Livestock Considerations

Cow Calf:
- Should be able to minimize outside inputs
- Should match calving/breeding period with quality forage period
- Should have the longest grazing season
- Has more fluctuations in nutrient requirements
- Should be able to increase carrying capacity, increase beef production per acre, and/or decrease costs
- Need functionally efficient cows

Stockers:
- Potential for higher returns from good forage management
- More consistent nutrient requirements
- May require more outside inputs
- May require more/better facilities
- Steers vs heifers?
- Fall vs spring purchase?
- Purchase size?
- Should be able to get 1.5-2.0 lbs. ADG and 500-800 lbs. beef/ac

Sheep:
- Potentially the most efficient grazing animal
- Good conversion of forage to meat and wool
- Complement rather than compete with other livestock
- Provide good biological weed control
- Help diversify farm income
- Help maintain plant diversity in pastures
- Require more fencing
- Should manage to lamb on pasture to cut expenses

Replacement Heifers:
- Can have higher returns per acre
- Higher nutrient requirements
- Need to gain 1.75 lbs. per day from weaning to calving at 2 years
- May need more supplementation
- Longer growing cycle than stockers
- Usually have a higher average intake than stockers
- With MIG can achieve target weight at a lower cost
Dairy:

- Potential for the highest return from grass management
- Has highest nutrient requirement
- Requires more time and management
- Requires more overhead
- Requires more outside inputs
- Shade and water are more critical
- MIG can reduce feed costs and other outside inputs
- MIG may reduce animal waste handling costs
- MIG may reduce some overhead costs
- MIG may improve health/life of herd
- Milk production can be maintained with MIG
- MIG may reduce equipment cost and maintenance
- Most profitable system will be seasonal, grass based with cows that are adapted and efficient grazers