

BLUESTEM PASTURE RELEASE 2019

Released: June 17, 2019

The 2019 results on bluestem pasture leases utilize the responses from the 2019 Kansas Bluestem Pasture Survey conducted from January through April of 2019 over the 14 Bluestem counties. It is important to point out that the format of the 2019 survey is different from previous surveys. The 2019 survey changes were in response to the long-time request to change the questions to better reflect bluestem prairie leasing practices. The new survey format incorporated suggestions from a focus group of report users that included landowners, livestock owners, livestock care providers, and Flint Hills extension agents. Because of the format change, discussion on leasing rates are not directly comparable to prior years. Please refer to previous Bluestem releases for historical leasing rates.

The 14 Bluestem counties surveyed include: Geary, Pottawatomie, Wabaunsee, Chase, Lyon, Morris, Marion, Butler, Chautauqua, Cowley, Elk, Coffey, Greenwood, and Woodson. Lease types discussed include short summer season leases, $\frac{3}{4}$ summer season leases, full summer season leases, winter grazing leases, and full year leases. The grazing period of short summer season leases lasts about 90 days; a $\frac{3}{4}$ summer season contract has a grazing period of about 120 days; and the grazing season is typically around 180 days for a full summer season lease. About 46% of the respondents to the survey are landowners; 34% of the respondents are livestock owners; and 20% of the respondents are livestock care providers.

In 2019, the condition of bluestem pasture in the Flint Hills region of Kansas was rated as 1.7 percent very poor, 6.7 percent poor, 20.3 percent adequate, 50.1 percent good, and 21.2 percent excellent. In 2017, the condition of Bluestem pasture in the Flint Hills region of Kansas was rated as 0.7 percent very poor, 3.4 percent poor, 13.1 percent adequate, 44.7 percent good, and 38.1 percent excellent. The 2019 results indicate that the Bluestem counties received adequate rainfall. However, responses indicate that pasture conditions in 2019 are not as good as they were in 2017.

Responses to the sources of **water** being used for livestock on bluestem pasture were distributed in the following manner: ponds, 43.4 percent; streams or spring-fed or spring development, 26.5 percent; rural water, 7.8 percent; wells, 7.3 percent; solar powered, 6.4 percent; windmill, 5.5 percent; electric-powered wells, 2.3 percent; and hauling, 0.9 percent. The biggest changes from 2017 to 2019 were in rural water and electric-powered wells. Rural water as the supply source increased from 2.7 percent to 7.8 percent; electric-powered wells decreased from 4.4 percent in 2017 to 2.3 percent in 2019. Kansas stock water supplies are no longer reported, as of 2018, by USDA. Missouri stock water supplies on June 2 were rated as 0 percent very short, 0 percent short, 77 percent adequate, and 23 percent surplus.

About 83 percent of the respondents reported **burning** their pastures. Most of the burning took place between April 1st and April 10th. Eighty-nine percent of **available pasture** was **contracted** in the 2018-2019 season. By lease type, almost 21 percent of the respondents had short summer leases; 18.9 percent had full year leases, and 44 percent had full summer season leases. Only 10 percent and 6.3 percent had $\frac{3}{4}$ summer season and winter grazing leases, respectively. Of the **acres** that respondents had contracted, 23 percent were under full summer season contracts; 32 percent were under short summer season contract for early intensive grazing; 11 percent were under $\frac{3}{4}$ summer season contracts; 27 percent were leased for the full year; and about seven percent for winter grazing. The average number of acres lease

ranged from 722 for full summer season leases to 2089 acres for short summer season leases.

The **start date** of the grazing season for most of the full summer season contracts was May 1, and the mode ending date was November 1. The mode starting date for short summer season or intensive grazing was also May 1, and the mode ending date was July 31. Most of $\frac{3}{4}$ summer season contracts start May 1 and end in late August. Winter grazing leases often start around October 15 or November 1 and last for about six months.

The term “with care” has a wide range of meaning across the 14 Bluestem counties. Therefore, the new survey format attempted to address that issue. The 2019 survey format allowed respondents to select from 10 specific and one “other” category of care services that may be included in the lease rate. The care services and related response percentages are shown in the following table.

Care Services Percentage of Total Respondents by Lease Types

Care Type	Percentage of Care (%)			
	Short Summer Season	$\frac{3}{4}$ Summer Season	Full Summer Season	Full Year Lease
Burning	82.61	100.00	84.38	91.67
Fence Maintenance	86.96	80.00	71.88	83.33
Grass Management	78.26	80.00	53.13	75.00
Distributing Salt & Mineral	73.91	80.00	34.38	58.33
Riding/Checking Cattle	73.91	80.00	31.25	50.00
Doctoring	69.57	80.00	28.13	58.33
Liability Insurance Coverage	34.78	-	28.13	33.33
Providing Medicine	21.74	-	18.75	58.33
Providing Salt & Mineral	21.74	20.00	15.63	41.67
Guaranteed Count	30.43	20.00	6.25	25.00
Other	13.04	-	9.38	8.33

- No Response.

Burning was provided by most of the respondents when care was provided. **Burning** was included in 84 percent of all **full summer** season leases with care. Services provided by the landlord or caretaker in full summer season leasing arrangements were: fence maintenance, 72 percent; grass management including weed & tree control, 53 percent; distributing salt & mineral, 34 percent; riding/checking cattle, 31 percent; doctoring, 28 percent; liability insurance coverage, 28 percent; providing medicine, 18 percent; providing salt & mineral, 16 percent; guaranteed count, 6 percent; and other miscellaneous services including provide or applying herbicide, 9 percent.

Fence maintenance was the service that was provided most often by the landlord or caretaker in **short summer** season leasing arrangements, about 87 percent. Other services included were: burning, 83 percent; grass management, 78 percent; distributing salt & mineral, 74 percent; riding/checking cattle, 74 percent; doctoring, 70 percent; liability insurance coverage, 35 percent; providing medicine, 22 percent; providing salt & mineral, 22 percent; guaranteed count, 30 percent; and other miscellaneous services, 13 percent.

Services provided in $\frac{3}{4}$ **summer** season lease arrangements were relatively less prevalent. Liability insurance coverage and providing medicine services were not included in any of the $\frac{3}{4}$ summer season leases with care. All $\frac{3}{4}$ summer lease responses with care arrangements included burning. Eighty percent of those lease respondents indicated services that included fence maintenance, grass management, distributing salt & mineral, riding/checking cattle, and doctoring. Twenty percent provided salt & mineral and guaranteed count.

Burning was also the service most often provided in **full year** contracts. Other services included were: fence maintenance, 83 percent; grass management, 75 percent; distributing salt & mineral, 58 percent; riding/checking cattle, 50 percent; doctoring, 58 percent; liability insurance coverage, 33 percent; providing medicine, 58 percent; providing salt & mineral, 42 percent; guaranteed count, 25 percent; and other miscellaneous services, 8 percent.

The number of years a bluestem lease has been in place varies. Most of the bluestem lease arrangements changed annually. Sixty-seven percent of the leases were yearly leases. Eleven percent of the leases have been in place for more than 10 years. About 52 percent of bluestem pasture leases were written, and 48 percent of the leases were oral leases.

The average lease rates for the various care services are shown in the following tables. To be included in the average, the lease rates had to be associated with the exact same care services. In these tables, B represents burning, and D represents doctoring. M indicates that the care giver administers medicine. F, G, and L indicate that the care provider maintains the fence, grass, and liability policy, respectively. DS and PS indicate that the care provider distributes salt and/or provides salt. Finally, the care provider may guarantee a count, C, of the cattle and may ride, R, the cattle.

Care Services Average Lease Rates by Lease Types

Care Services	Average Full Summer Lease Rates			
	600 lb.		1250 lb.	
	\$/head	\$/acre	\$/head	\$/acre
BDMFGLDSPSCR	1/	1/	1/	20.00
BDMFGDSR	93.00	1/	300.00	1/
BFGDS	1/	25.00	1/	26.00
BFG	1/	26.00	140.00	23.00
BF	1/	24.25	150.00	26.00
B	115.00	22.00	200.00	29.00
F	182.00	35.00	156.00	35.00

Care Services	Short Summer Average Lease Rates			
	600 lb.		1250 lb.	
	\$/head	\$/acre	\$/head	\$/acre
BDFGLDSCR	100.00	33.50	1/	1/
BDFGLDSR	91.25	32.50	1/	1/

Care Services	Full Year Average Lease Rates			
	600 lb.		1250 lb.	
	\$/head	\$/acre	\$/head	\$/acre
BDMFGLDSPSCR	1/	1/	1/	25.00
B	1/	22.00	1/	21.00

1/ Insufficient reports to publish.

a typical 600 pound animal was 2.7 acres in a short summer season contract. In a $\frac{3}{4}$ summer season lease, 4.5 acres were allowed. An average of 7.0 acres was allowed in a full year lease. In a winter grazing lease, 4.8 acres were allowed for a 600-pound animal.

For a full summer season contract, the average bluestem pasture **lease rate** for a 600-pound **steer/heifer** was reported to be **\$139.60 per head** where care is provided and **\$116.56 per head** where care is not provided. The average lease rate for this 600-pound steer/heifer in a short summer lease was \$91.58/head where care is provided and \$75.22/head when care is not provided. The lease rate for a $\frac{3}{4}$ summer lease averaged \$108.75/head with care and \$95.00/head without care. For a full year lease, the rental rate averaged \$190.00/head where care is provided.

The average **price per acre** for a 600-pound **steer/heifer** in a short summer lease was \$36.75 per acre where care is provided and \$26.23 per acre where care is not provided. For a $\frac{3}{4}$ summer season contract, price per acre with care averaged \$27.50, and the price per acre without care averaged \$26.00. The rate for a full year lease averaged \$27.17/acre where care is provided and \$23.17/acre where care is not provided. The average lease rate per acre for winter grazing without care was \$25.50.

For a full summer season contract, the average **price per head** for a 1250-pound **cow/calf** pair was \$257.44 per pair where care is provided and \$177.28 per pair where care is not provided. If care was provided, the average lease price for 1250-pound cow/calf pair in a full year contract was reported to be \$367.84; if care is not provided, the average price was \$134.67. The average lease rate for winter grazing without care for a 1250-pound cow/calf pair was \$114.67.

For a 1250-pound **cow/calf** pair, the average lease **price per acre** in a full summer contract averaged \$25.33 per acre where care is provided and \$24.93 where care is not provided. For a full year lease, the average lease price was \$28.50/acre where care is provided and \$21.75/acre where care is not provided. The average per acre lease rate for winter grazing for a 1250-pound cow/calf pair was \$20.67.

In the bluestem region, steel posts were the most common post for **fences**. About 62 percent of fences used steel posts, 33 percent used steel & wood posts, and 5 percent used hedge only. The rate charged for building a five-wire all steel post fence, including materials, averaged \$12,706 per mile (\$39.71 per rod). The rate, excluding materials, averaged \$9,800 per mile (\$30.63 per rod). The average rate charged for building a five-wire fence with steel and wood posts was relatively less expensive. If material is included, the rate was \$12,487 per mile (\$39.02 per rod), and the rate was \$5,400 per mile (\$16.88 per rod) without materials. The average hourly rate charged was \$45 per hour for fence building with equipment. Additional charges for gates and corners averaged \$123.32 and \$200, respectively. The additional charge for building in rough or rocky terrain was \$70 per hour.

Characteristics of Reported Bluestem Leases by Lease Types

Lease Type	Percent of Respondents (%)	Percent of Total Reported Acres (%)	Average Size (Acres)	Range (Acres)
Short Summer Season	20.7	31.9	2,089	20-12,000
$\frac{3}{4}$ Summer Season	10.0	11.5	1,552	160-8,000
Full Summer Season	44.0	23.1	722	60-5,500
Full Year	18.9	26.6	1,917	80-30,000
Winter Grazing	6.3	6.9	1,499	40-6,000

Average Bluestem Pasture Lease Rates per Head (\$/Head): 600-Pound Steer/Heifer

Lease Type	Average Lease Price per Head (\$/Head)				Acres Allowed (Acres)
	Without Care		With Care		
	Average	Range	Average	Range	
Short Summer Season	76.22	66.00-100.00	91.58	60.00-120.00	2.7
¾ Summer Season	95.00	90.00-100.00	108.75	90.00-125.00	4.5
Full Summer Season	116.56	70.00-182.00	139.60	75.00-225.00	4.9
Full Year	-	-	1/	1/	5.9
Winter Grazing	1/	1/	1/	1/	4.8

- No Response.

1/ Insufficient reports to publish.

Average Bluestem Pasture Lease Rates per Acre (\$/Acre): 600-Pound Steer/Heifer

Lease Type	Average Lease Price per Acre (\$/Acre)			
	Without Care		With Care	
	Average	Range	Average	Range
Short Summer Season	25.85	15.00-40.00	34.50	30.00-40.00
¾ Summer Season	24.67	19.00-30.00	28.33	25.00-30.00
Full Summer Season	23.40	20.00-28.00	29.40	26.00-35.00
Full Year	23.17	15.00-40.00	27.17	22.00-33.50
Winter Grazing	1/	1/	-	-

- No response.

Average Bluestem Pasture Lease Rates per Head (\$/Head): 1250-Pound Cow/Calf

Lease Type	Average Lease Price per Head (\$/Head)			
	Without Care		With Care	
	Average	Range	Average	Range
Short Summer Season	1/	1/	-	-
¾ Summer Season	1/	1/	1/	1/
Full Summer Season	177.28	130.00-240.00	257.44	90.00-300.00
Full Year	134.67	84.00-200.00	367.84	200.00-450.00
Winter Grazing	114.67	100.00-144.00	1/	1/

- No Response.

1/ Insufficient reports to publish.

Average Bluestem Pasture Lease Rates per Acre (\$/Acre): 1250-Pound Cow/Calf

Lease Type	Average Lease Price per Acre (\$/Acre)			
	Without Care		With Care	
	Average	Range	Average	Range
Short Summer Season	1/	1/	-	-
¾ Summer Season	1/	1/	-	-
Full Summer Season	23.87	15.00-35.00	30.25	25.00-45.00
Full Year	21.75	14.00-30.00	28.50	22.00-33.50
Winter Grazing	20.67	15.00-25.00	-	-

- No Response.

1/ Insufficient reports to publish.

Bluestem Pasture Custom Fence Building Rates in Miles, by Post Types

Post Type	5 Wire Including Materials (\$/Mile)		5 Wire Excluding Materials (\$/Mile)	
	Average	Range	Average	Range
	Steel Post Only	12,706	9,600-20,000	9,800
Steel & Wood Posts	12,487	6,000-32,000	5,400	4,800-6,000
Combined Rate	12,633	6,000-32,000	7,600	4,800-10,000

Bluestem Pasture Custom Fence Building Rates in Rods, by Post Types

Post Type	5 Wire Including Materials (\$/Rod)		5 Wire Excluding Materials (\$/Rod)	
	Average	Range	Average	Range
	Steel Post Only	39.71	30.00-62.5	30.63
Steel & Wood Posts	39.02	18.75-100	16.88	15.00-18.75
Combined Rate	39.48	18.75-100	23.75	15.00-31.25

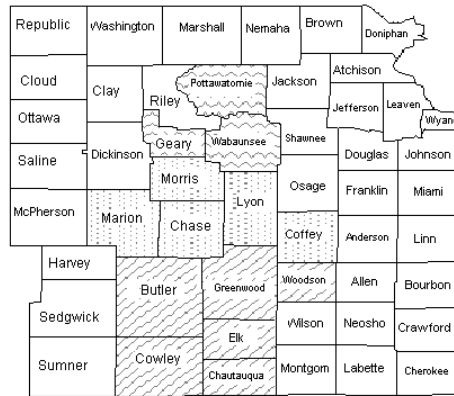
Bluestem Pasture Custom Fence Building Charges for Gates

Gate Type	Additional Charge for Gates (\$/Gate)		Number of Gates	
	Average	Range	Average	Range
	Steel Gates	152.65	75.00-250.00	2.54
Wire Gates	50.00	30.00-70.00	2.50	1.00-4.00
combined Rate	123.32	30.00-250.00	2.53	1.00-5.00

Additional Charges for Bluestem Pasture Custom Fence Building

Additional Charges	Average	Range
Additional Charge for Corners (\$)	220	50-500
Average Hourly Rate With Equipment (\$/hour)	45	15-95
Average Hourly Rate for Rough or Rocky Terrain (\$/hour)	70	25-100

Kansas Bluestem Pasture - 14 County Area



Northern Zone
Central Zone
Southern Zone