



**ALB Solar Grazing Workshop
May 8-10, 2024
Temple, TX**

WEDNESDAY, MAY 8

Frank W. Mayborn Civic & Convention Center

8:30 am – 5:00 pm **Day 1 Classroom**

8:30 am Welcome and Introductions

9:00 am Contract grazing and the opportunity for US sheep industry growth

Training will begin with an ALB intro outlining the need for expansion of the US sheep industry. Discussion will focus on the significance of imported lamb and how low input systems (such as solar grazing) provide an opportunity to be more competitive with a domestic product.

9:15 am Vegetation Management Objectives

This section will focus on the history of solar grazing along with other contract grazing industries that have existed before the widespread development of large scale solar. “What is vegetation management?” is the primary question to answer. As a grazer, understanding height restrictions and differences of grazing for shade prevention and fuel load reduction. Additionally, grazing management for optimal forage and soil health will be covered and will build off of the soil health session conducted in a virtual module.

10:00 am Break

10:15 am Selecting sheep that fit your operation
TAMU Extension, Jake Thorne, PhD

Texas A&M University will present on selecting sheep that fit specific environments and production systems.

11:00 am Solar Site Basics

The basics will be covered early in the program to ensure specific vocabulary is understood for the workshop. Array equipment and the differences between systems will highlight the grazing opportunities and hurdles with specific site designs. Understanding the rules and safety associated with operating within a solar array will be covered. Additionally, NERC compliance and the O&M dynamic will be a part of this session.

12:00 pm Lunch

1:00 pm Contract Grazing: What to expect

Understanding the scope of work will outline management systems such as grazing only, mowing only, and the hybrid models to ensure management of the site meets the company expectations. This section will also cover payment terms, insurance, contract lengths.

2:00 pm Break

2:15 pm What to look for: visiting the site before you bid
(Company discussion pre-construction)

Company interaction and understanding what to look for during the pre-construction phase of projects is a valuable skill for grazers to be exposed to. What to look for when visiting the site for the first time, what questions are important to ask to ensure long-term success.

3:00 pm Developing a Vegetation Management Plan

This session will highlight how to develop a professional vegetation management plan. This session will be interactive and should allow participants to work on their weak points of plan development. Items covered are:

- Setting goals: short and long term
- Mapping pasture rotations
- Stocking density
- Production thresholds for sheep
- Flock contingency plan
- Seasonal or year-round systems
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5:00 pm Closing remarks and discussion

THURSDAY, MAY 9

Frank W. Mayborn Civic & Convention Center

8:30 am – 5:00 pm **Day 2 Classroom**

8:30 am Marketing 101

9:15 am Operation Budgeting

Developing a budget for the sheep enterprise and the added needs for solar grazing systems. Added needs such as: Sheep purchases, labor, insurance and operating costs for an intensive grazing system. Ag lending along with payment scheduling with solar companies will also be covered.

10:15 am Break

10:30 am The Bidding Process: Preparing a bid

This session will explain different types of bidding companies may require and how to format the bid in a professional manner. Understanding the importance of knowing your cost of service and bidding

appropriately. Additionally, incorporating all facets of the management system (mowing, grazing, mobilization) into the bid for clear understanding will be covered.

11:15 am **The Bidding Process: Post-bid checklist**

Establishing site access dates and vegetation evaluation for mobilizing. “when should you start grazing” “what does stocking density look like on newly seeded arrays”. Understanding master service agreements and navigating long-term contracts following the bid process will be covered.

12:00 pm **Lunch**

1:00 pm **Growing Your Enterprise: FAQ**

Sourcing animals for rapid growth, growing internally (Pros and cons). Genetic selection for expansion with acquired stock and ewe lamb retention. Developing a workforce, establishing realistic expectations, and creating a sustainable business model.

2:00 pm **Grazing for Success: Implementing best practices**

This section will cover the things to look for during a pre-stocking tour along with fencing and water options while on the array, handling system basics. Developing reports for how vegetation is being managed throughout the season, and additional communication with O&M.

3:00 pm **Break**

3:15 pm **Industry Expert Roundtable**

Solar Grazer(s)
Asset O&M Manager
O&M Service Provider
Ag Finance
Extension Personnel

4:30 pm **Closing remarks and discussion**

FRIDAY, MAY 10

Field day

8:30 – 3:00 pm **Tour and Lunch**

- Solar site equipment ID
- Fencing/Water/Handling
- Equipment Review
- Q&A

Virtual Sessions

Soil Health and Grazing

- Understanding the impact of previous management
- Pasture improvement under panels, what options are there?
- Plant Identification for beneficial, noxious and/or poisonous plants

Flock Health

- Developing a health management for your flock
- Vaccination schedule
- VCPR with a growing operation
- Biosecurity
- Antibiotic stewardship

Guard Dogs

- Predators of concern
- Managing guard dogs

Transportation

- Animal handling and welfare
- Space requirements
- Biosecurity
- Finding/choosing a hauler

Nutrition

- Meeting requirements with forage
- Supplementing sheep on solar
- The importance of water

Parasite Management

- Internal parasites of concern
- Treatment options for parasite management
- Grazing for parasite control
- Value of genetic selection for parasite control