

Cow-Q-Lator answers questions about pricing

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After this summer's drought caused a forage shortage for cattle producers, many are venturing into grazing cornstalks for the first time. This raises questions not only about pricing, but also the responsibilities renters have during grazing.

Factors like fencing and animal care can affect price, along with distance and number of animals. The Cornstalk Grazing Cow-Q-Lator ([\[tral.unl.edu/web/westcentral/agecon3\]\(http://westcentral.unl.edu/web/westcentral/agecon3\)\) is a tool that can help both the corn and cattle producers determine a reasonable rate, according to Extension ag economist Matt Stockton.](http://westcen</p></div><div data-bbox=)

"The tool is designed for cattle producers to evaluate costs of cornstalk grazing," Stockton said. "However, it could be used by a corn producer to calculate how much a prospective lessee can pay."

The Cow-Q-Lator takes many of these effects into account to determine the price of renting acres. This Microsoft Excel spreadsheet includes entries for number and size of animals, transportation costs as well as for care and supervision.

"Corn producers will find that the farther they are from the cattle's home, the less their stalks are worth," Stockton said. "However, they may be able to provide animal care and supervision and reduce the owner's costs."

Rent may be higher, for example, if the owner of the property builds the fence around the grazing area. Producers can also use the Cow-Q-Lator to the point at which the cost of transportation exceeds cost of lease. With the Cow-Q-Lator, both lessor and lessee can play around and figure out the best deal.

For more information on the Cow-Q-Lator, visit cropwatch.unl.edu or www.agmanagers

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