Why Has Pasture-based Dairying Developed in Missouri

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Grazing Growth in MO

- **Climate**
  - Few days below zero
  - No prolonged days of freezing
  - All grazers in SW MO out-winter
  - Average rainfall:
    - SW MO 43 inches
    - Central MO 39 inches
Grazing Growth (cont.)

- Climate allows:
  - Forage diversity
    - Cool season
    - Warm season
Grazing Growth (cont.)

- **Land**
  - 30% of MO’s 114 counties have less than 10,000 citizens
  - USDA, 1/1/05 land prices averaged $1740/acre (including buildings)
Map 1. Estimated cropland values per acre for July 2005

Missouri Average
Good cropland $2,060
Average cropland $1,657
Poor cropland $1,294

Map legend, region averages:
- Good cropland
- Average cropland
- Poor cropland
Grazing Growth (cont.)

- **Land**
  - 30% of MO’s 114 counties have less than 10,000 citizens
  - USDA, 1/1/05 land prices averaged $1740/acre (including buildings)
  - Prices vary based on distance from trading centers
Grazing Growth (cont.)

- Grass state
  - 3.5 million acres used for forage production (2002 USDA Ag Census)
  - MO national ranking
    - 3rd in all hay
    - 2nd hay, excluding alfalfa

- High quality alfalfa available at a reasonable price
Grazing Growth (cont.)

- **Grains**
  - MO national ranking
    - Soybeans 7\textsuperscript{th}
    - Corn grain 9\textsuperscript{th}
    - Winter wheat 11\textsuperscript{th}

- **By-products**
  - From corn, soybeans, wheat, rice, cotton
  - Breweries
  - Access to prices weekly
    http://agebb.missouri.edu/dairy/byprod/AllProducts.asp
Grazing Growth (cont.)

- **Dairy infrastructure**
  - Processing capacity
  - Equipment dealers in most areas
  - Feed mills/farm supplies
  - Large animal veterinarians
  - Opportunity for organic production if desired
Grazing Growth (cont.)

- **Livestock**
  - MO’s rank
    - 2nd beef operation
    - 6th dairy operations
    - 2nd all cows
  - Opportunities for marketing
University of Missouri SW Research Center Seasonal MIG Dairy

- Helps answer real grazing issues
- Advisory committee composed of regional dairy grazers
- In a state of transition following our trip to New Zealand in 2005
  - Developing a “system”
  - You will see the beginning today
Grazing Growth (cont.)

- Supporting infrastructure
  - Dairy grazing groups
  - MU specialists that understand and promote dairy grazing

- Intangibles
  - Good place to live
  - Friendly people