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of water in one area, not because they ran out of grass. And they haven't exactly had ideal winters. Think record-breaking ice and snow, floods and drought.

Plus, even when they are feeding hay, Prince says it is to protect the forage. “Management-intensive grazing is about optimizing, not maximizing, the forage you are producing. We got dry the end of last year. We could have grazed 30 more days, but the grass will come back better in the spring if you don't graze it so close.”

There are also more subtle changes. The pasture inventories are now revealing a smorgasbord of forages. Andrews says, “In part of the fields he now has a mix of fescue, bermudagrass, crabgrass, clover and lespedeza. Clover is showing up in fields where he hasn't had it for years.”

The volunteer clover is a real plus. Jennings says, “Legumes improve forage quality and, in turn, animal performance. They help reduce the impact of fescue toxicity, provide a longer growing season and provide nitrogen fixation.”

To add even more of a good thing, Jennings spearheaded a clover demo at Prince's farm as part of the 300 Days of Grazing program. Prince seeded a third of his pasture acres with Patriot clover in strips. But, at Jennings' suggestion, he used three times the normal seeding rate. Then, as the clover matured and went to seed, he let the cattle spread it as he moved them though their temporary paddocks and/or they went back and forth to water. “It took a season and a half or two seasons, but it worked pretty well,” says Prince.

If all the benefits of rotational grazing appeal to you but it sounds overwhelming, Prince says it shouldn't. “People make it way more complicated than it is. You can buy a charger and poly wire and step-in posts for \$300 to \$400. Get your feet wet to see if you like it.”

Jennings agrees. “Start simple and keep it flexible. Have as few permanent fence subdivisions as possible. You can use poly wire to set up any size paddocks to strip graze or rotational graze. That gives you

flexibility for each season of the year. Then you can take the wire down to spray for weeds, fertilize, cut hay or overseed legumes or annuals.”

If you're already using rotational grazing, there are other ways of making your operation more efficient. Although Prince was one of the three whole-farm demonstrations in the 300 Days of Grazing program, the other producers could choose from one of eight forage-based categories. The first, of course, is improving grazing efficiency with rotational or strip grazing. That still leaves stockpiling fescue, stockpiling bermudagrass, incorporating legumes, using winter annuals, using summer annuals, reducing hay waste during storage and reducing hay waste during feeding.

Whether you live in Arkansas or California, Prince advises that you give one or more of these strategies a try. After all, he and 100-plus other producers agree that your bottom line will be the better for it. **FL**

## Reliability, Visibility, Ease of Use

**WHILE LIFELONG CATTLEMAN** Eddie Prince is willing to experiment with grazing techniques, when it comes to equipment he sticks with a proven product.

The mainstay on his stocker operation is a Massey Ferguson® 399 front wheel assist tractor that he uses every day to feed his cattle. “We've hardly had any problems with it. It's just reliable,” says Prince, who also notes it's easier to operate than other brands and has terrific visibility. “That's important to me, working with cattle and these step-in

posts,” he says of the low-lying fencing he uses in his 300-day grazing program.

Then there are his two longtime workhorses, a 1973 MF1100 and a 1964 model 1100, which he uses to bale hay. “The '64 has at least 30,000 hours on it,” Prince reports. “We used to row crop and we had John Deere, International, Case, whatever. But for the time it was built, the '64 was better engineered than some of the new tractors. It is a really good tractor, even today.”

