



INNOVATIVE Paddock MANAGEMENT WITH THE HOWARD ROTAVATOR

Let's Talk

Raymond Yutzy is an innovative seasonal grazer in Drakesville, Iowa, who practices Intensive Rotational Grazing with stocker cattle. Raymond acquired an 80" HOWARD ROTAVATOR in the spring of 2003 and used it aggressively to improve his grazing program.

Raymond starts buying heifers at a local auction barn in the months of Feb, thru April. He buys the heifers at 450-525 lbs., and feeds them hay and 1 lb. of grain / day until the 20th of April. They are fed grass only until October, when they are then sold at about 850 lbs.

Mr. Yutzy owns a no-till pasture drill, a conventional drill, a pasture harrow, and in 2003 a HOWARD ROTAVATOR for improving his pastures. After one season, with the HOWARD ROTAVATOR, he purchased a 10' Brillion seeder and the no-till pasture drill is for sale. Raymond believes no other tillage equipment will be necessary in his operation.

As an experiment his first year with the Rotavator, Raymond took the hay off a 3 year old 8 acre paddock of alfalfa and orchard grass the last week in May. He then tilled the 8 acre paddock 1 pass 3 – 3 ½ " deep with his HOWARD ROTAVATOR and then drilled 20-25 lbs. / acre of sorghum-sudan grass. Sixty lbs / acre of N* was applied.

When the sorghum-sudan grass was shoulder high, he mowed narrow strips to allow for his moveable wire. 160 heifers grazed in the 8 acres for 12 days.

Sixty lbs. of N* was applied to this paddock when the heifers were removed. Five weeks later the 160 head grazed the 8 acre paddock again for 9 days. Raymond said he could have grazed it longer, but he had other plans.

On the 10th of September 03, Raymond tilled the 8 acre paddock one pass 3 – 3 ½" deep with the ROTAVATOR and seeded 3 Bu / Acres of oats, and 3 lbs / acre of turnips. The 160 heifers grazed this paddock again, for 3 days, with forage left to feed more animals.

Raymond plans on using the ROTAVATOR more in 2004 to better manage his paddocks with respect to A) palatability B) digestibility C) rainfall deficits, and D) late / cool season grazing. He was pleased with grazing 160 head on one 8 acre paddock for 24 days in 2003, with an additional 1st cutting hay crop. More improvements in his paddock management will allow him to carry more cattle in 2004.

Some additional information reported by Raymond Yutzky for 2003 weight gain is as follows:

	<u>FIELD</u>	<u>ACRES</u>	<u>LBS / GRAIN</u>	<u>LBS / ACRE</u>
A)	KY 31 Fescue	42 acres	11,000	262
B)	Barrenbrug BG-34 ryegrass +white Alice Clover	42 acres	25,000	595
C-1)	1 st Cutting Alfalfa + Orchard Grass	8 acres	Included with field D	
C-2)	Sorghum-Sudan Grass	8 acres	5,000	712
C-3)	Oats + Turnips	8 acres	700	88
D)	Alfalfa 50 Big Round Bales 600 Square Bales	25 acres	4,700	188

As you can see, although the sorghum-sudan grass paddock started out as an experiment to provide drought season grazing for his livestock, and then later cool season grazing, the lbs of weight gain / acre for paddock C (800 lbs/acre) and B (595 lbs/acre) far exceeded that of his traditional KY 31 Tall Fescue (262 lbs/acre) the daily weight gain for the 2003 grazing season was 1.64 lbs/day.

2004 Update. Raymond reports it was a good year. Raymond had excess feed in 2003 (a dry year), so he increased his herd size from 160 to 175 heifers. Prices were good, weight gain good, but the cold wet weather presented problems. Weight gain per day was down because of the weather, but weight gain per acre was acceptable. The 8 acre paddock that ended with oats and turnips in 2003 was ROTAVATED once early in 2004 then seeded (Brillion seeder) to GREEN SPIRIT an italian rye grass. It was grazed in the summer, then ROTAVATED twice in the fall and seeded to alfalfa and orchard grass.

14 Acres of Alfalfa Hay (42 big round bales) was taken off with the 1st cutting. Two passes 3" deep were made with the ROTAVATOR, and the paddock was drilled to sorghum-sudan grass. The SSG was grazed once, then ROTAVATED twice, and seeded (Brillion) 10 Sept 04 with BG34 and white alic clover, or 24T and white alic clover. Raymond is pleased with the direction in which he is taking his pastures, and his profitability.

N* – was supplied from an application of PADDOCK POWER. 200 lbs was applied in May, then again in late August.

A HOWARD ROTAVATOR IS THE MOST VERSATILE SURFACE TILLAGE TOOL ON THE FARM, BECAUSE IT IS THE MOST ADJUSTABLE. THE ADJUSTABILITY OF THE ROTAVATOR ALLOWS FOR CONTROLLED TILLAGE. THE BEST TILLAGE IS THE LEAST TILLAGE; JUST ENOUGH TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE CROP THAT WILL FOLLOW. DEFINE THE TILLAGE OBJECTIVE, AND THEN ADJUST THE ROTAVATOR FOR OPTIMUM ONE-PASS PERFORMANCE.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OF HOW TO GET THE BEST PERFORMANCE FROM YOUR ROTAVATOR OR HOW ROTARY TILLAGE CAN BEST FIT YOUR NEEDS, CONTACT GUY MACHINERY.

GUY MACHINERY – 14213 Washington St. WOODSTOCK, IL. 60098
PHONE 815-338-0600 FAX 815-338-2525
E-Mail guymachinery@yahoo.com Website www.tinedweeder.com