

COTTON MEDIA GUIDE TO THE COTTON INDUSTRY



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STALKS

DEFINITION

Once farmers have removed their cotton from the field, they are left with fields filled with the bare stems of cotton plants. They contain little or no leaves and some residual cotton and were usually plowed back into the soil until an alternative use was discovered.

DETAILS

- Farmers traditionally would plow the cotton stalks back into the soil in preparation for future planting shortly after harvest.
- Many farmers are now using these stalk filled fields as grazing for cattle of their or leasing the acreage to other area cattle owners.
- Cattle use the stalks and what little cotton or leaves may be left in the field as roughage, adding important nutrients and bulk to their diets.
- Cattle owners are able to save significantly on feed costs and may rest and replenish their other grazing areas during the time their cattle are feeding on the stalks.

STORY IDEAS

- Find farmers and ranchers in your area who use cotton stalks as a cattle grazer
- Talk with local farmers about the impact of the added revenue of renting or leasing their cotton fields to cattle owners
- Talk with local cattle owners about the impact of decreased feed costs during stalk grazing and how their cattle do on a higher roughage diet



IMPACT

- Cattle owners are able to decrease their feed costs while cattle are grazing on cotton stalks, ultimately reducing their overhead on each head of cattle they own.
- By renting or leasing their farm land to cattle owners, cotton farmers are able to gain additional profits from each crop of cotton that they harvest.
- While not the most economically advantageous by-product, grazing cotton stalks has influenced the cotton farmer and cattle ranchers gain in the marketplace.