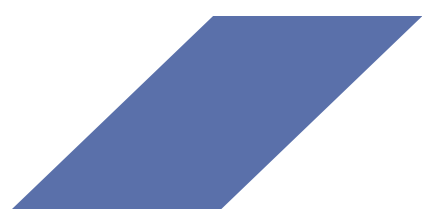




# Strategic Plan

January 2023 - January 2027



Updated: 3/6/2024

## Vision

The South Carolina Forage and Grazing Lands Coalition (SCFGGLC) aspires to be a leader and voice of economically and environmentally sound forage-focused agriculture.

## Mission

Our mission is to promote sustainable forage production and grazing management practices to support environmental stewardship and farm profitability in South Carolina.

# Programmatic Goals

## What do we do?

**Goal 1:** Provide conservation **technical assistance** to SC producers to increase the use of sustainable forage production and grazing management practices.

**Goal 2:** Support and promote **research** efforts that advance the development of sustainable forage production and grazing management strategies in South Carolina and the Southeast region.

**Goal 3:** Support and coordinate **educational and outreach efforts** on sustainable forage production, grazing management and livestock production topics.



# Operational Goals

## How do we do it?

**Goal 4:** Staff the SCFGGLC at the appropriate level to accomplish SCFGGLC's goals.

**Goal 5:** Develop adequate, sustainable, and diverse financial resources for the operations and programs of SCFGGLC.

**Goal 6:** Ensure SCFGGLC follows financial best practices by completing the annual financial duties outlined in the SCFGGLC bylaws.

**Goal 7:** Develop a diverse and engaged Board of Directors to ensure consistent strong leadership for the organization.

**Goal 8:** Develop and use guidance documents to ensure SCFGGLC is pursuing strategic goals efficiently and sustainably.

**Goal 9:** Use strategic marketing and communications to expand the reach of programs developed and/or supported by SCFGGLC.





# Programmatic Goals & Objectives

**Goal 1: Provide conservation technical assistance to SC producers to increase the use of sustainable forage production and grazing management practices.**

1.1 Develop conservation plans for livestock producers.

1.2 Participate in the NRCS State Technical Committee Meeting.

1.3 Help rewrite conservation practice standards for NRCS.

1.4 With the landowners' permission, notify the NRCS district conservationist and Clemson Extension Livestock and Forages Agent when visits/plans are to be developed through SCFGLC in their coverage region.

1.5 Ensure NRCS district conservationists receive a copy of conservation plans SCFGLC develops in their service area.

1.6 SCFGLC's technical service provider(s) will provide a list of Clemson Extension Livestock and Forages Agents and their contact info to producers during the conservation planning process.

1.7 Develop processes and resources to guide producers on how/when they can participate in NRCS programs after conservation plans have been developed and delivered.

1.8 Consider adding a producer mentorship and networking program to SCFGLC's suite of offerings if/when staff and funding allow. (If/when a decision is made to develop this new program, begin by planning the program's structure.)

**Goal 2: Support and promote research efforts that advance the development of sustainable forage production and grazing management strategies in South Carolina and the Southeast region.**

2.1 Assess forage and livestock producers' research needs in SC and the southeastern region through direct surveys or by partnering with other researchers who have conducted similar surveys.

2.2 Review feedback from applied surveys with researchers and determine whether additional research, and/or better communication of existing research results, is warranted. Through this process, develop a list of priority research topics for SC and the southeastern region.

2.3 Advocate for those research priorities with potential funding agencies and with those who would conduct the research.

2.4 Communicate research findings to producers and policymakers so that research findings may influence management decisions and policy.

## Goal 3: Support and coordinate educational and outreach efforts on sustainable forage production, grazing management and livestock production topics.

3.1 Identify the education needs of forage and livestock producers in SC and the southeastern region through direct surveys or by partnering with other researchers who have conducted similar surveys.

3.2 Summarize and use survey results to tailor the topics of our education and outreach efforts to the needs of our audience.

3.3 Support the development of SC-specific publications and educational resources, such as:

- A list of economically sustainable grazing mixes for winter and summer that includes planting time recommendations and recommendations for legumes.
- A book on grazing in SC.
- Publications highlighting case studies or individuals.
- Additional publications as staff and funding allow.

3.4 Support and/or host educational events for producers, including:

- At least four public pasture walks each year.
- At least four events each year that feature the rainfall simulator (trailer or table top).
- Events that include on-farm demonstrations of hands-on skills such as forage sampling, fencing, and monitoring tool use.
- Events that are presented in partnership with other education providers such as Clemson Extension and the SC Cattlemen's Association.
- Events that feature some, or all, of the following topics: animal-focused education, profitability and input cost reduction, small ruminant topics, equine topics, and soil health.
- Events that target the following audiences: forage and livestock producers; small ruminant producers; equine producers; new, young, and beginning farmers; youth; and underserved and minority producers.

3.5 Support and/or host educational webinars and grazing schools when staff and funding allow.

3.6 Explore the feasibility of hosting or supporting an SC forage competition which is aligned with the southeastern competition structure but emphasizes environmental and economic goals, not just crude protein goals, when staff and funding allow. Until then, encourage and support SC producers' participation in the existing Sunbelt competition.

3.7 Feature Clemson's research in the SCFGLC annual meeting.





# Operational Goals & Objectives

## Goal 4: Staff the SCFGLC at the appropriate level to accomplish SCFGLC's goals.

4.1 Annually review existing labor contracts to ensure appropriate compensation and benefits are provided.

4.2 Develop a plan for the optimal staff configuration for SCFGLC in the short- and long-term, and ensure funding is available to cover these positions.

Consider:

- What staff and contract positions are needed to accomplish SCFGLC's programmatic goals and meet the demand for technical assistance in SC?
- What are their job titles, job duties, full-time or part-time status, contractor or employee status, pay rates, and funding mechanisms?
- Does SCFGLC need additional technical assistance providers, administrative support, grant writing assistance, a resource development officer, an industry relationship manager?

## Goal 5: Develop adequate, sustainable, and diverse funding for the operations and programs of SCFGLC.

5.1 Diversify SCFGLC's income stream by recruiting \$10K/year from non-federal sources by 2027.

5.2 Develop an industry partnership program to provide a diverse income stream for SCFGLC and increase SCFGLC's collaboration with industry partners.

5.3 Follow through with partner benefits to ensure long-term program sustainability.

5.4 Consider modifying how SCFGLC charges USDA-NRCS for pasture plans, based on the prices TSPs are paid for pasture plans. Explore whether this information should change how SCFGLC Pasture Planners are compensated.

5.5 Pursue additional program funding through additional federal and state grant/agreement opportunities. Work with NRCS staff to develop a plan to continue funding technical assistance as existing agreements expire.

5.6 Work with NRCS staff to develop easier processes to enter and extend cooperative agreements.

## Goal 6: Ensure SCFGLC is following financial best practices by completing the annual financial duties outlined in the SCFGLC bylaws.

6.1 Ensure the finance committee presents a summary of the previous year's incomes and expenses, and a recommended budget for the upcoming year, at the start of each calendar year. Ensure the SCFGLC board reviews and adopts an annual budget.

6.2 Ensure the finance committee oversees the completion of an annual audit of finances using the audit checklist.

## Goal 7: Develop a diverse and engaged Board of Directors to ensure consistent strong leadership for the organization.

- 7.1 Develop and deliver an on-boarding process for new board members, as outlined in the policy and procedure manual.
- 7.2 Provide regular training and leadership development opportunities for all board members in order to develop new leaders for the organization.
- 7.3 Develop a process to acknowledge and celebrate board members' service in tandem with the annual meeting.
- 7.4 Increase board diversity by soliciting more board representatives from the agribusiness sector, academic institutions beyond Clemson, new and beginning farmers, small ruminant producers, hay producers, full-time producers, producer organizations, underserved producers, producers who live in urban areas, producers who manage multiple species of livestock, and minority producers.
- 7.5 Consider providing travel reimbursements for participants serving on the board.
- 7.6 Develop committees and engage board members in committee service.
- 7.7 Remove board members with chronic attendance problems.
- 7.8 Increase board meeting attendance by sending calendar invites in addition to email invites.
- 7.9 Consider adjusting the meeting time to encourage board meeting attendance.
- 7.10 Consider changing the bylaws to state a quorum is based on the deciding votes of members present.

## Goal 8: Develop and use guidance documents to ensure SCFGLC is pursuing strategic goals in an efficient, sustainable manner.

- 8.1 Approve a policy and procedure manual.
- 8.2 At least annually, appoint a subcommittee to review and revise the SCFGLC policy and procedure manual. The subcommittee should provide a report and any recommended changes to the full board for consideration.
- 8.3 Adopt a mission statement.
- 8.4 Develop and adopt a strategic plan.
- 8.5 At least annually, appoint a subcommittee to review and update the SCFGLC strategic plan. The subcommittee should provide a report and any recommended changes to the full board for consideration.





# Goal 9: Use strategic marketing and communications to expand the reach of SCFGLC's programs and messages.

9.1 Order grazing sticks.

9.2 During the annual budget/strategic plan review process, determine if SCFGLC has resources and desire to celebrate Forage Week in the upcoming year. If so, establish a subcommittee to take action.

9.3 In collaboration with partners including Clemson Extension, develop a streamlined, universal communication tool (e.g., universal calendar or listserv) to collate ALL relevant forage and grazing events/information and distribute it to ALL members of the community.

9.4 Develop a "welcome bucket" to give producers when we visit their farm (aka, "grazing plan in a box").

9.5 Nominate soil health champions.

9.6 Redesign website.

9.7 Deputize soil and water conservation districts to be SCFGLC's collaborators, partners, and advocates.

