

Hungry Games at Home

DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO KEEP YOUR COWS HEALTHY AND HAPPY? PLAY HUNGRY GAMES TO FIND OUT!

What you need to get started:

- [Hungry Games video](#)
- 2-7 friends to participate
- Cow ears (*like the ones on your flower crown!*)
- “Farmer” hats (*like a straw or sun hat*)
- Markers to create 3 separate “pastures” about 20’ x 20’ each (*i.e., stones, sports cones, etc*)
- Rope or branches for the boundaries of the “pastures”
- A bag to represent each “cow’s” stomachs
- 150 small easily handled items to represent grass (*cardboard pieces, green walnuts, etc*)
- 90 small easily handled items to represent cow manure (*pebbles, pinecones, etc*)
- Animal bell craft

Instructions:

1. Watch the video to learn about rotational grazing at the Accokeek Foundation.
2. Create 3 separate “pastures” about 20’ x 20’ each.
3. Spread out grass items in each pasture. Evenly distribute all of the manure items in the stomachs bags.
4. Each participant should choose a role. A small group (ideally 2 or 3) will be farmers and the majority (ideally 4 or more) will act as American Milking Devon cows.



The object of the game:

Keeping the cows happy and healthy keeps the farmer and the soil happy and healthy as well. Cows need plenty of grass, plenty of room to roam, and to stay physically healthy. This is not a race, it's about keeping a good balance of grass and manure. If the farmer allows the cows to eat and poop too much, the pasture does not grow back and the cows do not have a reliable food source. If the cows do not eat enough, the farmer will not yield enough milk or quality meat and will have to spend more money on additional feed.

For each round, the cows will graze inside each pasture. The farmers will observe their herd. The cows will move to repeat the round in the next pasture until all of the pastures are grazed. At the end of each round count the manure items to see how each round turned out. Track each round to see the improvement. You can even make it a group challenge!

The farmers will collectively decide when to rotate to the next pasture by ringing the cowbell. The farmers will ring the bell to signal a pasture rotation when the ideal ratio is reached at 40% poop and 60% grass.

The cows “eat” the grass items by collecting them in their stomachs bags and “poop” out the manure items by dropping them on the ground. As the cows pick up 3 grass items, they will say “moo” and drop 1 manure item.

Rotate each role so everyone gets a chance to be a farmer and cow.

Discuss how your group did and the importance of rotational grazing.

- How happy are the cows? How does the cow's health affect the farmer?
- What do you think would happen if a cow was confined to the same pasture for an extended period of time?
- How would farmers feed their cows if they do not have enough grass?
- How would a farmer keep their cows healthy if there is too much manure in the pasture? Where would all of that manure go when it rains?
- What was the most challenging part of being a farmer? What advice would you give for future farmers?