

Protective Grazing Heights for Dominant Forage Species

The following grazing heights should be maintained for native and introduced grasses where grazing is the principle method of harvest. Monitor grasses before, during, and after grazing cycles.



Use a grazing stick or ruler to monitor grass growth.

Dominant Forage Species	Minimum Starting Height in inches (turn animals in)	Minimum Grazing Height in inches (Do not graze below this protective height)
Alfalfa	6	4
Alkali sacaton	6	4
Blue grama	3	2
Little bluestem	6	4
Orchard grass	5	3
Russian wildrye	5	3
Sand bluestem, Big bluestem	8	6
Sideoats grama	6	4
Smooth brome grass	5	3
Switchgrass	8	6
Wheatgrasses (Pubescent, Intermediate, Crested, or Siberian)	5	3
Wheatgrasses (Western, Bluebunch, Slender, or Thickspike)	6	4
Wheatgrass, tall	8	6
Yellow indiangrass	8	6
Tufted hair grass	6	4
Nebraska sedge	6	4
Prairie cordgrass	8	5
Tall fescue	5	3

Source: NRCS, CO Specification Guide 528