


ANIMAL PERFORMANCE AND VEGETATIVE RESPONSE TO CONTINUOUS AND ROTATIONAL GRAZING

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During the summer of 1996, three permanent transects were set up in each replicated pasture (one per paddocks in rotational systems) to monitor the vegetative response to grazing system. Vegetative response will be measured by changes in species composition and biomass production for each pasture. Animal performance (ADG) will be compared between yearling heifers grazing in either rotational (3 pasture-1 herd) or continuous grazing systems. The trial will start in May 1997 and end in November

1999 and will be conducted at the NMSU Corona Range and Animal Research Center.

The replicated pastures will be grazed from May to November and rested during the winter. Animals will be randomly assigned to treatment by weight. Twenty-four hour shrink weights will be taken at the beginning, and every month until the end of the grazing period to determine animal performance. The transects are located on "key sites" and consist of 100 point readings to determine percent species composition and percent basal cover. Biomass production will be determined by clipping non-permanent exclosures.