

NORTH FLORIDA BEEF & FORAGE GROUP



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North Florida Beef & Forage Group Agents

Alachua County
Cindy Sanders

Baker County
Mike Sweat

Bradford County
Tim Wilson

Clay County
David Nistler

Columbia County
Elena Toro

Duval County
Brad Burbaugh

Nassau County
Steven Gaul

Suwannee County
Vacant

Union County
Dr. Jacque Breman

March 23, 2008

Dear Producers,

As a group of extension agents, we hope that the information that we have provided in this newsletter will be educational and informative. As we face challenging times in the industry with rising fuel and fertilizer prices, we encourage all producers to take advantage of soil testing services to assess soil fertility status of pastures and hay

fields. If you have already taken soil samples and have questions about the fertilizer recommendations, feel free to call your local extension agent.

I also want to personally invite you to two upcoming programs. The first program will be the Forage Management Field Day that will be offered at the North Florida Research and Education Center- SV in Suwannee County on April 5, 2008.

The second event is the Beef Cattle Management Basics Workshop at the Columbia Livestock Market in Columbia County on April 24, 2008. Look for the flyers about these workshops in this newsletter. Look forward to seeing you there.

Sincerely,

Elena M. Toro

Elena M. Toro
Chairman, North Florida Beef & Forage Group

Warm Season Annual Grasses and Legumes

Mike Sweat, Baker County Extension

Many livestock producers are looking for fast-growing, high yielding nutritious forages that can be planted following winter pastures. Fortunately we have several popular varieties that are well adapted to our area.

Pearl millet and sorghum-sudan hy-

brids, are warm-season annual grasses that are very popular and relatively easy to grow. These annual grasses are usually grazed by animals that need a high-quality forage, such as stockers, replacement heifers, first-calf heifers, or dairy cows. Pearl millet and

sorghum-sudan hybrids are excellent creep pasture for nursing calves and may be harvested as hay, green chop, or silage although a hay conditioner is required due to the large stems. Soil temperature must be warm before planting since seed germination

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“Recently, the University of Florida Soil Testing Lab has changed some of its procedures.”

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and seedling growth are very sensitive to cool soil conditions. Both pearl millet and sorghum-sudan hybrids can be broadcast, drilled, or planted in rows. The seeding rate for broadcast plantings is 24 to 30 pounds per acre. The seeding rate can be reduced for drilled and row plantings.

Pearl millet should be grazed rotationally. Millet should reach a height of 14 to 24 inches before each grazing period. Try to graze each pasture down to 6 to 8 inches in one to three days. After a pasture has been grazed, allow it to regrow to a 14 to 24 inch height before regrazing. When plants start to form heads, removing heads by mowing may prolong vegetative

growth.

Alyceclover is a warm season annual legume that grows well in our area. It re-seeds each year if allowed to mature and produce seed in the fall. Alyceclover can be broadcast or drilled between April 15th and June 30th. The recommended planting rate is 12-15 lb/acre at a depth of ¼ to ½”.

Aeschynomene is another warm season annual legume that is very popular in wildlife food plots and is used for grazing. Aeschynomene is planted between March 30th and June 30th at a rate of 6-6 lb/acre of dehulled seed. The planting depth is ¼ to ½”. Aeschynomene can provide some highly nutritious late season forage if managed properly.

Hairy Indigo is also a warm season annual legume used

mainly for grazing. Hairy Indigo is adapted to sandy soils that have good drainage. Hairy Indigo will re-seed itself if allowed grazing is withheld in the fall. The recommended seeding rate is 6-8 lb/acre at a depth of ¼ to ½”.

For more information on these forages, call your local extension office, visit the Northeast Florida Beef/Forage Website at <http://nfbfg.ifas.ufl.edu> or check out the specific publication website:

Millet and Sorghum:
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AG157>

Alyceclover:
http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/D_S123

Aeschynomene:
http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/A_A189

Hairy Indigo:
http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/A_G156

Fertilizer & Your Bahiagrass

David B. Nistler, Clay County Extension

When deciding to fertilize your pastures, ask yourself these questions: “Does the livestock need the extra forage?”, “Will the money I spend on fertilizer equal more dollars for my livestock?” and, “Do I have the ability to harvest the additional forage produced?” There is no reason to apply fertilizer, from a profit on investment standpoint, if

the forage produced is not used.

By fertilizing at the beginning of the growing season, warm season perennial grasses are stimulated to grow and produce adequate forage for most pasture systems. In some cases an application of Nitrogen (N) in June may be applied if additional forage is needed.

Fertilizing for the Establishment of Bahiagrass

For establishment of new plantings, apply 100 lb N/acre and split application as follows: apply 30 lb N/acre, all of the soil test recommended P₂O₅, and 50% of the K₂O as soon as plants emerge. Apply the re-

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maining K_2O and 60 to 70 lb N/acre 30 to 50 days later.

Recently, the University of Florida Soil Testing Lab has changed some of its procedures. In order to receive phosphorus fertilizer recommendations for established bahiagrass, soil and tissue samples should be submitted to the Extension Soil Testing Lab (ESTL) at the same time. This is due to the current research noting soil tests alone are not adequate enough to determine bahiagrass P needs. For additional information concerning Bahiagrass tissue testing, contact your local extension agent.

Fertilizing Established Bahiagrass Pastures

Low-Nitrogen Option: This option results in the lowest cost of purchased fertilizer. Apply 50 to 60 lb N per acre in the early spring. Apply 25 lb P_2O_5 per acre if your soil tests Very Low or Low in P and

tissue P concentration is below 0.15%. Do not apply P if tissue P concentration is at or above 0.15%, even if the soil tests Very Low or Low in P. For Medium and High soil P levels, neither P application nor tissue analysis is recommended.

Medium-Nitrogen Option: Apply 100 lb N/acre in the early spring. Apply 25 lb P_2O_5 per acre if your soil tests Very Low or Low in P and tissue P concentration is below 0.15%. Do not apply P if tissue P concentration is at or above 0.15%, even if the soil tests Very Low or Low in P. For Medium and High soil P levels, neither P application nor tissue analysis is recommended since there will be no added benefit of P fertilization on bahiagrass yields. Apply 50 lb K_2O /acre if your soil tests Very Low or Low in K and none if it tests Medium or High.

High-Nitrogen Option: Apply 160 lb N per acre in two applications of 80 lb N/acre in early spring and

early summer. Apply 40 lb P_2O_5 per acre if your soil tests Very Low or Low in P and tissue P concentration is below 0.15%. Do not apply P if tissue P concentration is at or above 0.15%, even if the soil tests Very Low or Low in P. For Medium and High soil P levels, neither P application nor tissue analysis is recommended since there will be no added benefit of P fertilization on bahiagrass yields. Apply 80 lb K_2O per acre if your soil tests Very Low or Low in K and 40 lb K_2O per acre if it tests Medium. No K should be applied if your soil tests High or Very High in K.

For additional information or questions please contact David Nistler, Clay County Extension Agriculture, Small Farms, and Natural Resource Agent at the Clay County Extension office.

[Source: UF/IFAS Standardized Fertilization Recommendations for Agronomic Crops, R. Mylavarapu, D. Wright, G. Kidder, C.G. Chambliss]

Beef Cattle Fly Control

Tim Wilson, Bradford County Extension

Losses to the beef industry associated with horn flies have been estimated to be as high as \$700 million annually due to blood loss, irritation, annoyance and reduced weaning weights of calves nursing dams (Allison, NCSU 1996). Producers may use one or more of the many methods of application currently available to control horn flies such as sprays, dusts, ear tags, back-rubbers, boluses and in-feed additives. Some even take advantage of dewormers applied as an injectable or pour-on that are labeled to control horn flies in their management strategy.

New technology developed to control horn flies has been limited for the past 20 years. In the past pyrethroids and organophosphate have been the only two primary chemical classes of insecticides commonly used to control horn flies. To prevent resistance to these chemical classes, producers have been encouraged to design their fly control strategies to change every two years.

New Pour-on Chemical Class Product

In May 2004, a product containing spinosad, from the chemical class spinosyn, was approved

for use in beef cattle. Spinosyn compounds are in a chemical class separate from pyrethroids and organophosphates and have

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Figure 1 Horn flies on beef cattle

“If using a bottom plow, come back with a disk after plowing to level the soil.”

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been used to control pests in cotton.

This product is a pour-on and may take a couple of days before fly control is realized. Producers who wish to further diversify their horn fly control strategy could incorporate this new chemical class of insecticide into their management.

New Ear Tag Chemical Class Product

A new ear tag entered the market in 2007 containing the active ingredient endosulfan.

This product is in the chemical class cyclodiene. This newly developed chemical class along with the three previously described enables increased flexibility in management strategies. Although resistance to this new product should not be an immediate concern, producers are still advised to read the label and remove the tag accordingly. Field demonstrations have yielded results that appear to be promising.

Removing fly tags at the recommended time and alternating the chemical class of insecti-

cides can help prevent horn fly resistance in beef cattle. When using insecticides, review the label and follow it closely. Remember, the label is the law.



Bahiagrass Establishment

Cindy Sanders, Alachua County Extension

This is the time of year that landowners are preparing to plant bahiagrass. With all the rains that we have been receiving, this spring should be wetter for planting. Planting dates for bahiagrass is March 15-September 15. Bahiagrass should be planted on a well-prepared seedbed. The optimum temperature range for seed germination is 85-95 degrees. Summer is still the best time to plant due to temperatures and rainfall. Remember to take a soil sample for proper fertilization and pH recommendations.

When planting ba-

hiagrass much planning should be done in advance. For example, species selection, site development, soil test, seedbed preparation, planting procedure, and weed control. I will cover site development, preparation, and planting procedure in this article.

Site Development &

Preparation:

If it has been several years since your pasture has been renovated, I would recommend either using a bottom plow or a disk. If using a bottom plow, come back with a disk after plowing to level the soil. If you only have a disk available, disk the

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Pensacola Bahiagrass

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field multiple times, even criss-crossing the field to really break it up. After the field is clean and level, you are now ready for seeding. Seeding can be done with a grain drill or spreader. You will find that using a drill will require less seed and better coverage. However, a 3-point spreader works fine

too. After spreading the seed, use a rolling device after broadcasting, this will produce a firm, smooth seedbed which conserves moisture.

Seeding Rates:

Seed should be broadcast at 15-20 pounds per acre. I know that seed cost are expensive this year, but if you cheat on the rate, you will not

have the desired coverage. After seeding cover no more that 1/2 inch deep.

After planting, wait at least 90 days before grazing. Again, this will depend on weather and rainfall over the first 90 days of establishment. Once established, bahia-grass has an aggressive growth habit and forms dense sod which is relatively easy to maintain.

Beef Cattle Management Basics

Sponsored by the Northeast Florida Beef and Forage Group

Date: April 24, 2008 Time: 5:00pm - 8:30pm

\$5.00 Registration

Program

- 5:00 pm. Introductions & Welcome**
- 5:10-6:00 pm Selecting Bulls to meet market demands.**
Dr. Cliff Lamb, UF Beef Cattle Extension Specialist.
- 6:00-6:30 pm Dinner**
- 6:30-7:30 pm Castration methods and chute side manners.**
Dr. Todd Thrift, UF Beef Cattle Extension Specialist, David Nistler, Clay Co. Extension.
- 7:30-8:15 pm Avoiding costly mistakes when selling feeder calves and cows.**
John Willis, Columbia Livestock Market, Elena Toro, Columbia Co., Livestock Agent & Tim Wilson, Bradford Co. Livestock Agent.
- 8:20 pm. Adjourn**

Program Location: Columbia Livestock Market, South Hwy 41, Lake City, FL 32025

Directions: From I-10 East, Take Hwy 441 south 12 miles south;

From I-10 West, Take Hwy 41 south 12 miles south.

Please RSVP by calling (386)752-5384 before April 20th, 2008.

For additional information about this program contact:

Elena Toro at 386-752-5384 or your county agent in Northeast Florida.



NFBFG
1025 West Macclenny Avenue
Macclenny, FL 32063

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We're on the web:
<http://nfbfg.ifas.ufl.edu>

PASTURE MANAGEMENT FIELD DAY

NORTH FLORIDA RESEARCH AND EDUCATION CENTER - SUWANNEE VALLEY

April 5th, 2008, 8:30 am to 12:30 pm

\$10.00 Registration for lunch and handouts; To register call 386-362-1725 ext. 101 or
386-752-5384 before April 1st

Program

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|-------------------|--|
| 8:30 - 9:00 am. | Registration |
| 9:00 - 9:15 am. | Welcome and Introductions
Elena Toro, Chair NFBFG |
| 9:15 - 10:00 am. | Station 1: Bahiagrass, Bermudagrass, and Perennial Peanut Varieties Overview
Cindy Sanders, Alachua County Extension & Elena Toro, Columbia County Extension |
| 10:15 - 11:00 am. | Station 2: Planting Demonstrations
Mike Sweat, Baker Co. Extension, Steve Gaul, Nassau Co. Extension & Tim Wilson, Bradford Co. Extension |
| 11:15 - 12:00 am. | Station 3: Weed Control (Pastures and Basal Treatments)
Dr. Jacque Breman, Union Co. Extension & Barton Wilder, Alachua Co. Extension |
| 12:00 - 12:30 pm. | Irrigation Equipment booths & Water Management Districts Representatives
Brad Burbaugh, Duval Co. Extension |
| 12:30 - 1:00 pm. | Lunch & Collect Evaluations |
| 1:00 pm. | Adjourn |



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