

Missouri Dairy Grazing Conference

Randy Mooney

Dairy producer, Rogersville, MO

Chairman, Dairy Farmers of America



Dairy Farmers of America

**A great conference, despite
challenges we face in the
industry, and in our region**



Dairy Farmers of America

Grazing, has come a long way



Dairy Farmers of America

Grazing, has come a long way

Some highlights



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1991 –

**The first grazing
demonstration was held in
Southwest Missouri**



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1999 –

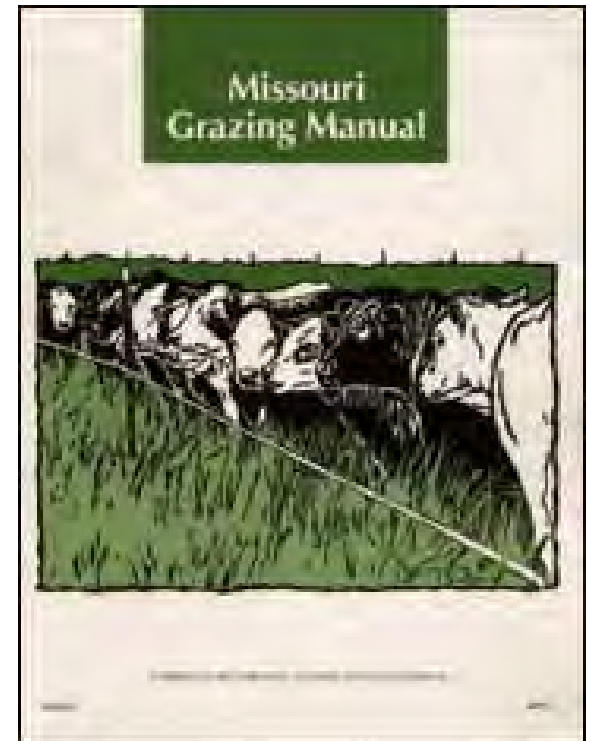
**The Southwest Center
established a seasonal
rotational grazing dairy**



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2001 –

First dairy grazing manual published by University of Missouri Extension



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2004 –

**New Zealand farmers
explored Missouri and
other states for
opportunities**



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2006 –

**grazing conference in
Missouri attracted 200
attendees from 21 states**



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2008 –

**Charles Fletcher
recognized as Innovative
Dairyman of the Year**



2009 –



**Last Joplin Grazing
Conference, with 325
attending**

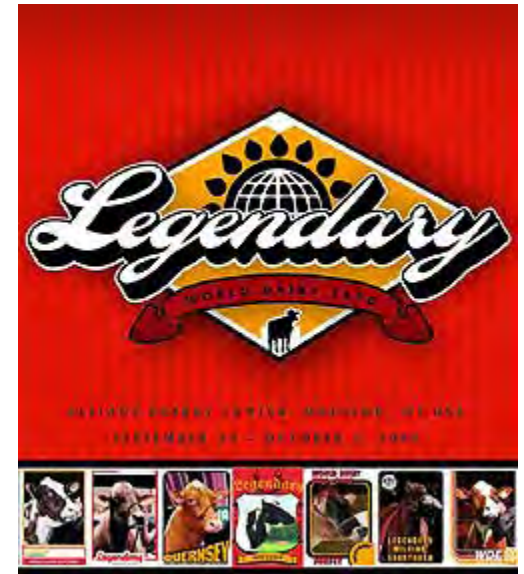
**DFA formed Dairy Grazing
Services to assist
producers**



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2010 –

**World Dairy Expo
opens Grazing
Pavilion at trade show**



Dairy Farmers of America

Klessigs find grazing to be enjoyable way of working land

Progressive Dairyman Editor Karen Lee

The late Ed Klessig and his wife, Margaret, ran a conventional dairy farm for decades, just as three generations of his family had done before on the same piece of land in eastern Wisconsin. In 1989, at the urging of their two sons and son-in-law, they made the switch to rotational grazing and let their cows out of the barn.

Saxon Homestead Farm LLC is now a fifth-generation family partnership operated by Robert and Kathleen Block-Klessig, Karl and Elizabeth Klessig, Gerald and Elise Klessig Heimerl, and their families. They milk 450 cows and raise 425 youngstock and 250 steers. The animals graze 825 acres of permanent pasture and the dairy has another 200 acres of alfalfa ground.

"We really depend on our working lands for our way of life," Karl Klessig said to a group of local legislators and dairy producers that



Karl Klessig, left, leads a tour of local legislators and dairy producers around his family farm. He described how grazing is the way they prefer to work the land. Photo by Karen Lee

the family is mindful of its land use.

They began using a nutrient management plan in 2004 and participated in the Discovery

Green Tier program.

"The dairy industry has made huge steps in the last 40 years to deal with manure in a positive way," Klessig said.

applied on growing pasture land throughout the spring and summer months.

They start using the pasture at the

2011 –

Grazing featured in national publications like Progressive Dairyman



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**Our “secret” is getting out,
and even more opportunities
will open**



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Opportunities for pasture-based dairies

- **Lower input cost (profitability)**
- **Lifestyle attractive to younger producers**
- **Local milk for deficit markets**
- **Connections to sustainability**
- **Attraction to consumers**



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MILK

Natures Perfect Food

The single best thing anyone can consume

The single best product for the planet



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Thank you



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