

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

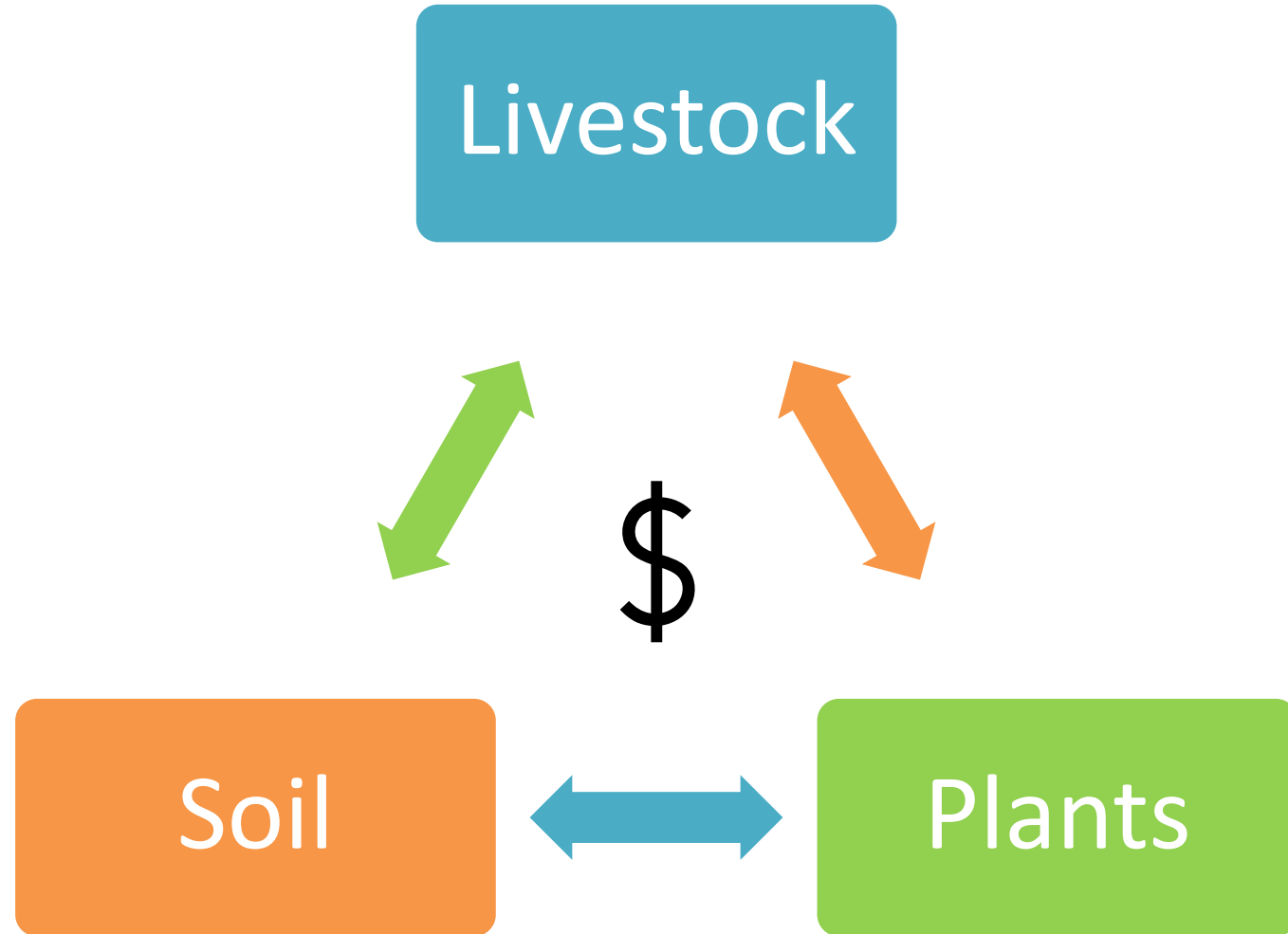
# Pastures: Spring and Summer

Turning Pasture and Forage Into Profit

Sheep Producers Association of Nova Scotia

November 13, 2021

# Pasture Production



|                 | Hay             | Pasture         |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Est. over 4 yrs | 37.00           | 37.00           |
| Seed            | -               | -               |
| Fertility       | 82.65           | 16.53           |
| Herbicide       | -               | -               |
| Equipment       | 39.65           | -               |
| Twine           | 4.95            | -               |
| Fertility App   | 22.30           | 22.30           |
| Herbicide App   | -               | -               |
| Bale wrapping   | 69.40           | -               |
| Fence & water   | -               | 32.67           |
| Labour          | 28.80           | 28.80           |
| Prod Insurance  | 7.36            | 9.00            |
| Interest        | 8.00            | 8.00            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>    | <b>\$300.11</b> | <b>\$154.30</b> |

# Number Crunching

|                       | Hay            | Pasture        |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Cost per acre         | \$300.11       | \$154.30       |
| Yield/acre (tonnes)   | 3.15           | 3.15           |
| <b>Cost per tonne</b> | <b>\$95.27</b> | <b>\$48.98</b> |

Note: Hay COP does not include yardage

# Number Crunching

Cost per tonne of forage

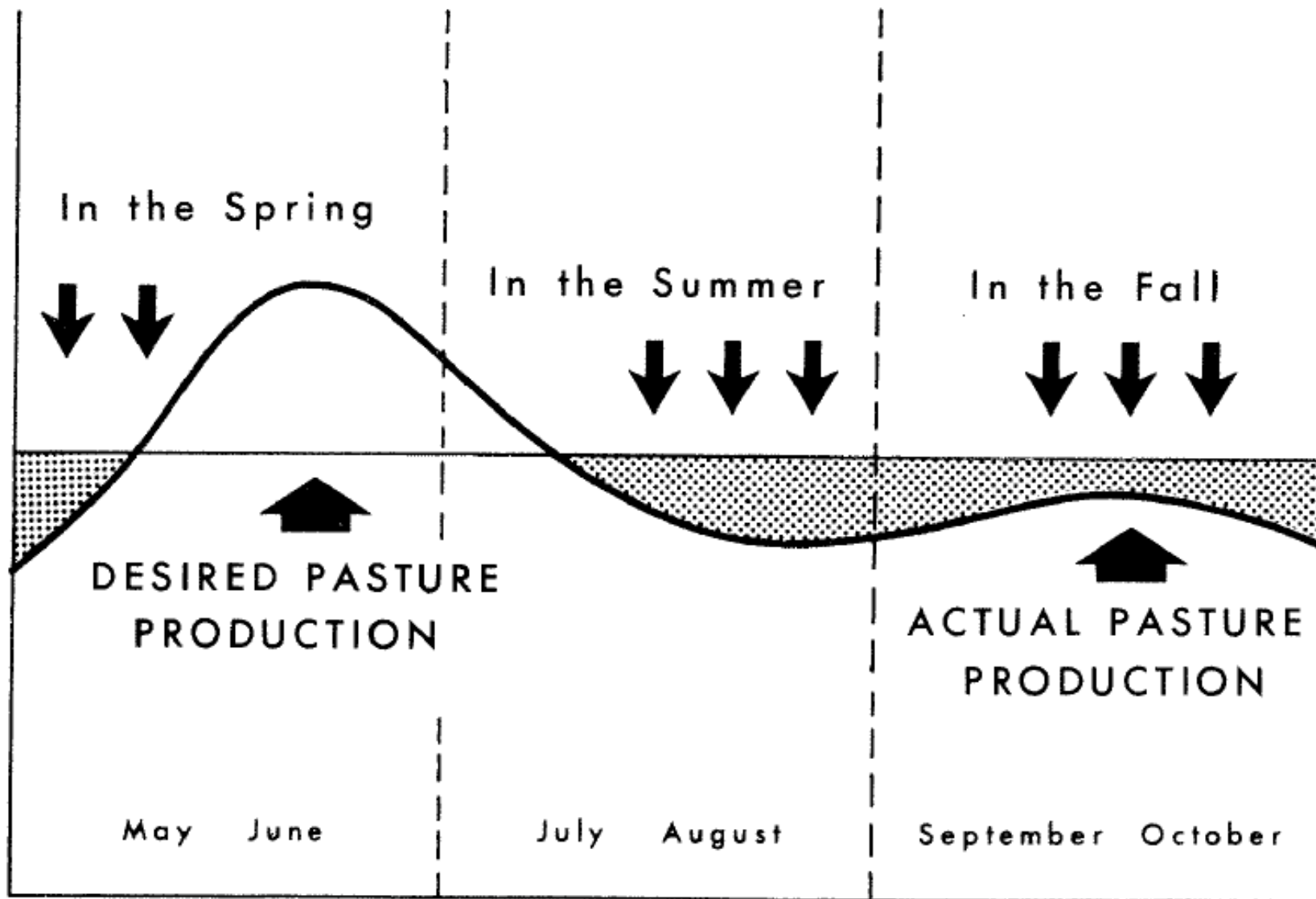
|                | Hay            | Pasture    |
|----------------|----------------|------------|
| Hay storage    | \$9.00         | -          |
| Feeders        | \$2.25         | -          |
| Equipment      | \$14.24        | -          |
| Manure Storage | \$9.00         | -          |
| Manure App     | \$13.49        | -          |
| Labour         | \$26.99        | -          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>\$74.97</b> | <b>\$0</b> |

# Number Crunching

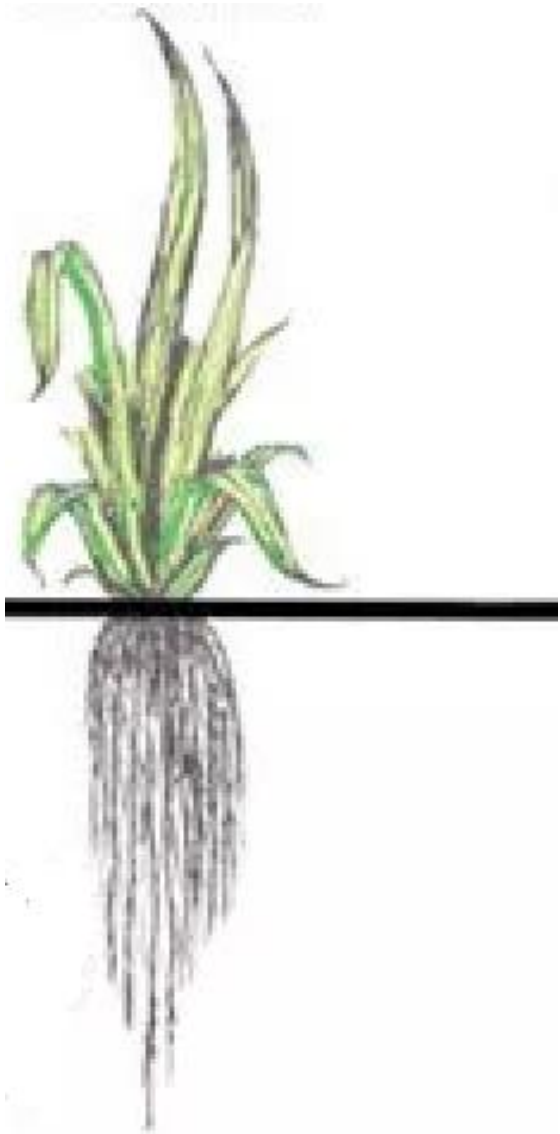
|           | Dry Ewe          |         |
|-----------|------------------|---------|
| Weight    | 80 kg (176 lbs)  |         |
| DMI 2.6%  | 2.1 kg (4.6 lbs) |         |
|           | Hay              | Pasture |
| \$/tonne  | 170.24           | 48.98   |
| \$/hd/day | \$0.36           | \$0.10  |

Grazing perennial pasture is less than 1/3 of the cost of feeding hay!

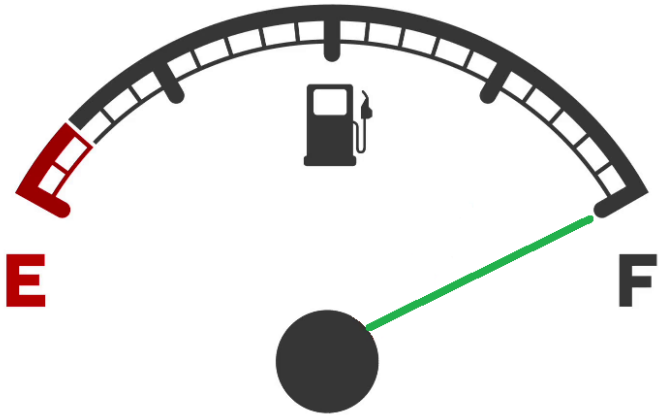
# WHEN IS PASTURE LACKING?



# How a grass plant works

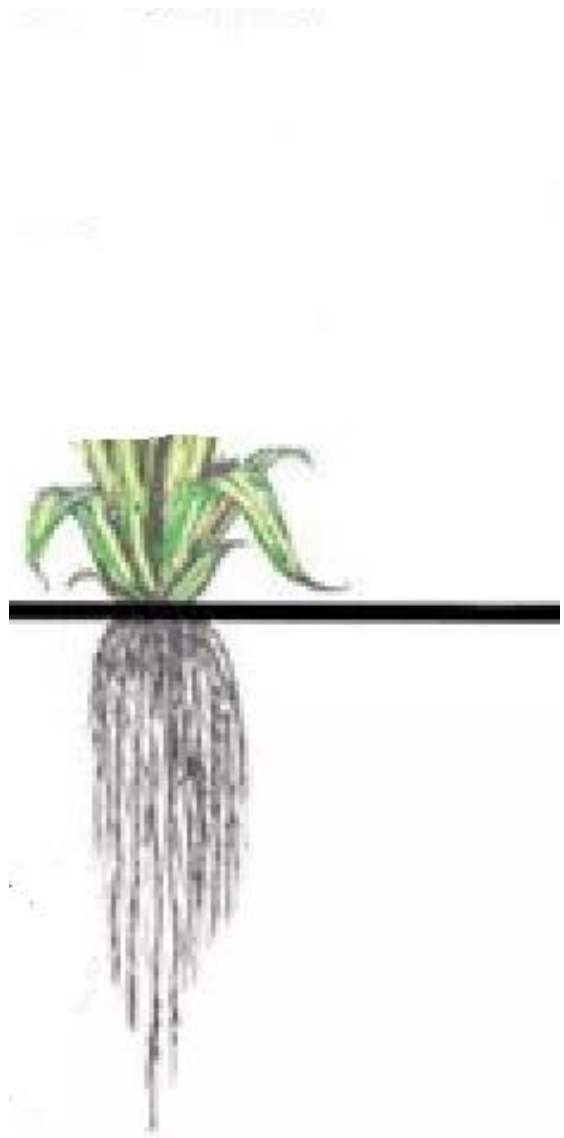


Ready

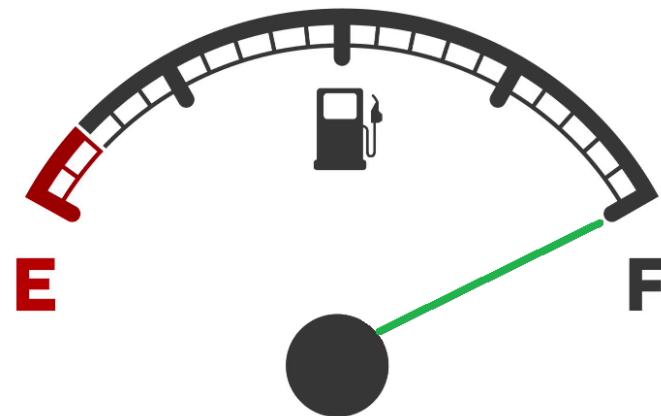




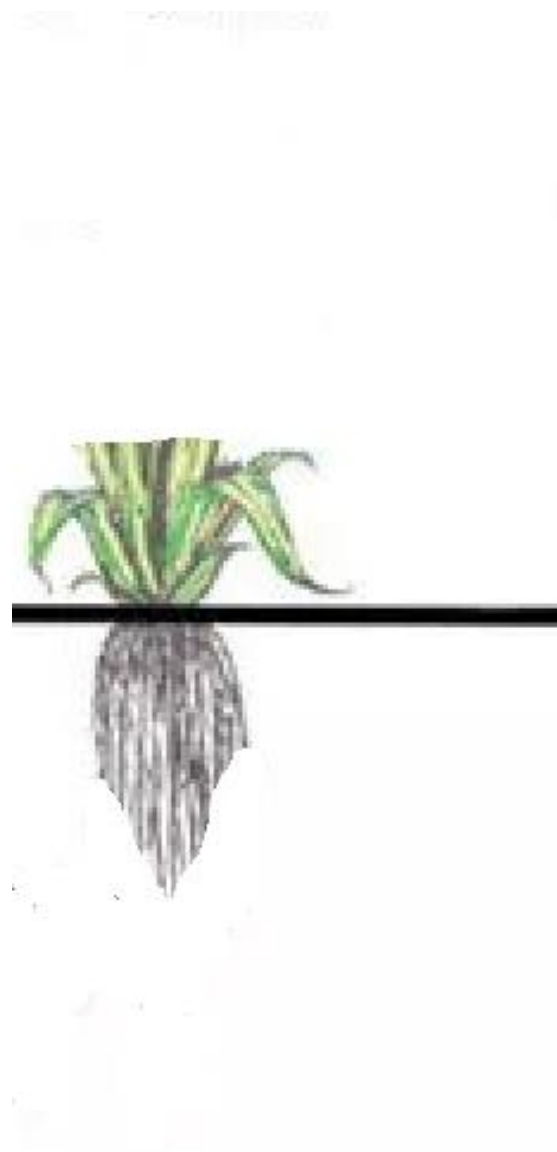
# How a grass plant works



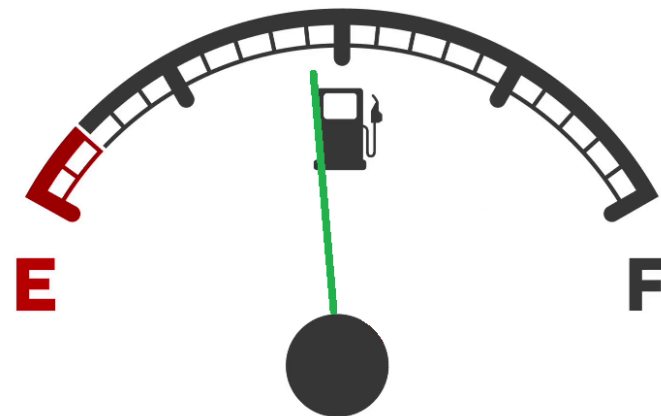
## Grazing Event



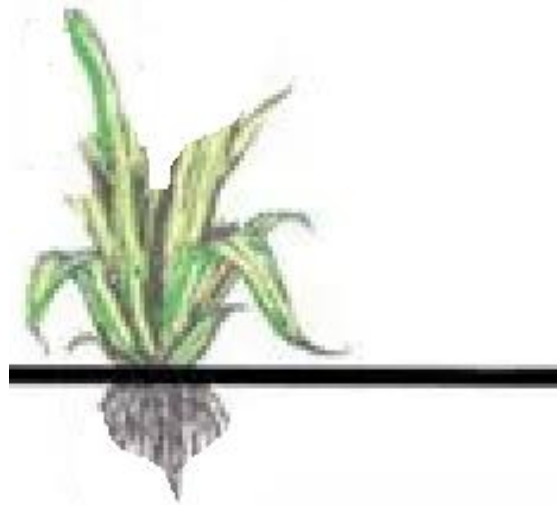
# How a grass plant works



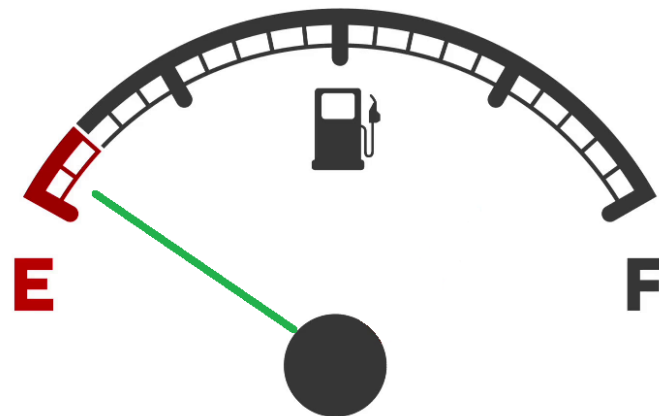
**~5 days after grazing event,  
mobilizes energy from lower  
stem and/or roots**



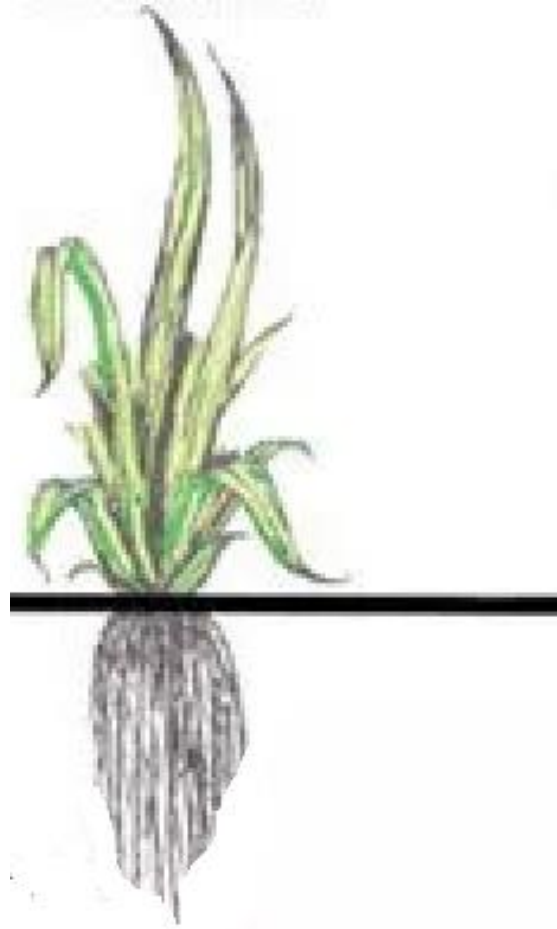
# How a grass plant works



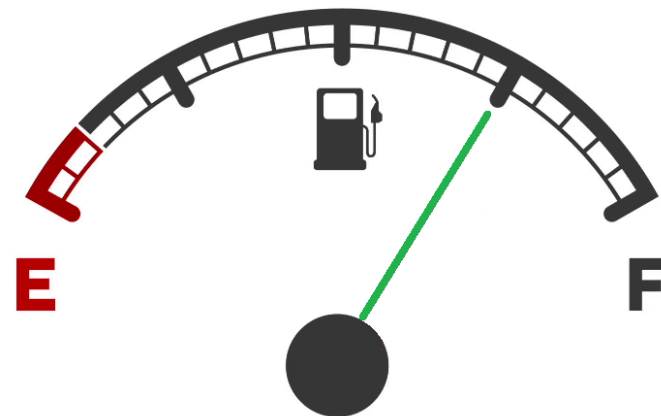
**Tillers grow!**



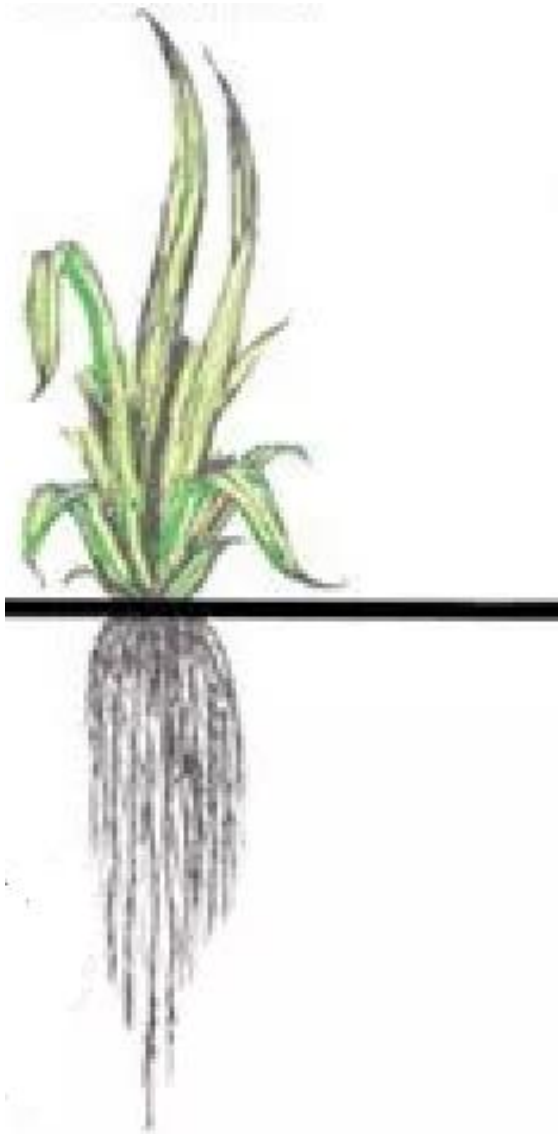
# How a grass plant works



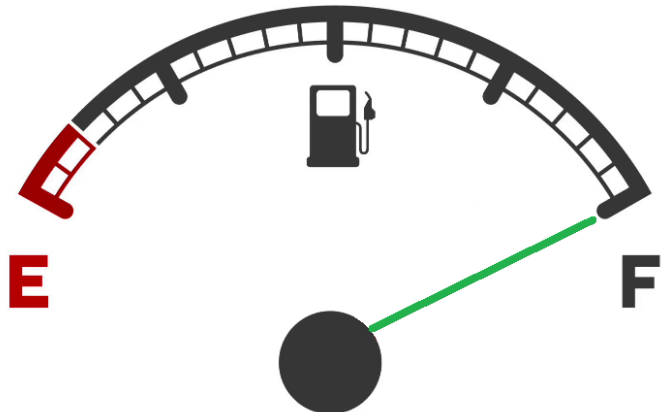
Speed of recovery depends on temperature and rainfall



# How a grass plant works

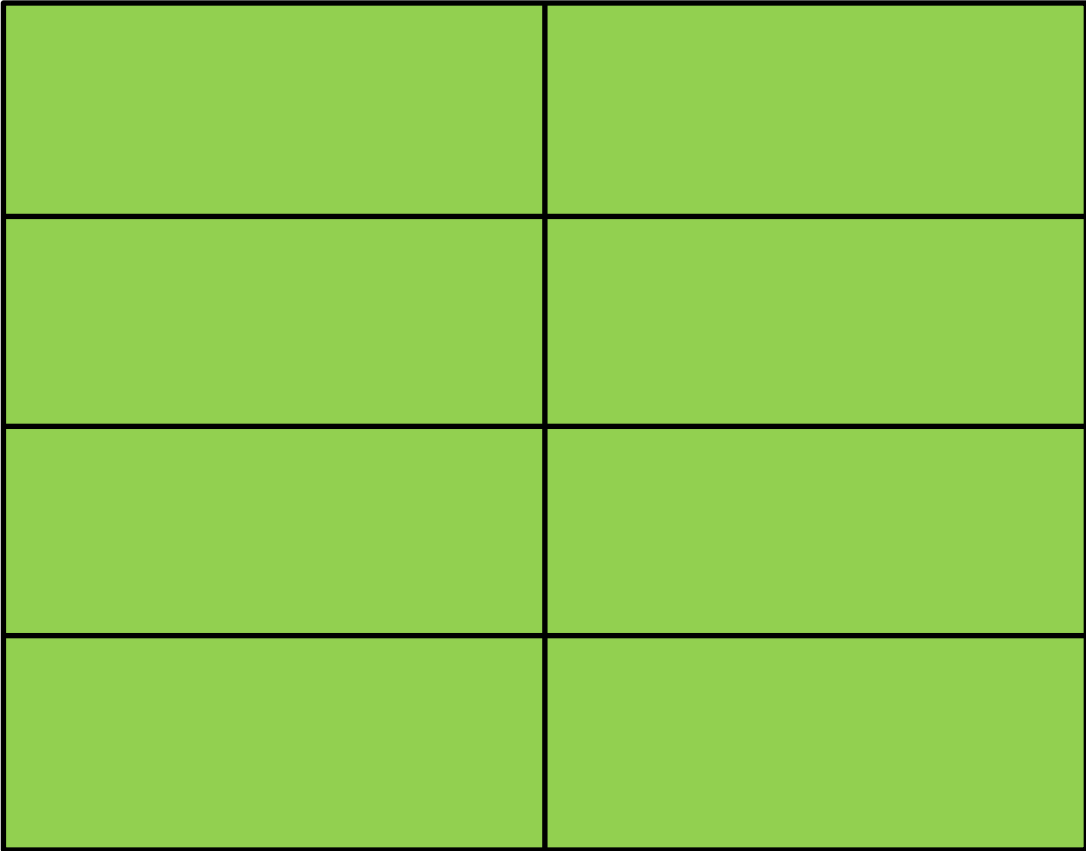


Ready



# Spring Turn Out Strategies

One Mix – Change First Paddock



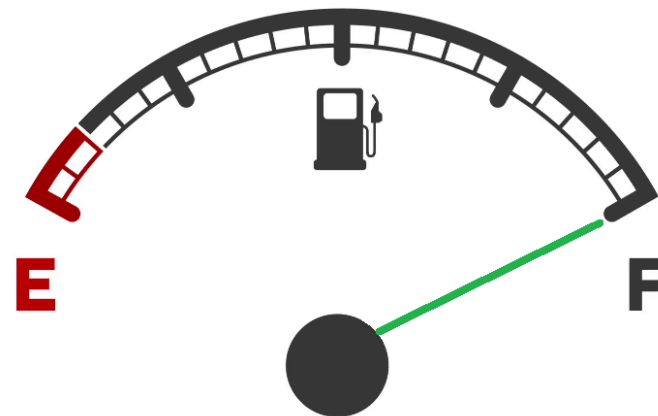
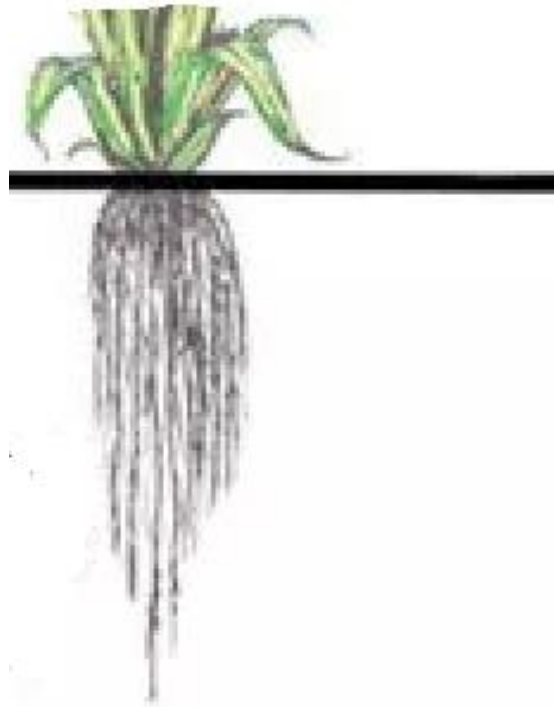
Many Mixes – Graze in the Same Order



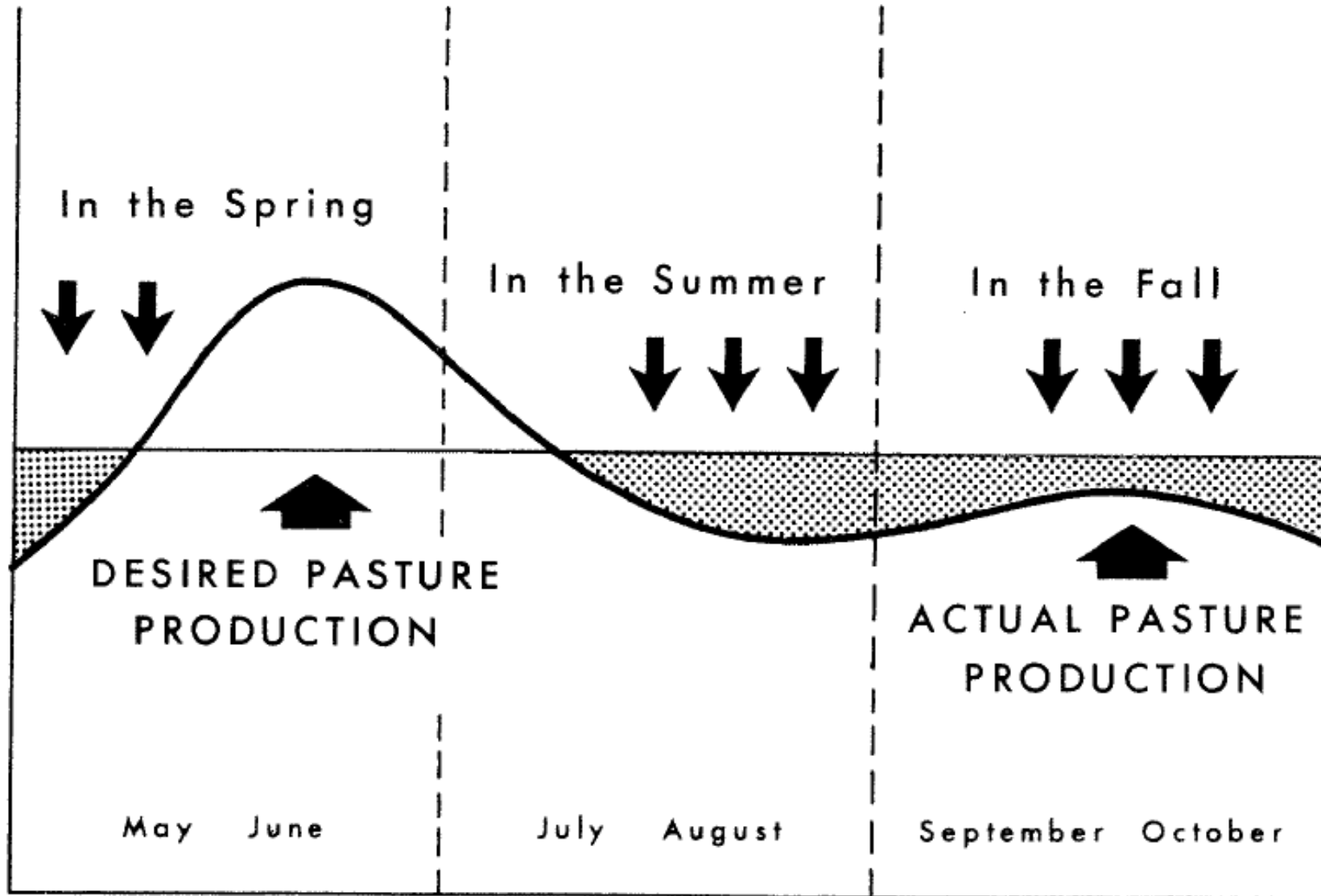
# How early is too early?

## Breaking dormancy

Grasses should have 3-4 leaves  
before being grazed



# How to manage the spring flush?

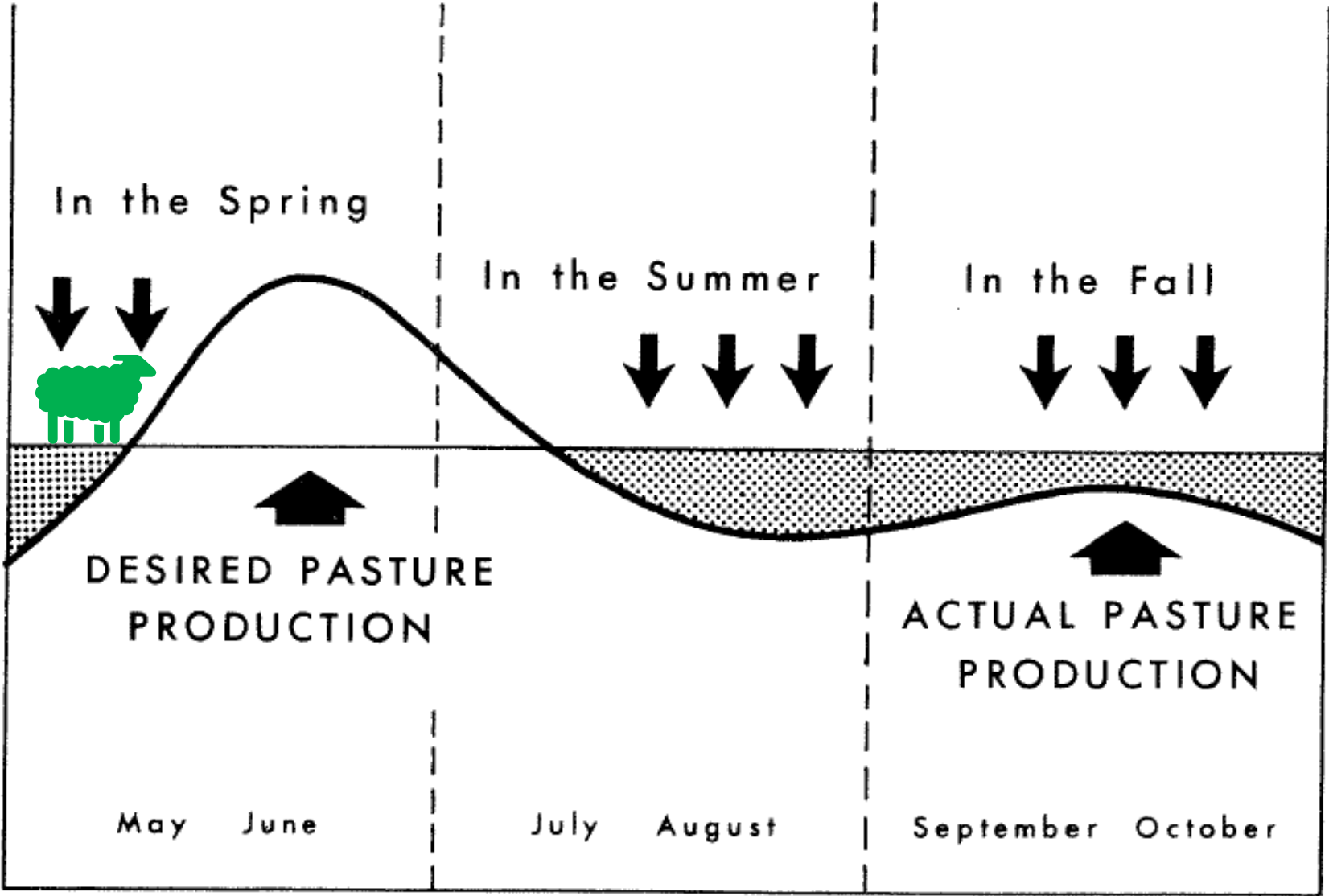


Source: Ontario Dept of Ag, Pub 543

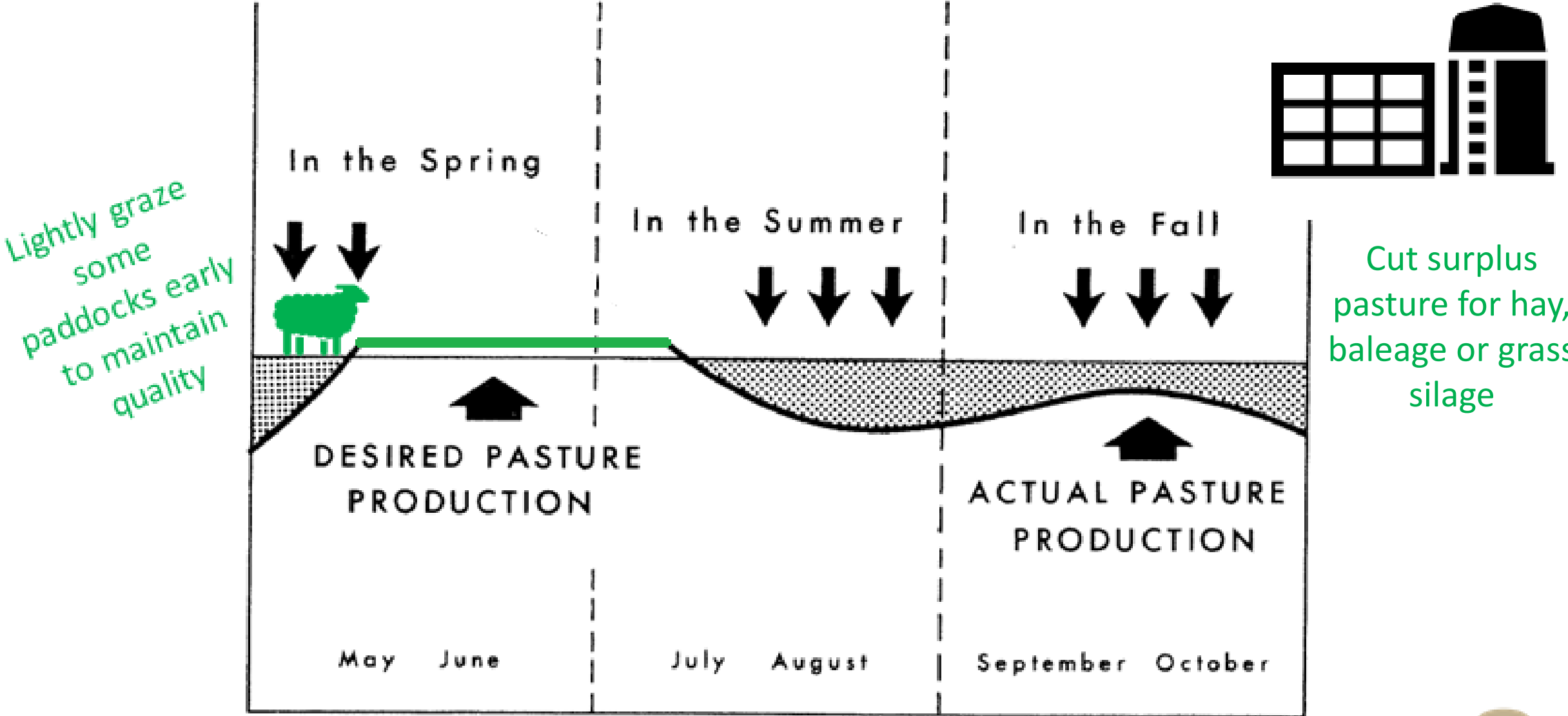


# How to manage the spring flush?

Lightly graze  
some  
paddocks early  
to maintain  
quality

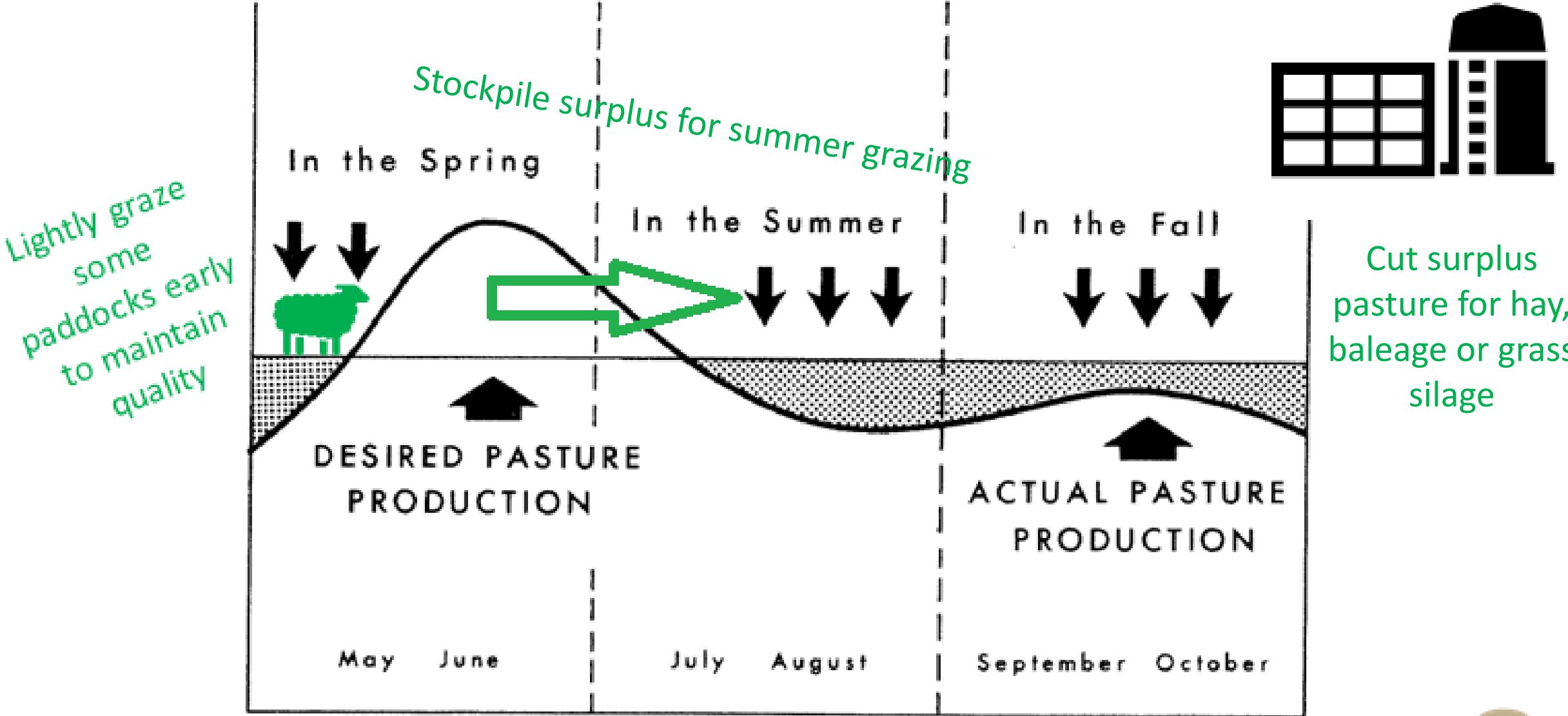


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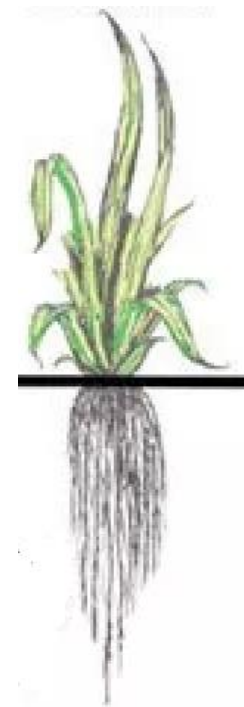
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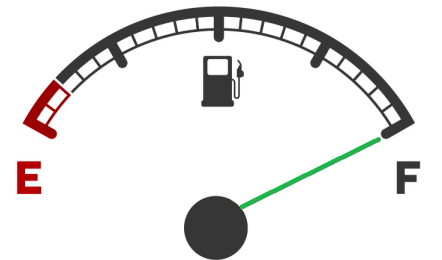
Source: Ontario Dept of Ag, Pub 543

# Summer

- Lengthen the rest period
  - Combine smaller groups into one large flock
  - Increase grazed acres by using hay regrowth or warm-season annuals
  - Feed supplemental forage before sheep run out of pasture



Ready



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