Clark County Beef and Forage News

Fall 2015

AFGC Fall Forage Conference on November 5

You work hard to make your farm better and you get bombarded daily with information telling you to do something different. How do you know what works? New results on many currently popular topics will be discussed at the Arkansas Forage and Grassland Council’s Fall Forage Conference.

The conference will on Thursday, November 5 at the Woodland Heights Baptist Church Education Building in Conway. The conference theme is “Making your farm work harder so you don’t have to”. Dr. Jim Russell, professor from Iowa State University, will talk about his grazing research at the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture on soil health and water quality. Dr. Dennis Hancock, State Forage Specialist from the University of Georgia will talk about his work on which forages produce the best grass-fed beef and recent studies on alternatives to ammonium nitrate fertilizer. Other topics include how a local producer grazes nearly year-round, which pastures hold the most rain, new ways to control feral hogs, new insect pests of forages in Arkansas, and new work on liquid fertilizer effect on forage growth.

Registration starts at 8:30 a.m. and the welcome is at 9:00 a.m. Registration can be paid at the door by cash, credit or debit card, or check. The registration fee is $45 per person, $60 per couple, and $10 for students and includes lunch, conference materials, and membership in the Arkansas Forage and Grassland Council and American Forage and Grassland Council. Commercial exhibits and booths will be set up for attendees to see the latest forage management products. Pre-registration is encouraged to help with conference planning, but is not required for attendance. Anyone wanting to improve their forage system should attend this conference. For more information about the conference or to pre-register, call Linda McCargo at 501-671-2171.

The Woodland Heights Education building is located at 4215 Prince Street at the corner of Prince and Hogan streets in Conway, AR. To reach the Education Building, take I-40 to Conway; Take the Dave Ward Exit (Exit 129) and go west on Dave Ward Drive to Hogan Lane (about 4 miles). Turn right (north) onto Hogan and go to Prince Street. Woodland Heights Baptist Church is at that corner on the left.
Plan Now to Stockpile Pastures

Hay harvest conditions have been terrible this year and hay quality is low in many cases. This is a similar scenario as 2014. Many producers relied on a good hay crop, of low quality, to winter their herds. But the winter was colder and longer than in recent years so livestock didn’t fare well. With scattered rainfall occurring across the state, stockpiling bermudagrass or fescue pastures to produce grazing in fall and winter is a good option. Many producers cut hay as late as October and begin feeding in November. Stockpiling is similar to managing for a last cutting of hay, but is managed for livestock grazing to reduce harvest cost. Using the stockpiling program, cattle graze the forage through fall and winter. Forage quality of stockpiled bermudagrass can be over 15% crude protein in October and November. Stockpiled fescue quality in February is usually higher than typical hay on hand. For stockpiled bermudagrass, clip or graze fields to a 3” stubble and fertilize by mid-August for the best growth potential. Fertilizer can be applied even during hot weather to produce good forage return. The growth potential of stockpiled forage is usually 2000-3000 lbs of dry matter per acre so the recommended fertilizer rate is 50-60 lbs per acre of nitrogen to match that yield potential. Don’t delay because waiting until September to fertilize for stockpiled bermuda will reduce yield potential by 60-80%.

Stockpiling forages has been one on the most consistent of all forage management practices in the Arkansas 300 Day Grazing Program. Over 15 years of U of A on-farm stockpiled forage demonstrations, only one out of over 150 failed to pay a positive return over the cost of feeding hay. In recent research at the Southwest Center at Hope, hay feeding was either eliminated entirely or reduced to 30 days by grazing stockpiled bermudagrass and winter annuals. For more information on stockpiling forages for fall and winter grazing ask for FSA 3133 “Grazing Stockpiled Forages to Reduce Hay Feeding in Fall and Winter” at your county Extension office. John Jennings, Professor— Extension Forages

When & How Much Winter Annual Forage Acreage Needed

Determining when and how much winter annual forage acreage to plant John Jennings and Paul Beck University of Arkansas Department of Animal Science Matching winter annual production with livestock need can be a challenge. The following observations from University of Arkansas research and farm demonstrations will be useful for developing a fall and winter grazing program. Forage brassicas Forage turnip and rape must be planted early for fall grazing. Brassicas planted in late August to early September can produce grazeable forage by late October. Tillage is required for good establishment. Light disking may be adequate. Clean tilled seedbeds are best. Brassicas can be grazed from October through December.

A combination planting of forage brassica and ryegrass has proven to be an effective practice. The brassica produces forage for fall grazing and the ryegrass produces forage for spring grazing. Forage brassica varieties are much more productive than “garden-type” varieties. Small grains and ryegrass For grazing by November 1-15: Small grains and ryegrass intended for grazing by early November must be planted before September 15. Planting on a tilled seedbed or no-till into harvested crop fields will be required for this to work. Apply 50 lbs per acre N after the stand comes up to ensure growth. Apply P and K according to soil test. If no soil test is available, be sure to apply at least 50 lbs each of P and K. Apply 50 lbs more N in February for sustained growth into spring. Due to the tillage requirement, this option will not fit every case or every field. However, selecting specific fields for this early planting option may fill a void until other forage is available. For grazing by December 1-15 Winter annuals intended for grazing in early December can be interseeded into warm-season grass sod or planted in crop fields from September 15 to October 1. The grass sod should be suppressed with a low rate of glyphosate herbicide or with moderate disking when planting this early to prevent competition with the small grain seedlings. Planting can be done with a no till drill or by disk and dragging with a harrow. Apply 50 lbs per acre N after the stand comes up to ensure growth. Apply P and K according to soil test. If no soil test is available, be sure to apply at least 50 lbs each of P and K. Apply 50 lbs more N in February for sustained growth into spring. For grazing by February to early March Planting annuals after mid-October into November will allow good establishment, but forage production will be delayed until February or early March. Fertilizer application can be delayed until February since growth potential is limited during mid-winter. How much to plant Research has shown that a good measure for determining planting acreage is 1/10 acre per cow per day of the week to be grazed through the winter. For example, if cows will be limit grazed 3 days per week then plant 3/10 acre per cow. For 50 cows that equals 15 acres. More grazing time requires more acreage. Dr. Paul Beck’s work has shown that cows limit grazed on winter annuals 2 days per week and fed hay the remaining time perform quite well. In that study, the "grazing day" was an 8 hour day and not a 24 hour period. As forage growth increases during the early spring, cows can be allowed to graze more frequently. This is an effective way to match the increased nutrient requirements of spring calving cowherds and to supplement low quality hay. Of course, some acres can be planted early for fall/winter and spring pasture and other acres can be planted in October for spring grazing to match herd needs.
Winter Feed Meeting November 3rd

A Winter Feed Meeting will be held November 3rd at the EHC Kitchen on the Clark County Fairgrounds beginning at 6:30 pm. This will be similar to the one we held a few years ago.

You will be able to get a forage analysis for a fee of $5 per sample submitted. You will also get a feeding recommendation. You can bring as many samples as you want to be tested. To get your results you MUST attend the meeting on November 3rd, complete the survey during the meeting and the end of winter feeding/followup breeding survey.

Hay samples need to be submitted to the office by October 9th. If you have any questions, just let me know.

Winter Annuals for Pastures

Winter annuals for pastures are important because they can potentially provide high quality forage for up to six months of the year, depending on environmental conditions as well as the combination of annuals used. Crops that may be used for winter grazing include wheat, rye, ryegrass oats, or triticale seeded alone or in combination with crimson, arrowleaf, or berstem clovers. Rye will generally grow in cooler weather and thus will provide a little more winter grazing. Ryegrass and wheat provide spring grazing, which results in an extended grazing season after the rye begins to mature. Clovers will increase the protein of the forage as well as the total amount of forage produced and the dry matter intake.

Selecting a variety is one of the few ways a producer can exert control over the type and quantity of forage that animals consume. Other practical management techniques at the producer’s disposal include fertilization grazing management and weed control.

Variety selection is an opportunity to take advantage of recent genetic improvements in yield, digestibility, cold hardiness, drought and heat tolerance, disease and insect resistance, toxicity levels and palatability. The table on the left below shows types of winter annuals and traits about each one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preferred Plant Date</th>
<th>WHEAT</th>
<th>ANNUAL RYEGRASS</th>
<th>OATS</th>
<th>RYE</th>
<th>TRITICALE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germination</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height @ maturity</td>
<td>2-4</td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>2-4</td>
<td>2-4</td>
<td>2-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Est. Yield tons/acre</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>8.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Production season</td>
<td>Nov-Dec</td>
<td>Nov-Dec</td>
<td>Nov-Dec</td>
<td>Nov-Dec</td>
<td>Nov-Dec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Feb-Apr</td>
<td>Feb-May</td>
<td>Feb-Apr</td>
<td>Feb-Mar</td>
<td>Feb-Apr</td>
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PESTICIDE APPLICATOR’S CLASS

We will be having our annual private pesticide applicator’s training class on December 1st at the Clark County Fairgrounds EHC Kitchen. It will begin at 6:30 pm. Farmers who purchase or use restricted pesticides must have a private applicator’s license. The cost of the training is $10.00 for the meeting. A one year license costs $10 and a 5 year license costs $45.

The Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital or veteran status, genetic information, or any other legally protected status, and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Jerry Clemons, County Extension Agent- Staff Chair

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