

## SUMMER WATER NEEDS

This summer's heat and humidity makes it abundantly clear how important adequate water is for your pastured livestock. Let's discuss ways to provide water throughout your pastures.

Summer has been hot and muggy. While it may be uncomfortable for you and me, it is particularly hard on livestock out on pasture. To help them survive, much less thrive, under these conditions, they need plenty of good, clean water.

Not only do they need plenty of good, clean water – they need it close by. Once upon a time, it was common to make cattle walk a mile or more to water. And they'd do it. But just think how hard it is on animals in this heat and humidity. Once they get to the water, the last thing they want to do is turn around and go way back where they came from to graze. As a result, they do little grazing more than a half mile away from water. In fact, research shows that when cattle need to travel more than 1000 feet to water, they spend less time grazing, they burn off pounds walking, and they graze distant areas incompletely.

So – how can you improve your water distribution? More ponds, wells, windmills, and dugouts will help, but they can get expensive. Plus, they can only be placed in certain locations and can't be moved. So my preference often is to use a pipeline. They can be put almost anywhere. And if you want to add more water locations, pipelines can be tapped into anywhere along the line. In many areas, you might qualify for cost-share dollars to help pay for the installation. You also can leave your pipe on top of the ground, saving trenching costs, if you only need water during the growing season.

Over time, water improvements pay for themselves with better grass and improved animal performance.

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