Are we still headed in the right direction with grazing?
“Pretty much.”

Lots of graziers are still doing well despite it all.
After all these years ...

...US grazing is still operating within a scientific vacuum.
We were getting things figured out.

Then the world changed.
We have entered an age of competition for limited resources.
Economics of (organic) grain

Income over feed costs/cow/day
(pasture season only)

12 lbs./cow: $0.38
6 lbs./cow: $2.20
0 lbs./cow: $3.61

Source: University of Minnesota WCROC
Net farm income/cow
Wisconsin organic dairy farms

2010: $762.04
2011: $788.12
2012: $1,041.67

Tom Kriegl, UW Center for Dairy Profitability
Grazing remains an extremely competitive dairy production system for those with the required scale, labor efficiencies and management ability.*

*Note the caveats.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Grazing</th>
<th>Conventional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>919.39</td>
<td>317.18</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>761.59</td>
<td>722.57</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>627.43</td>
<td>640.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tom Kriegl, UW Center for Dairy Profitability
Is grazing falling behind?

* lack of productivity gains?
Challenges

* perennial forage genetics
* lack of institutional support
* labor efficiency/business skills
* overall lack of productivity
* high land costs
* poor quality winter feed
* feed costs and lack of hay
* weather volatility
* government policy
* skilled management/farm transfer
“Weatherproof” your dairy

* irrigation
* annuals and cover crops
* warm season perennials
* CORN
Build feed reserves

- Review stocking rates
- Measure, monitor, manage
- Improve fertility management
Look harder at added value

* grassfed/non-GMO
* find a beef niche
Develop a cattle genetics plan

* Too much “flavor of the year”
Develop a systems approach

*Too much attention to the parts, too little to the whole.
Develop new management talent

*need more formalized programs
Are we still headed in the right direction with grazing?
Who are “we”?