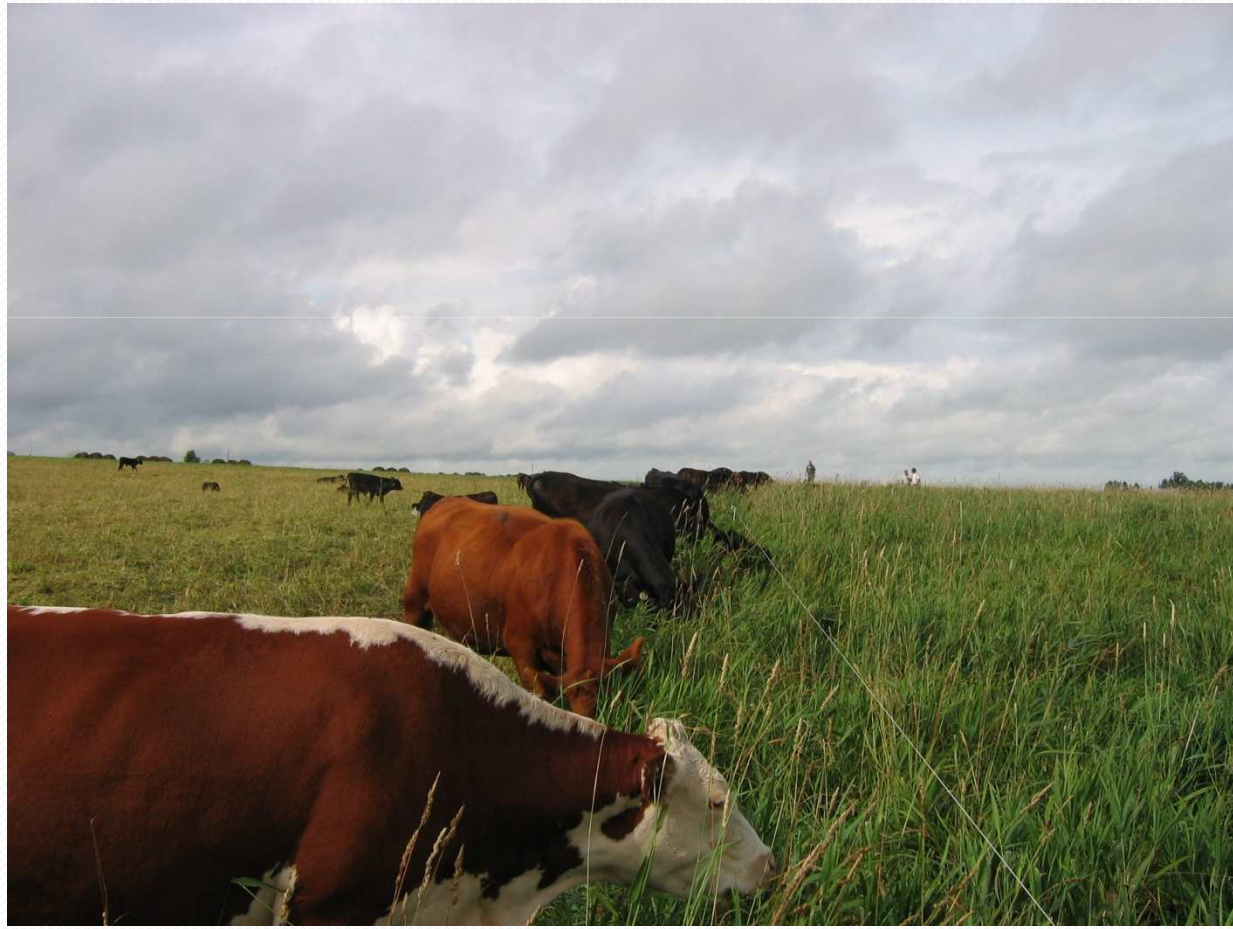
- Assume each animal weighed 1000#
- 100 animals/acre = 435.6 sq.ft./animal
- Greater concentration leads to less animal selectivity of forages and better distribution of manure and urine

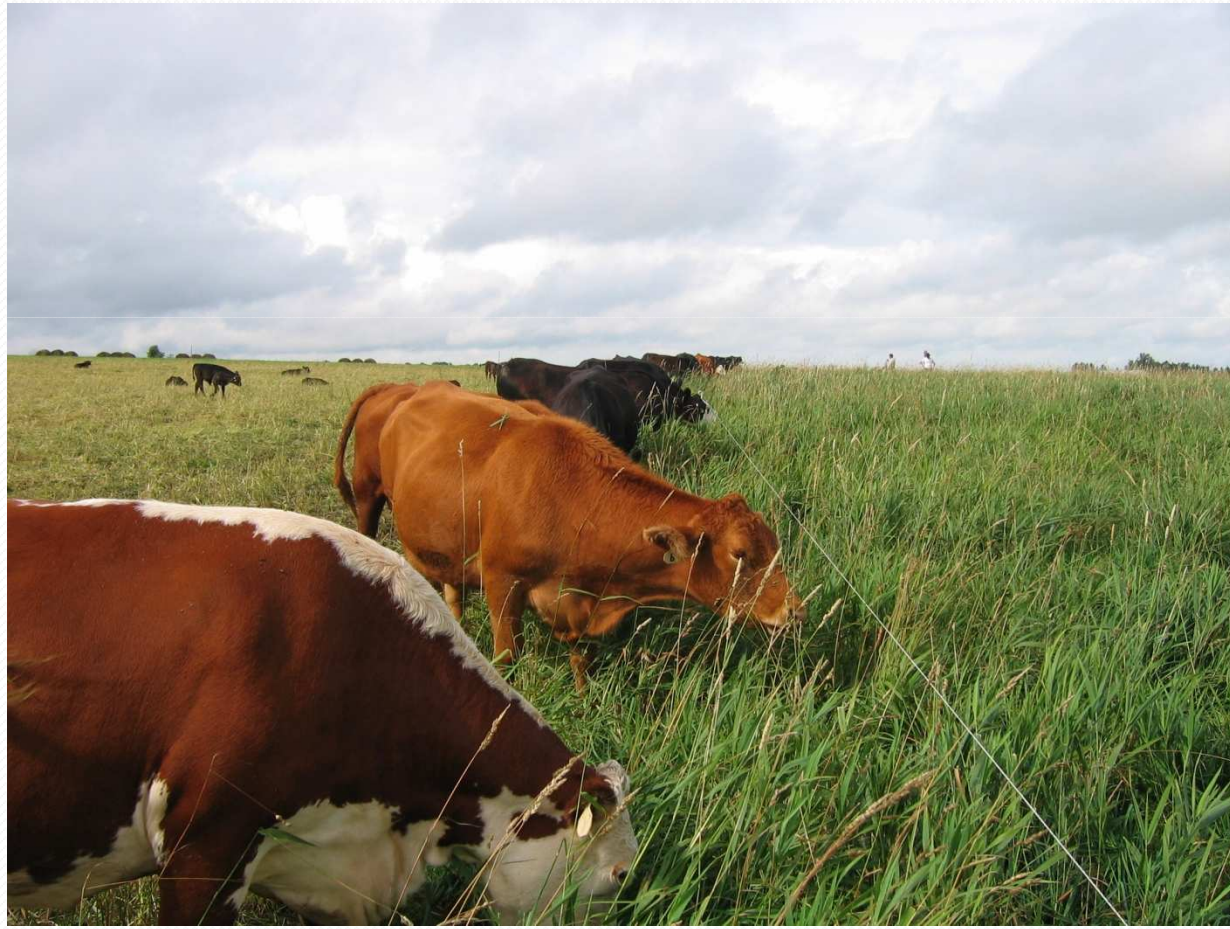
Typical MOB Stocking Pasture Composition



Not actually MOB stocking but
composition is similar















MIRG Stocking Concentration

- 1320 sq. ft./animal
- Animals can be more selective about what they graze in comparison to MOB stocking.

Typical MIRG



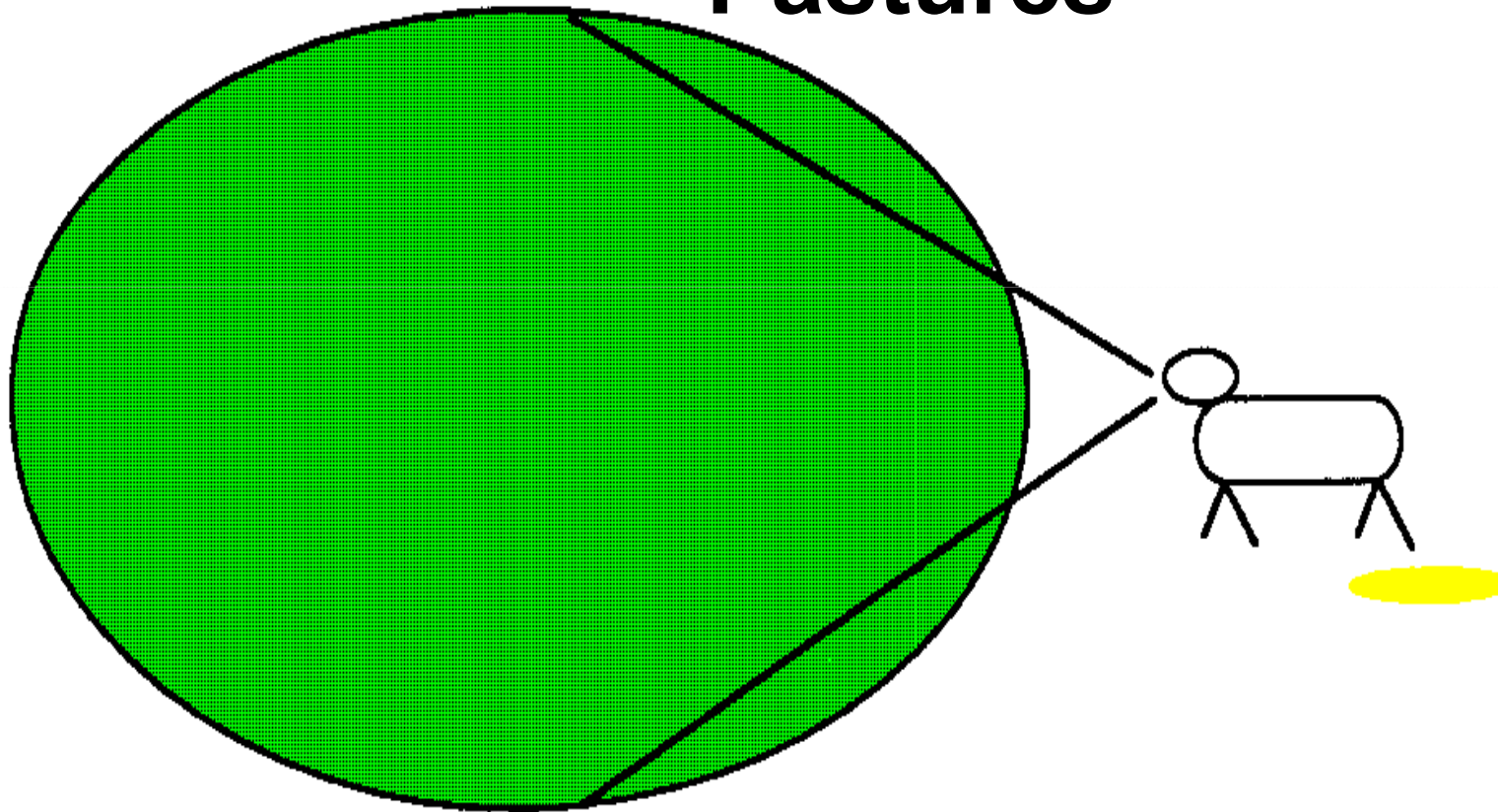


MOB vs. MIRG

- MOB stocking uses mature forages, MIRG uses forages that are kept vegetative with occasional completion of the life cycle
- MOB uses very high concentrations to reduce selectivity and incorporate organic matter.
- MIRG uses high concentrations to reduce selectivity but still allows animals to be somewhat selective.
- MIRG and MOB stocking both improve nutrient distribution but MOB stocking does a better job.



Nutrient Management on Pastures



Effect of Grazing: Concentrating nutrients - consume them from a large area and excrete them in a small area.

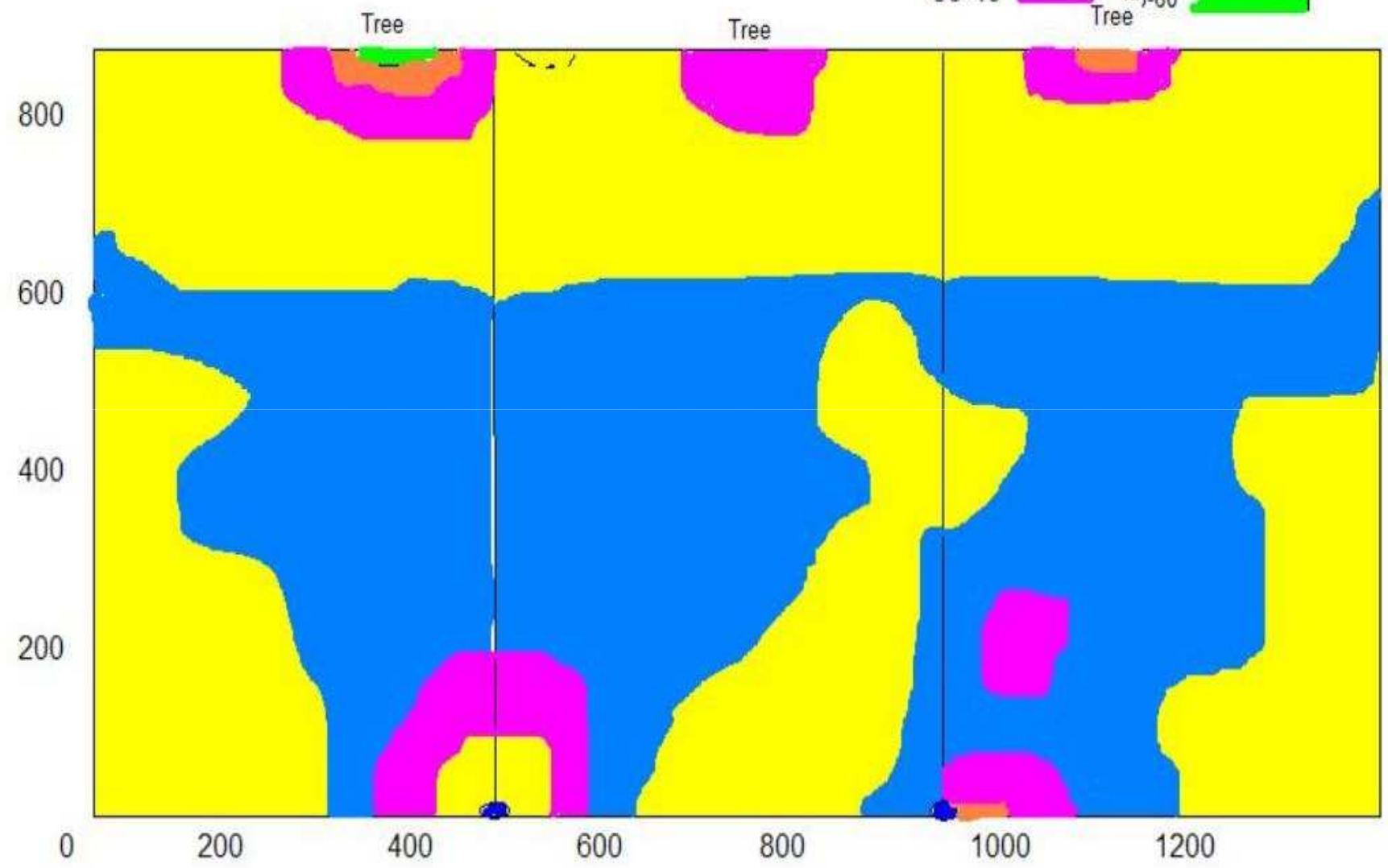


Table 10.2. The effect of grazing intensity on manure distribution in pastures.

Rotation frequency	Years to get 1 pile/sq. yard
Continuous	27
14-day	8
4-day	4-5
2-day	2

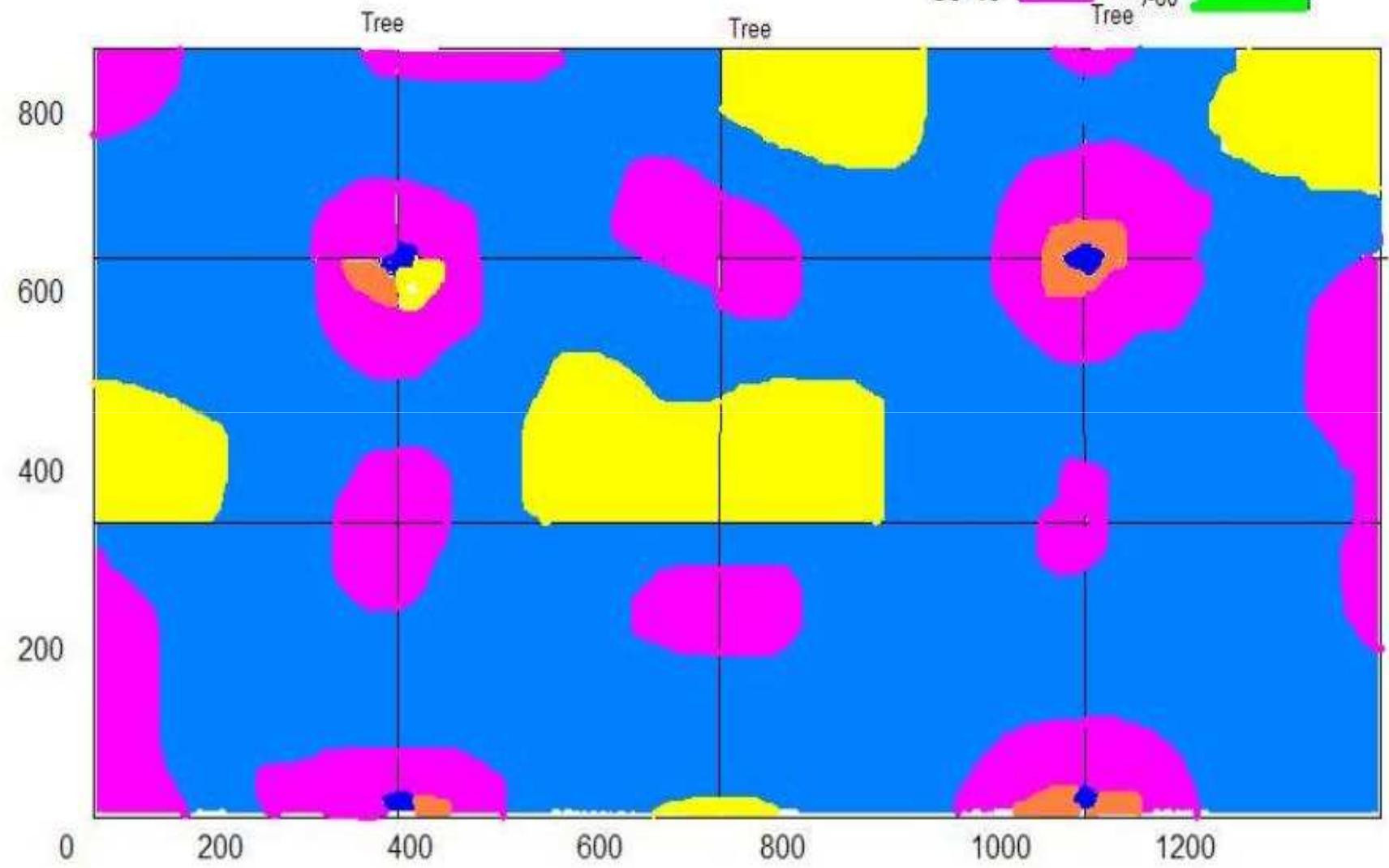


3 Paddock System





12 Paddock System





MIRG vs. MOB

- Mob stocking develops root system of forages faster
- MOB increases organic matter faster
- MOB: essential to have a fence energizer that is functioning well for livestock control
- MOB: must have temporary fence that is appropriate for species to be grazed
- MOB: requires more labor than MIRG
- MOB: may not be appropriate for animals that have high nutritional requirements

Earthworm and Organic Matter Increases Due to MOB stocking



Multispecies Grazing MOB



Practical Considerations

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