



## IN THIS ISSUE:

- Planning Fences
  - Benefits p.1
  - Locations p.2
  - Layout Plan p.2 - 3
  - Permanent & Temporary p.4
  - Horse/Cattle Fencing p.5
- Profiled Event p. 2
- Wood Duck Boxes p.6
- Weed of the Month p.7
- Contact Us p.7

## MAINTENANCE

- Continue to assess fire safety compliance
- Evaluate fencing needs & develop a fencing plan
- Monitor drainage ditches and culverts
- Prune Dormant Fruit Trees and Shrubs

## PLANTING

- Make a record of what you planted and where you planted it, of what succeeded and what failed in 2005, to help you do better in the future.
- Mail order bareroot plants now to save \$\$

## Planning Fences

Whether you are raising livestock or crops, you are certain to have problems in building new fences and maintaining old ones. This month we focus on fencing for containing and managing livestock, and watch for next month's fencing installment on keeping unwanted wildlife out.

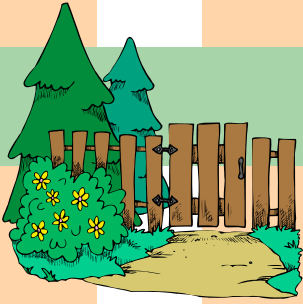
### The Benefits

It is sometimes difficult to measure the financial return on your fencing investment. Yet it is easy to recognize that the following results are direct advantages:

- ❖ **Boundary lines** are permanently established.
- ❖ **Animal diseases** are more easily controlled.
- ❖ **Appearance** of the farm is improved.
- ❖ **Quality livestock** can be kept separated from scrub animals: breeding is controlled.
- ❖ **Friendly relationships** with neighbors are more easily maintained.
- ❖ **Loss of livestock** on highways is **prevented**.

Fencing pastures and rangeland has several advantages:

- ❖ **Increases grazing capacity** of land as much as 25 percent.
- ❖ **Permits grazing both cattle and sheep** in the same pasture.
- ❖ **Makes rotational and deferred** grazing functional so pastures can be properly rested.
- ❖ **Gives seasonal control** of hazardous areas such as bogs or poisonous plants.
- ❖ **Allows new seedlings** extra time to become established.



## Events

[Organic Gardening Course \(Online\) given by Cornell University – Instruction starts Jan 16<sup>th</sup>](#)

[2006 Stockton Ag Expo & Family Ranch Show - January 19 thru 21st](#)

[2006 Ecological Farming Conference, Jan 25-28, Santa Cruz](#)

[Sierra College AG 118 Ranch Property Development & Management – Instruction starts Jan 27<sup>th</sup>](#)

[2006 PlacerGROWN Farm Conference Feb 4<sup>th</sup> – Lincoln](#)

[2006 Colusa Farm Show - Feb 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> - Colusa](#)

## Determining Location of Fences

Before developing a fencing plan, you will need to consider the following factors:

- ❖ The **capability** of your **land**.
- ❖ How to **fit** your **fences** to your **soil conservation practices**.
- ❖ How to **arrange** your **fields** and **passageways** for **convenience** and **labor saving**.
- ❖ Where you can **justify permanent fences** and where **movable fences** will make more sense.

## PLANNING THE FENCE LAYOUT

Follow these 4 steps to a fencing plan that really works for you.

### 1. Sketch the layout of your property.

Use your legal plot map for accurate outside dimensions and shape of your property. You should have this with your legal escrow papers, or you can get one from the county assessor's office.

### 2. Divide your land into areas that are best suited to the following uses:

- Pastures (irrigated and non-irrigated)
- Woodlands
- Cultivated areas
- Wildlife sections
- Annual Rangeland
- Wetlands (including ponds)

Fence each area separately and, where you can, use straight fences. (Straight fences save time & money) Where a fence is adjacent to a waterway, locate it parallel to the waterway and allow for a buffer zone. A good rule of thumb is to keep livestock out of natural waterways in order to alleviate damage to these fragile areas of your land.

## Fencing layout continued

### 3. Sketch in proposed lane(s) to connect farm buildings with permanent pastures.

Your lane(s) should connect all fields to be grazed. By installing entrance gates to each field the animals will always have access back to the barn for feed, water, and protection. Otherwise you must provide water to each individual fenced field.

**Key Design Point: Passageways should always be located in well-drained areas, if at all possible.**

### 4. Indicate gates and other passageways.

If possible, gates and passageways for livestock and equipment should be in the corner of each field. If you have fields on opposite sides of a public road, the gates should be located where there is good visibility from either direction. Provide ample clearance for a tractor to be parked while opening or closing a gate. Many rural roads provide very little space. It is important that you provide a drive-in area at the gate as a matter of safety – one with enough space so that no part of your equipment extends into the roadway.

## Profiled Event – 2006 Colusa Farm Show

Date: February 7-8-9, 2006

Hours: 9am to 5pm

Cost: FREE Admission!

Location: Colusa Fairgrounds, Colusa CA

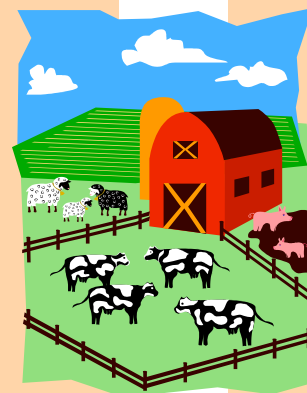
The purpose of this showcase is to acquaint agriculturalists with the latest in modern farming equipment and techniques.

This show is sponsored by the 44th District Agricultural Association, State of California.

Visit [www.thefarmshow.com](http://www.thefarmshow.com) for all the show details or call them at 530-458-2641

*Did we mention that they plan to have many fine examples of livestock fencing at this show too? Don't miss this one!*

It is important that you provide a drive-in area at the gate as a matter of safety – one with enough space so that no part of your equipment extends into the roadway.





## Common Fence Types

**Barbed Wire Fences**

**Cable Wire Fences**

**Woven Wire Fences**

**Mesh Fences**

**Board Fences**

**Electric Fences**

## Permanent vs. Temporary Fencing – What, where?

### LOCATING PERMANENT FENCES

There are no set rules for determining where permanent fences should be built, except possibly the perimeter fence of your property.

**If you are not sure about some of the permanent fences, mark them as movable fences** until you get some experience with your fence arrangement. After a year or two of experience, you can decide where they should be. (Mark permanent fences with a heavy line and dots, and movable fences with dotted lines.)

### LOCATING TEMPORARY FENCES

Movable fences cost less to buy and build. They generally are less effective and have a shorter life span.

Movable fences have a definite place in any livestock program. Their principal advantages are as follows:

They **can be used temporarily** in place of permanent fences until you can afford to invest in permanent fencing. (I would not use temporary fencing for property boundary barriers because of liability; they are great for interior cross fencing)

They **can be relocated** from year to year until you are certain what field layout fits your needs.

They **can be moved** to divide a field so that it can be pastured on a rotational basis.

They help you **adjust the size of a temporary pasture** to the amount of livestock being grazed, thus assuring good use of the pastured area while new growth develops in the rest of the pasture. (Remember the phases of growth I, II, III. We want to stay in phase II growth, 4" – 12" in grass height)



## Fencing options for horses and cattle...

**Leisure and High-Value Horses**, the mesh wire fence and the board fence are excellent. These are also excellent fences for other farm animals, but other types of excellent fences are much cheaper for cattle, and sheep. For leisure horses, the mesh wire fence with a 1inch x 6-inch board over it provides excellent protection from injury. Also a 10 wire, high-tensile smooth wire is recommended.

Horses, particularly young ones, often run, play and kick feet into the air. They can hang a foot, pull a shoe, strain a muscle, or cut their hide on most woven and barbed wire fences. An excellent permanent electric fence for leisure horses can also be built with five or more strands of smooth wire.

A **3-strand barbed** wire fence is rated **fair** for cattle; however, a **4-or 5-strand** fence is much **better**. The upkeep for this kind of fence is high. Gage 12 ½ wire will last about 33 years, while 14 gage has a life of about 19 years in a humid climate.

The heavy-and extra-heavyweight woven wire fence with a height of 39" or more and one or more strands of barbed wire above it makes an excellent fence for cattle.

**Cable, mesh** and **board** fences make strong, excellent fences for cattle. The **costs** are **high**; therefore, these fences are used in areas where cattle are confined.

Electric fences with four or more lines of smooth galvanized wire make excellent permanent fences for cattle. Three-strand fences are rated good. The cost of a 4-line electric fence is about 50 percent of that of a 4-strand barbed wire and 30 percent of a 1047-11-12 woven wire fence. A moderate amount of upkeep is necessary with electric fences.

.....  
Most of the information within  
this newsletter was got from  
the publication

"PLANNING FENCES"

American Assoc. for Vocational  
Instructional Materials  
220 Smithonia Road, Winterville,  
Georgia  
30683-9527  
(706) 742-5355  
www.aavim.com

J. Howard Turner is  
the author  
of this publication, and  
Dr. Roland R. Harris,  
former professor of  
Agricultural Engineering,  
University of Georgia,  
was a consultant for the  
writing of this publication,  
both are now deceased.

We highly recommend  
that you get this  
publication.

ISBN 0-89606-049-7  
www.aavim.com

.....



### Wood Duck Box



- 👍 Anchoring boxes securely, but where you can still access them to check them.
- 👍 Placing boxes within 200 feet of water.
- 👍 Checking boxes often to remove debris, predators that are trying to move in and to replenish nest material (wood shavings), as needed.
- 👍 Taking time to enjoy your handiwork and to share your experience with friends & family.

### Wood Duck Box



- 👍 Painting the boxes
- 👍 Altering the entrance hole in any way.
- 👍 Placing boxes on trees or limbs (unless you can easily access the location - personal safety is #1)

## Special Offer!!!

Improve Wood Duck habitat on your property with a handmade nesting box. These beauties are available for only \$40 at the Nevada County Resource Conservation District office. With this purchase you also support local high school students raise money for science field trips. The Nevada County Contractor Association and the NCRCD proudly sponsor this worthy project.

Call the good folks at the NCRCD (530) 272-3417 for more info.

### Some Information About Wood Ducks:

- Females are identified by the white rings around their eyes.
- Acorns, moist seeds and invertebrates are their preferred foods.
- Pairs of wood ducks are generally found from late winter through April
- Wood ducks will search for their nests beginning in early February and on into March.
- Laying season is generally from March to June.
- Wood duck eggs take 28-32 days to hatch.
- Ducklings leave the nest in mid-morning when they are only 15-25 hours old.
- Ducklings can safely fall 50 feet or more.

### Habitat Requirements & Box Placement:

- Forested wetlands, swamps, ponds and lakes are good areas; make sure the boxes are visible to the ducks, without limbs blocking the entrance or the box.
- Place box 8-12 feet above ground.
- Place box 30-100 feet from nearest water source.
- Space boxes at least 100 feet apart.
- Boxes should be hung vertically or angled slightly forward, never backward as the ducklings will not be able to get out.

### Box Maintenance & Cleaning:

- Put 4-6 inches of wood shavings (not sawdust) in the bottom of the box to start. Always keep shavings in the boxes.
- Check your wood duck box in January, mid April and again in mid July.
- If there is a hen in the box while you are doing the check, leave her alone and come back once she has left.
- Make sure to evict any inhabitants that aren't wood ducks.

This valuable Wood Duck information was provided by Lesa Osterholm of the NCRCD and available to us compliments of the California Waterfowl Association 916-648-1406



# WEED OF THE MONTH

## Contact Us

Phone:  
530.269.1217

E-Mail:  
[keith@kcrabtree.com](mailto:keith@kcrabtree.com)  
[paul@kcrabtree.com](mailto:paul@kcrabtree.com)



*Helping you manage  
your Green Acres*

**[Have you seen  
this noxious,  
invasive weed  
on your  
property?](#)**

Click to view images

## Perennial Pepperweed – *Lepidium latifolium*

**Description:** An rhizomatous perennial in the Mustard Family that is an extremely invasive weed known by many common names: perennial pepperweed, perennial peppergrass, perennial peppergrass, broad-leaved peppergrass, peppergrass, slender perennial peppergrass, tall whitetop or dittander. This perennial plant grows from 1 to 4 feet tall. The lanceolate leaves are bright green to gray-green, have a smooth (entire) to toothed margin. The basal leaves are larger than upper leaves. The white flowers develop in dense clusters near the ends of branches. Individual flowers are very small, but the entire top of the plant blooms in early summer through fall. It produces a two-seeded fruit capsule. The reddish-brown seeds are round, flat, slightly hairy, and about 1/16 inch (1 mm) long.

**Where would I find it?** From sea level to 4,000ft, it is most frequently found in riparian areas, marshes, estuaries, irrigation channels, wetlands, and floodplains, but is not exclusive to these areas. If introduced, it can proliferate in roadsides, native hay meadows, alfalfa fields, and rangeland habitats.

**Where did it come from and how does it spread?** A native from North Africa, Southern Europe and Western Asia, this weed has invaded every state in the Western U.S. except for Arizona. Perennial pepperweed was first discovered in California in 1936 and it is believed that perennial pepperweed was introduced to the central valley as an accidental contaminant in sugar beet seed. Rhizomes and seeds are often contaminants of fill dirt or topsoil during construction. Seeds can be carried on equipment (especially tires), dried flower arrangements, livestock, waterfowl, contaminated hay, feedstuffs and straw used in soil stabilization projects. This plant has been found to produce roots capable of tapping water tables as deep as 10ft. Its prolific seed production can create an annual seed bank of over 6 billion seeds per acre.

**What problems does it cause?** Large colonies replace native grasses, sedges and rushes. Infestations lower protein content and digestibility of the pasture for livestock. If the infested area is not mowed down, the accumulation of the non-degraded stems and leaf litter can physically inhibit future grazing and seed germination of preferred pasture species. If ingested in large quantities blindness, impaired swallowing and use of the tongue have been observed. The semi-woody stems hinder nesting waterfowl and the weed prevents the regeneration of willows, cottonwoods and other desirable riparian plants. Lastly, Pepperweed impairs scenic value of our natural areas and reduces important biodiversity.

**How can I get rid of it?** With no known biological controls and mechanical means commonly furthering the increase of this plants spread, the best control seems to be from the use of herbicides. Herbicides may be most effective when applied during the flowering stage but some research indicates flower bud stage. The most successful chemical controls, to date, include metsulfuron (Escort®), chlorsulfuron (Telar®), and Imazapyr (Arsenal®). [Contact your local county commissioner, farm advisor, and/or a licensed pest control advisor for professional guidance regarding the use of these chemicals.](#)