

Maple-Dale Farms

Kevin, Katie, Dyllyn, Nolan & Liam Aitken

Holstein, Ontario

- 240 Acres Owned
 - 200 Acres Pasture
 - 40 acres bush & riparian areas
 - 35 acres rented pasture
- Breeding 35 Purebred Hereford Cows
- Custom Graze
 - 70 cow/calf pairs



Why Only Pasture?

- ▶ Steve Kenyon-Alberta Custom Grazier
- ▶ Cattle vs. Equipment
- ▶ Family Life
- ▶ Work off the farm full time
- ▶ Financials
- ▶ Land Health

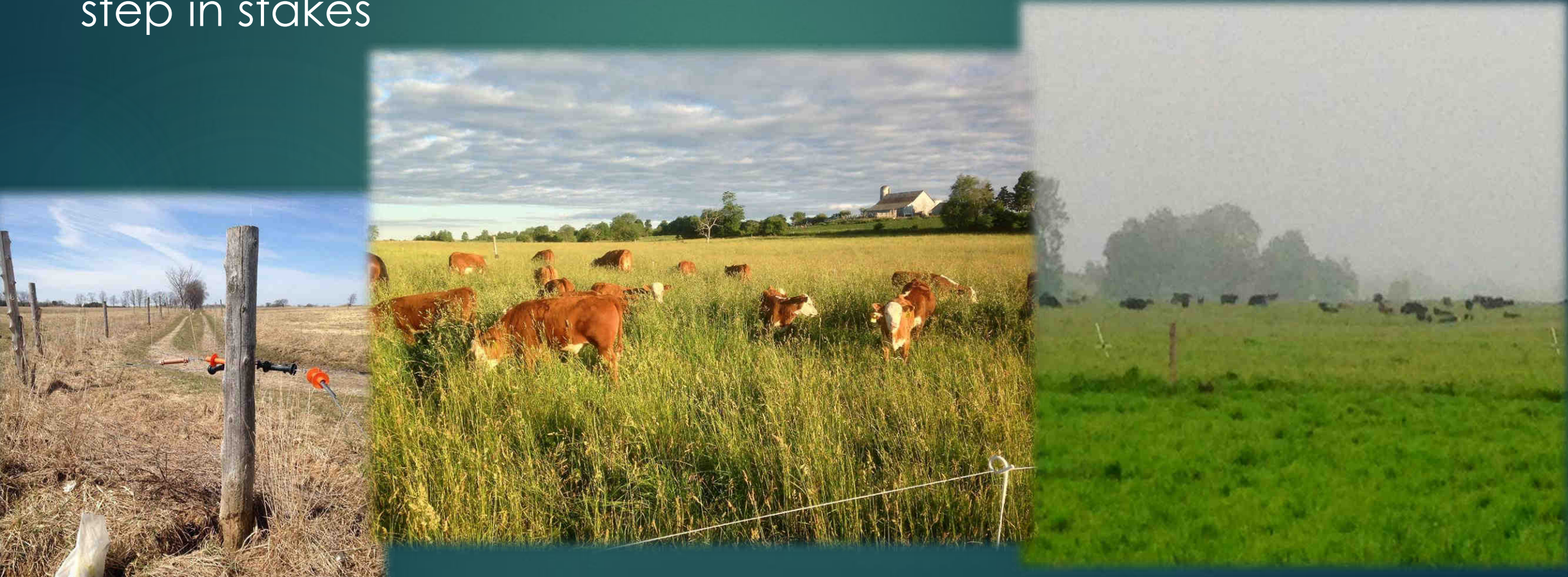




- ▶ 2009-2011 remaining cropland seeded down long term pasture mix
- ▶ White clover, ladino clover, trefoil, alfalfa, brome grass, orchard grass, perennial rye
- ▶ Frost seeding-white clover/trefoil

Fencing

- ▶ All pasture is rotationally grazed in 5-10 acre paddocks
- ▶ Single wire electric, splits fields, perimeter fence
- ▶ 25 acres-strip grazing, tumble wheels, reels and step in stakes



Pasture Goal

- ▶ To have the grass greener on my side of the fence



Pasture

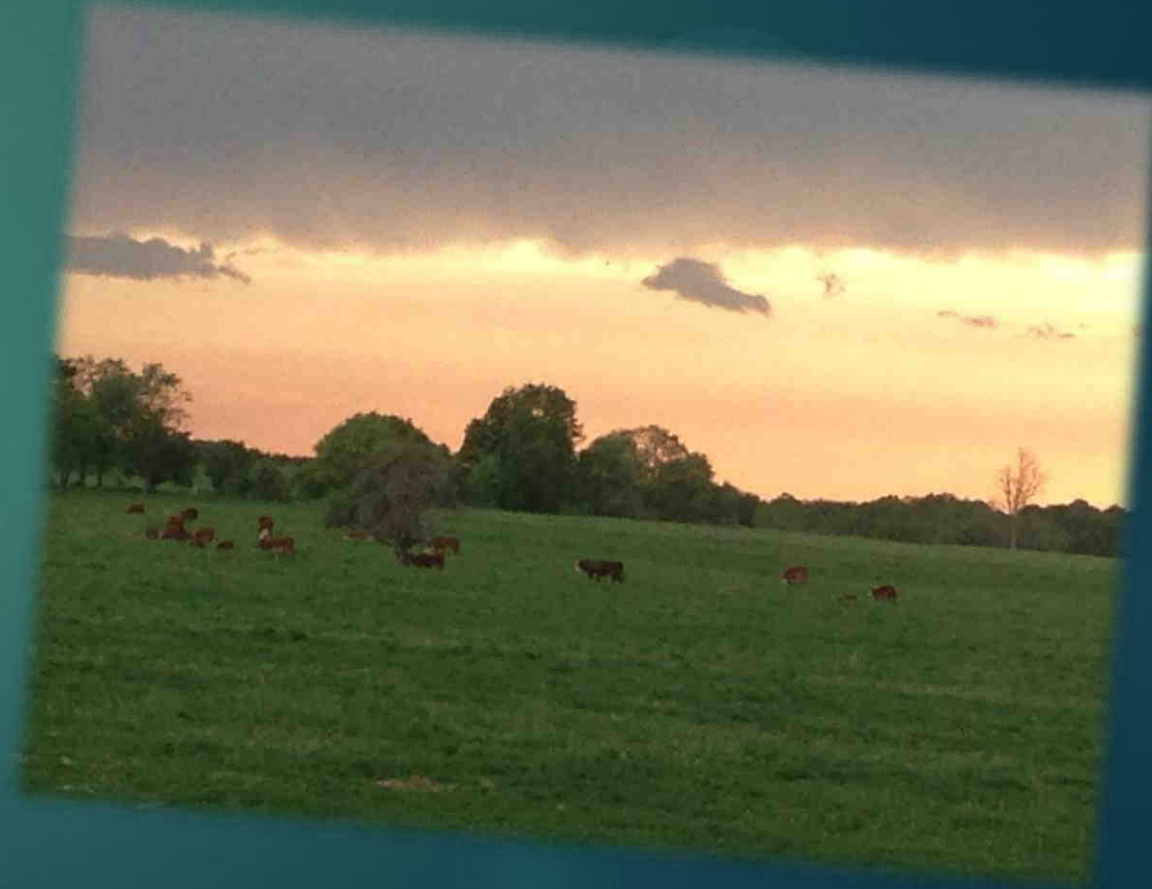
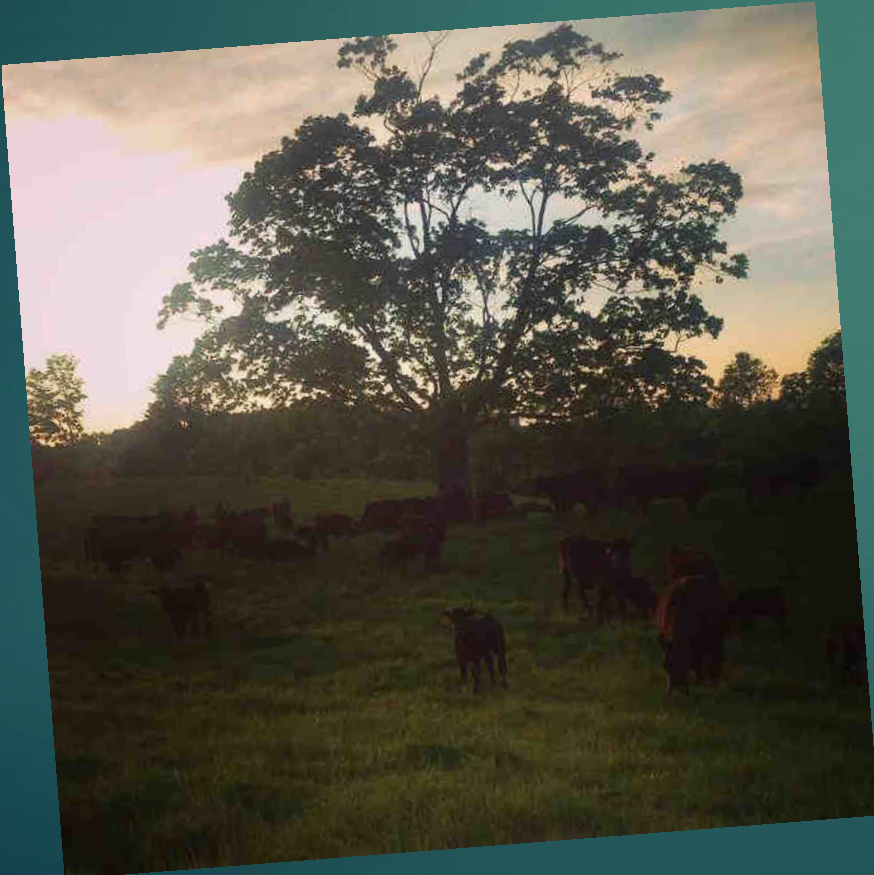
► Pasture Goal:

- To have maximum pasture growth and forage availability each growing day of the year
- Maximize the genetic potential of the cattle grazing it.



Pasture Season

- ▶ Early Spring Grazing
- ▶ Custom Cattle Entry, May 20-24



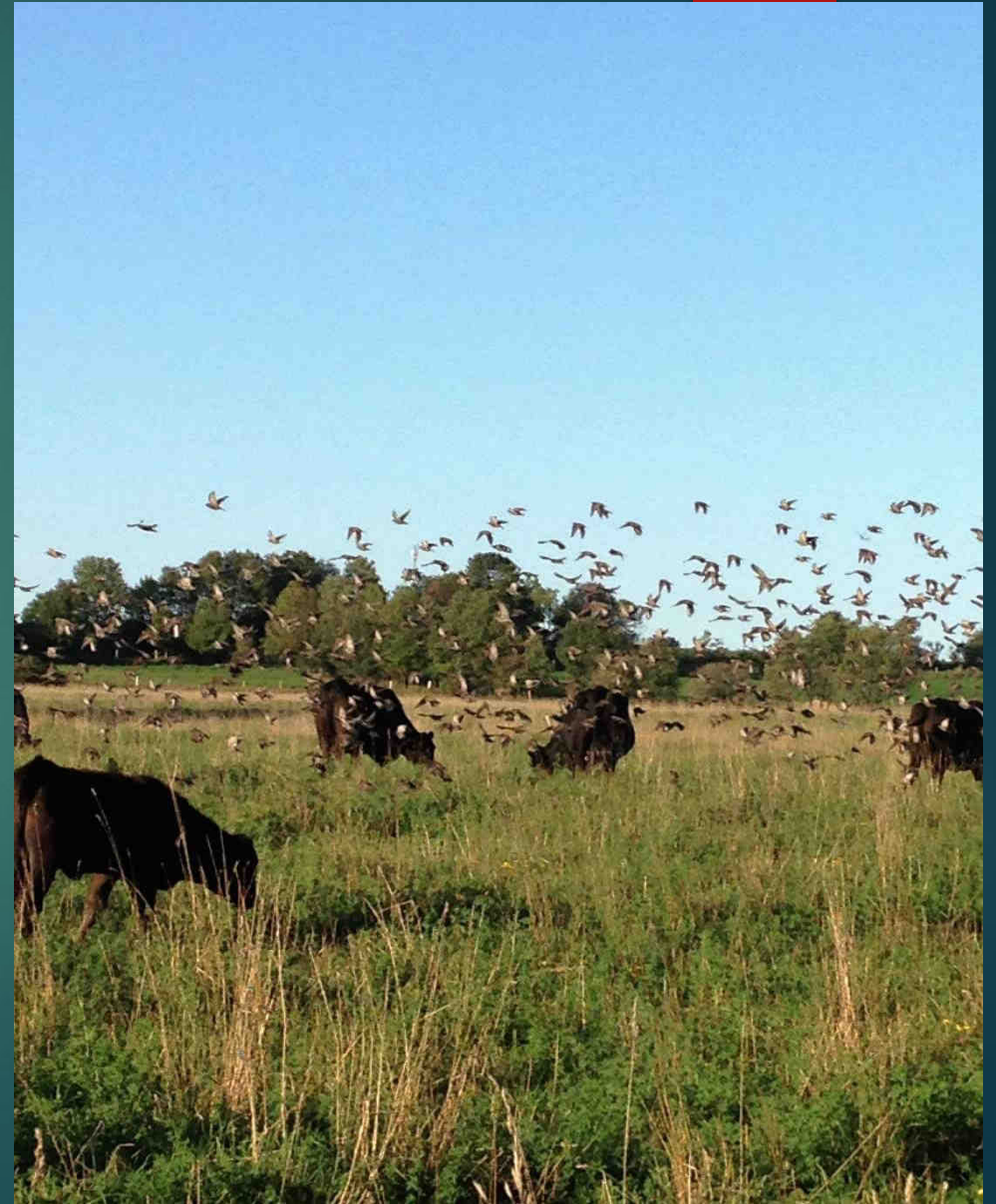


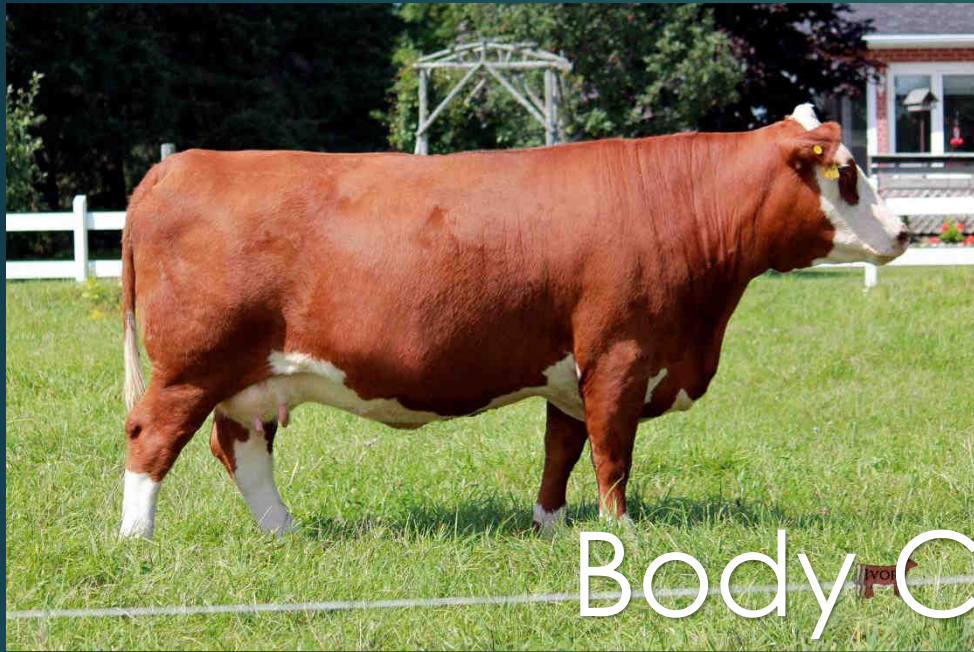
Strip Grazing

- Even graze pattern
- Pasture rest period
 - Early season 20-25 days
 - Mid-Season 30-40 day

Benefits of Rotational & Strip Grazing

- ▶ More available forage
- ▶ Longer grazing season means less hay needed
- ▶ Water management
- ▶ Wildlife Habitat(Bobolink)





Body Condition



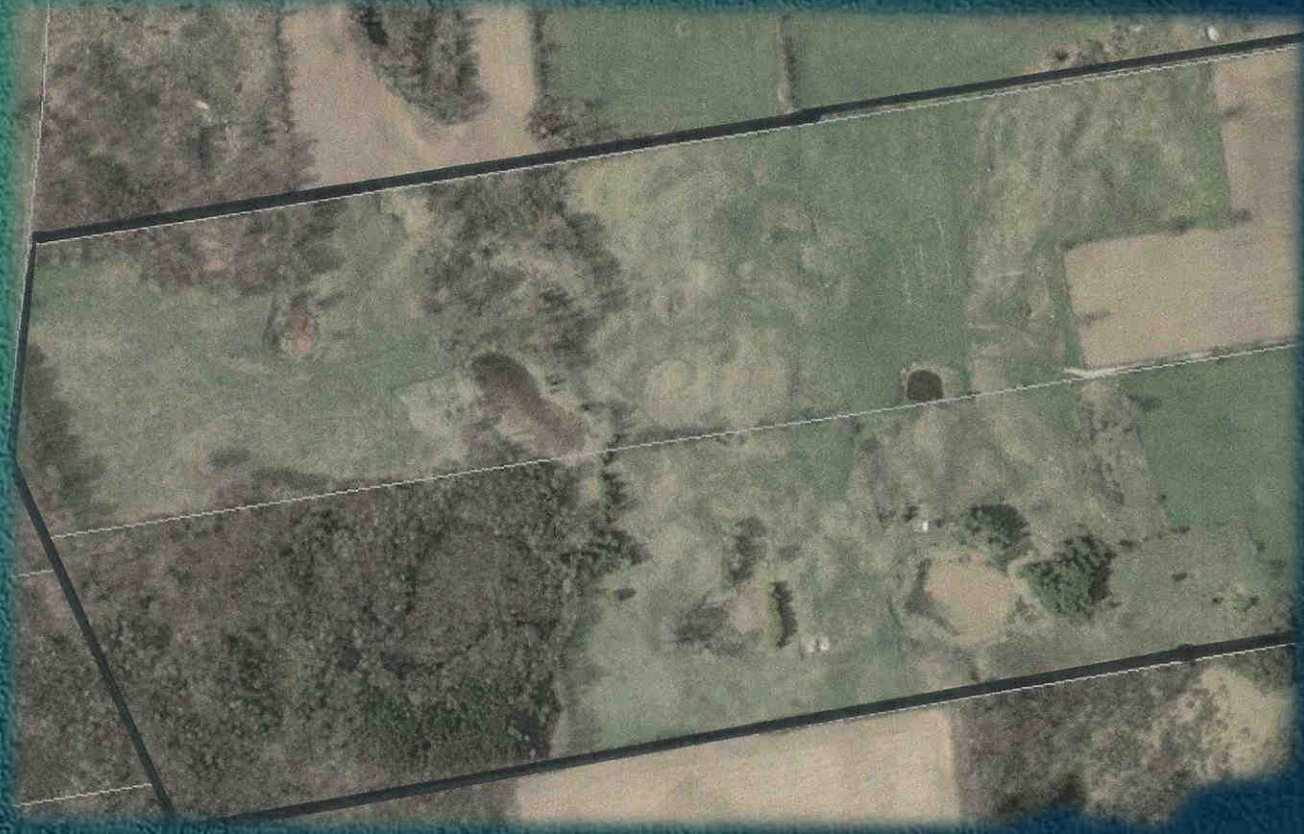
Calf Performance

Weaning Weights

- ▶ Calves Born Feb-March 2015
 - ▶ Steers Sold Oct 1 '15 753 lbs avg.
 - ▶ Heifers & Bulls Weaned Oct. 29 '15 730 lbs avg.
- ▶ Calves Born Feb-March 2016
 - ▶ Steers Sold Nov 1 '16 626 lbs avg.
 - ▶ Heifers & Bulls Weaned Oct. 10 '16 643 lbs avg.

Farm Topography

- ▶ Approx. 100 Acres classified as Burford Loam Soil
- ▶ Approx. 140 Acres Pike Lake Loam soil
- ▶ Gravel Bottom=Great Drainage
- ▶ Rough Terrain-Pike Lake Loam

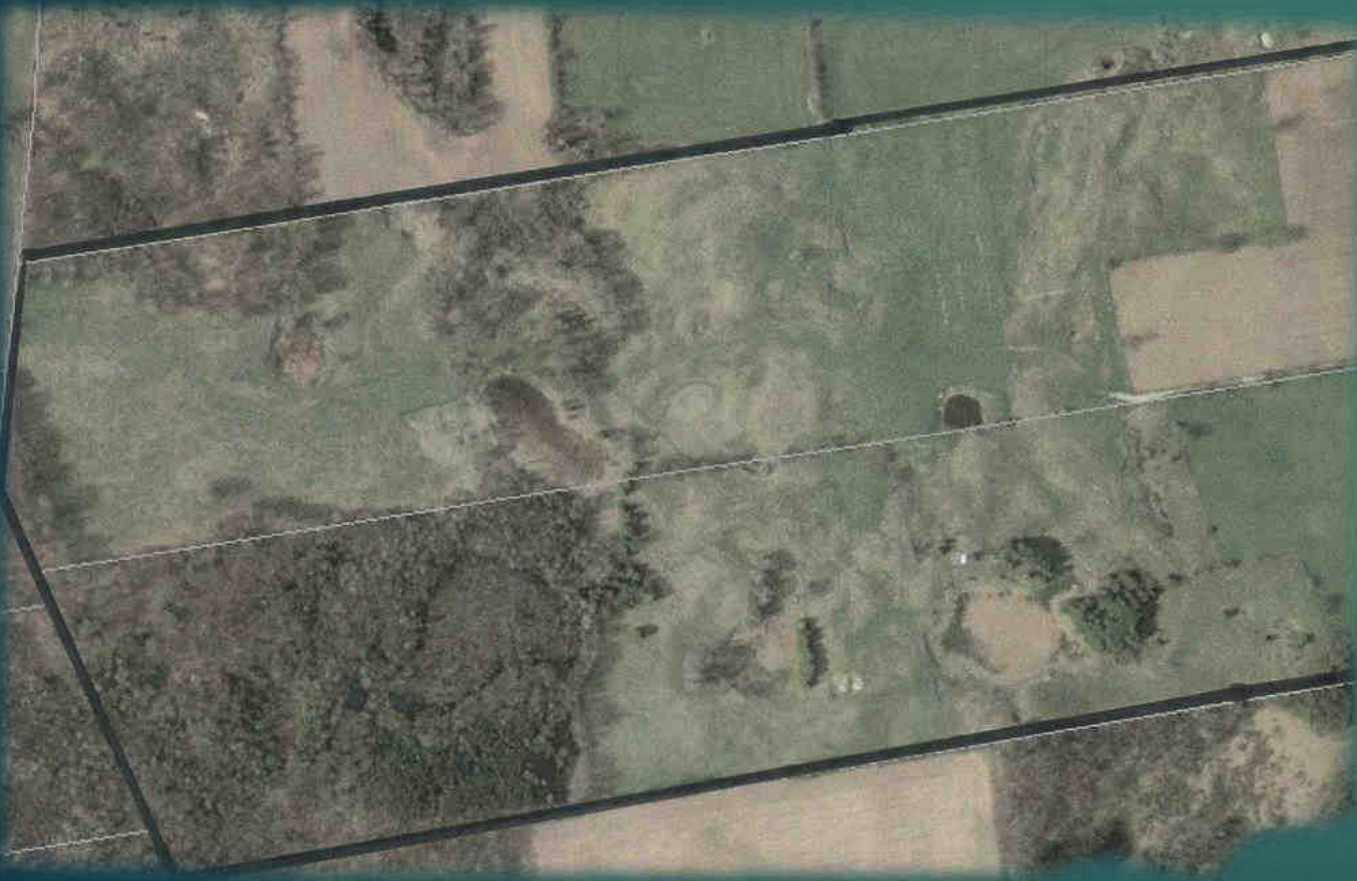


Topography Challenges

- ▶ Burford Loam Area
 - Flat, Little Shade, No Wind Breaks



Topography Challenges



► Pike Lake Soil Area

- Prone to Drought
- Encroaching Thorn Trees
- Riparian Areas
- Rough Terrain
- Large Boulders

Green in 2016?

► May 17th



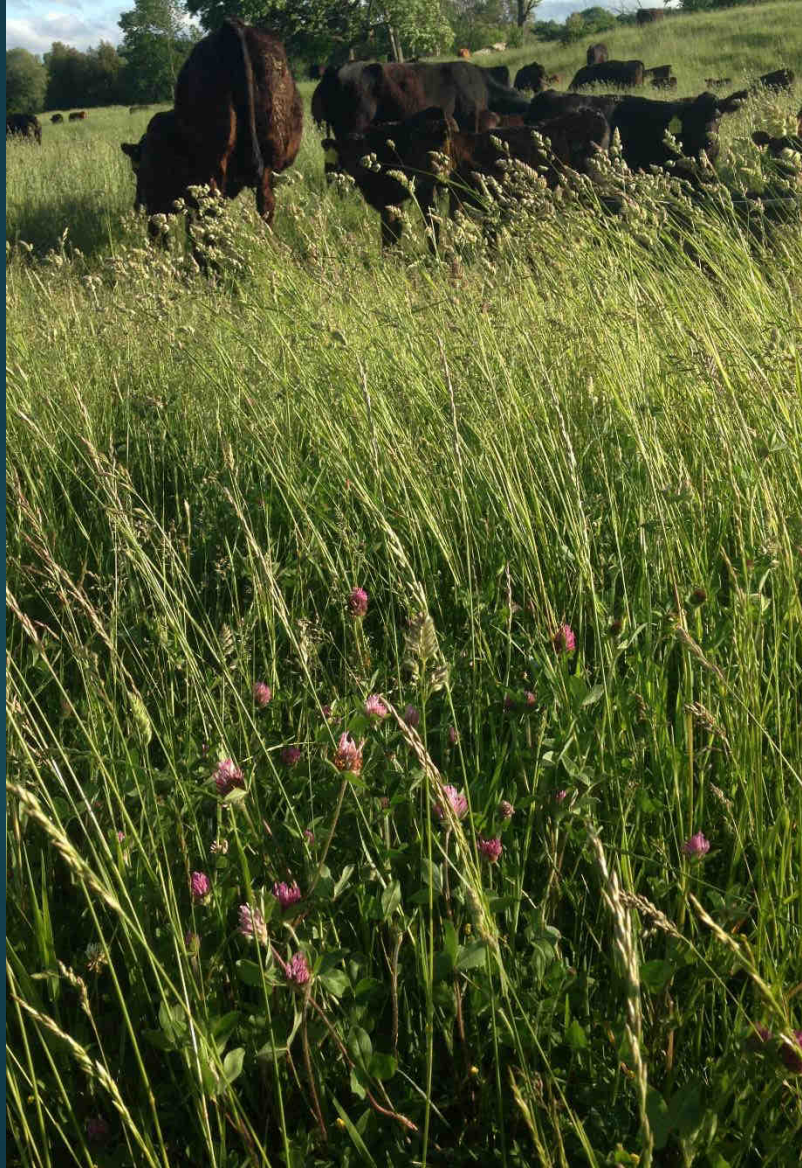
May 20th



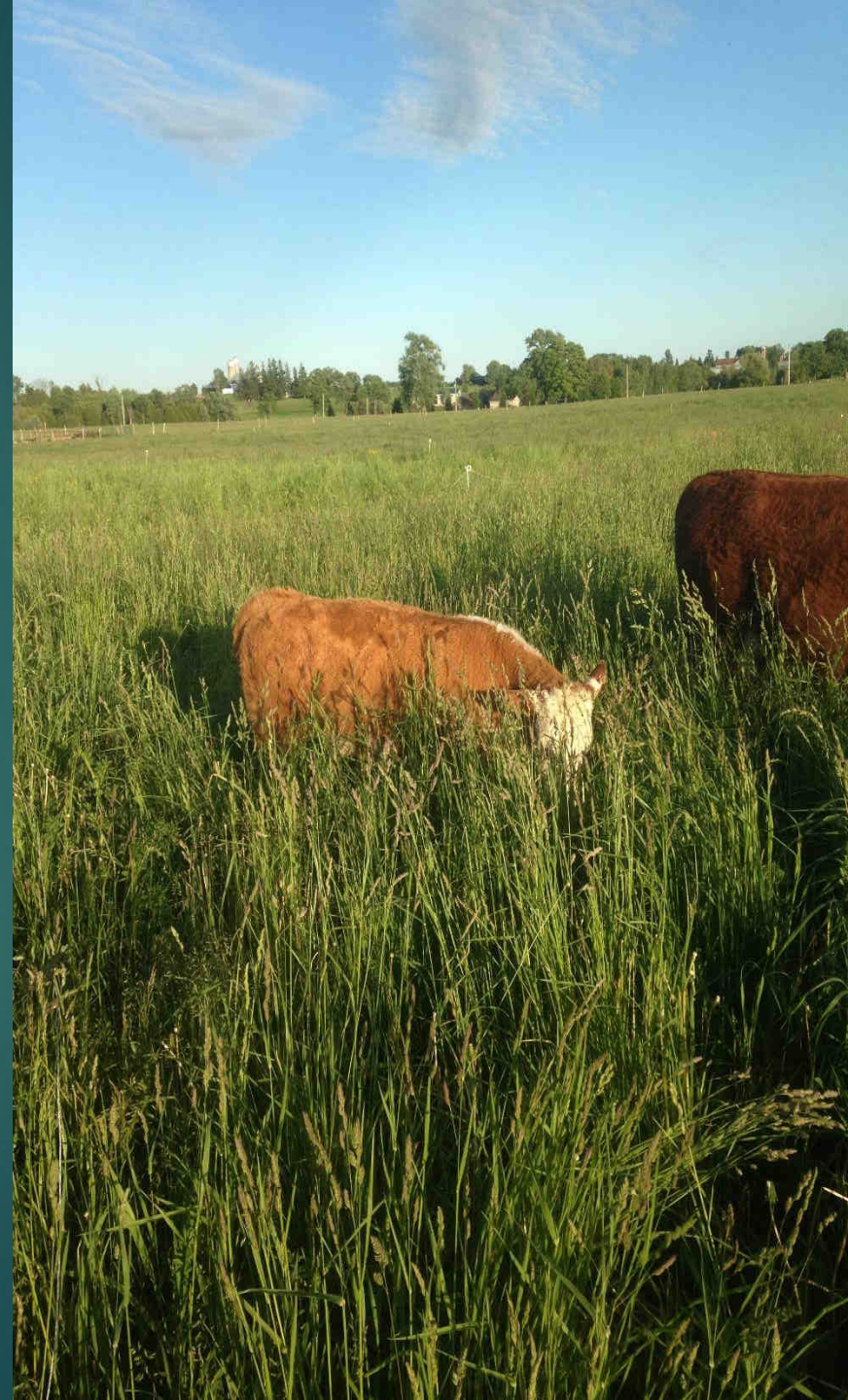
► May 29th



June 7th



June 10th



August 2016



September 3rd



October 7th



Extended Grazing Season

- ▶ No tilled fall rye – for early spring grazing
- ▶ Bale grazing for winter feeding
- ▶ Cover crops








**Nutrient Distribution & Fertilizing
Strategy**



A photograph of a farm scene. In the foreground, a group of brown and white cows are grazing in a green field. In the background, there is a red barn with a grey roof, surrounded by trees and a clear sky. The image is framed by a dark teal background with a red vertical bar on the right side.

Thank you for inviting me to
speak today



Check us out on
Facebook:
mapledalefarms

Kevin Aitken
519.321.9724
mapledalefarms@yahoo.ca