

Solar Power Showcased at Rotational Grazing Demos



Lely Voyager Solar Grazing System at work in the pasture

Canada's Outdoor Farm Show (COFS) will again be featuring a live demonstration of solar grazing equipment on September 15, 16 & 17, 2009 in Woodstock, Ontario. This year will be a true long-term representation of rotational grazing with 15 head of Jersey heifers supplied by Grobrook Farm Ltd. of Ingersoll having been moved to the field starting May 1.

"We were very pleased with the opportunity to graze our pregnant heifers over the summer in preparation for the Show", says Nick Groot of Grobrook Farm Ltd. "We always pasture this group and needed a place to put them this year. The rotational system of rotating cattle through paddocks is an efficient way to handle and feed dairy heifers and helps the Farm Show management demonstrate new technologies."

The SouthWest Demo Field at Canada's Outdoor Farm Show has been assigned as the solar grazing demonstration location, with one field showcasing the Lely Voyager Solar Grazing system and the other featuring conventional grazing techniques utilizing moveable electric fencing. Once the pasture fencing was installed by Kane Power Fence and Gallagher Power Fencing Systems, the water had to be pumped 20 feet vertically and over 2,400 feet horizontally to reach the grazing fields. In keeping with the need to be 'green,' Tim Prior of Brussels Agri Services came up with a unique solar pumping solution.

To make cattle grazing more profitable, Tim Prior believes that water needs to be taken to the cattle - not the cattle to the water which only adds environmental and pollution headaches. "The water needs to move along with the cattle," says Prior. "To demonstrate this at the Farm Show, we've installed a solar-powered piston pump – a simple but powerful pump running off batteries that are charged by a solar panel – to draw water from Sally's Creek up to the paddocks."

The water line runs along the fence lines with quick-coupling connections installed at intervals down the line so the water troughs can be moved to the next connection in the line as the livestock moves. A high-flow valve in the trough ensures that fresh water is constantly refilled.

"At Brussels Agri Services, we work to get the highest production out of any grazing field by utilizing the most practical technology for each installation," says Prior. "We design grazing solutions that will get higher returns back in farmers' pockets."

The systems will be in operation constantly during the Show with organized tours and explanations occurring daily at 11:00 am and 2:00 pm in the SouthWest Demo Field. Canada's Outdoor Farm Show runs September 15, 16 & 17, 2009 at Canada's Outdoor Park in Woodstock.

