

LOUISIANA FORAGE FARMER

VOLUME 32, NUMBER 2

Louisiana Forage Farmer

Volume 32, Number 2

CONTENT OF THIS ISSUE

Featured article

- *The True Believer: Don Ashford tells his grazing story Beef & Forage Field Day Set For April 27 in Bossier City*
- *2017 Pasture and Warm-Season Forage Crop Variety Suggestions*
- *Breeding Of Annual Ryegrass For Improved Heat Stress and Disease Resistance*
- *Potential of Forage Brassicas For Use In Pasture-Based Livestock Systems*
- *Pasture Herbicide Stewardship, Our Efforts To Reduce Off-Target Damage To Sensitive, High Value Crops*
- *Field Evaluation Of 42-0-0 Foliar Fertilizer On Improved Bermudagrass Varieties For Forage Production*

Louisiana Forage Farmer

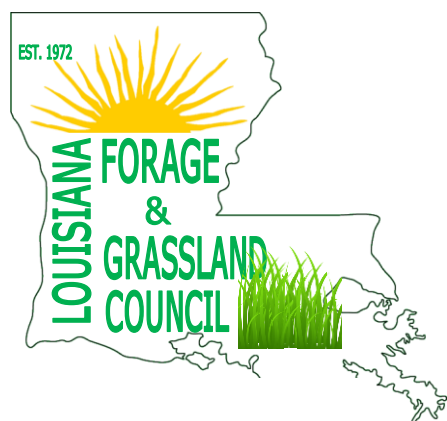
Volume 32, Number 2

The True Believer: Don Ashford tells his grazing story

by Don Ashford, East Feliciana Parish

The name of our outfit is Ashford Cattle Co. This may seem to be a big name for such a small operation, but we are very proud of what we have been able to accomplish in the last 20 years on this little place. My wife Betty and I have been in the cattle business since 1956. In that time, we have owned cows and calves, been in the dairy business, ran a stocker operation, and custom grazed cattle for other folks. Having said all of that, you would believe that we knew a little bit about grazing management. But until we began to use management intensive grazing (MIG) we did not know just how little we did know about grazing management.

From 1977 until 1990 we were in the dairy business. We went from milking 60 cows to milking 150-200 cows. We fed our cows with a computer system and made all of our feed. The reasons that we are not milking today are not all economic, but without question economics was a



big part of it. After working 7/24 for 13 years we wanted to continue in livestock production but in a totally different way. So we decided on MIG and have had no regrets. We have learned that the grass is the foundation that an operation should be built on, not the hay baler or feed truck. We have not used feed in our little operation in years and the hay we use is at a level that is minimal and going down.

The open ground that we use in our grazing operation is divided into paddocks with poly-wire and each paddock is an acre more or less. We try to get the paddocks as close to the same size as possible but do not get caught up in a lot of measuring. The perimeter fences are barb-wire with offsets to carry the power. Waterlines have been installed and there is water available in each paddock.

Over the years, we have grazed several hundred calves that we bought. Also at different times we have grazed heifers for other folks and have grazed cows for people who were out of grass during the summer. There is no way that we could operate without using MIG. With just 20 or so acres of grass, it is mandatory that we get maximum utilization of each acre.

We are now running a cow/calf operation. On a small place that can be very rewarding, but it can be very challenging. In our case, the time from mid-October until the ryegrass is ready can be very tricky. The only time that our cows are not on grass is from early October until late December. This is when we feed hay. But our ace in the hole is that we can turn the cows in the woods, and for about two weeks there is plenty of grazing and browse for them. This saves on the hay bill and the cows seem to like the change.

By October all of the calves have been sold, so we are dealing with dry cows. When the ryegrass is

ready, the cows are given what they need each day, controlled by the paddock sizes. The cows are on the ryegrass until spring and no hay is fed. In our system, the least time that will pass before the cattle are returned to a previously grazed paddock is 21 days.

When the calves are born they start grazing in a few days. This makes the cow's job easier, keeps her body condition up and enhances rebreeding. Moving the cattle everyday allows the grass recovery time and maintains the nutrition level for the calves and cows.

None of this is complicated; it is just common sense and not that costly. Last year it cost us 41 cents a day per cow to feed our cows using this method. Management Intensive Grazing gives us the tools to do this. Try it; you will like it.

Beef & Forage Field Day Set For April 27 in Bossier City

Agriculture producers with cattle interests can get updates on a wide range of topics at the LSU AgCenter beef and forage field day set for April 27 at the Red River Research Station in Bossier City.

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. followed by a field tour at 9:00 a.m. and concluding with a sponsored lunch.

The field topics will include:

- Market Outlook
- Warm-season Grasses
- What's New In Vaccinations
- Pasture Weed Control and Coated Fertilizer Use

The field day is approved for Phase 2 and continuing education credits for the Louisiana Master Farmer program and qualifies for four veterinarian continuing education credits.

Early registration for the event is preferred by April 20 by contacting the Red River Research Station at 318-741-7430 or by emailing Donna Haynes at dhaynes@agcenter.lsu.edu.

2017 Pasture and Warm-Season Forage Crop Variety Suggestions

Ed Twidwell and Wink Alison
LSU AgCenter

Introduction

Variety selection is an important decision producers must make when establishing forages in pastures. Many varieties of forage crops are marketed in Louisiana and scientists with the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center periodically conduct variety trials with warm-season forages. This information is used to make suggestions each year concerning warm-season forages for producers to consider utilizing. Suggested varieties listed are ones evaluated in Louisiana and found to perform satisfactorily. Suggested seeding rates are made assuming the use of good quality seed that meets the germination and purity seed standards as determined by the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry Seed Commission.

Perennial Grasses

Warm-season perennial grasses grown in the Southern region are of tropical origin and grow mainly during the late spring, summer and early autumn. These grasses become dormant and remain unproductive during the winter months. The

optimum planting date for these grasses is from March 1 to June 1, but they can also be planted anytime during the growing season when soil moisture is adequate.

Bermudagrass

Bermudagrass can be grown throughout Louisiana, and is adapted to most soil types. Both seed-propagated and vegetatively propagated varieties are available. Seeded varieties should be planted at a rate of 3 to 5 pounds of hulled seed per acre. The hybrid varieties should be planted with enough plant material to give about 7,500 plants per acre.



Hybrids: Alicia, Brazos, Coastal, Grazer, Tifton 44, Tifton 85, Russell, Jiggs, Sumrall 007 and Little Phillip #1

Seeded: Common, Cheyenne II, Mohawk, Rancho Frio, Sungrazer Plus

Bahiagrass

Bahiagrass is widely grown throughout Louisiana, and is particularly adapted to well-drained sites and will persist on low fertility soils. It should be seeded at a rate of 15 pounds per acre.

Argentine, Pensacola and Tifton 9

Dallisgrass

Dallisgrass is very productive on alluvial soils and more fertile upland soils in Louisiana. Dallisgrass is noted for having poor seed quality. Seed germinate slowly, often taking four weeks or longer for emergence. There are no varieties of dallisgrass; all seed is “common” and is imported from countries outside of the United States and seed availability is often limited. Dallisgrass should be seeded at a rate of 5 pounds per acre.

Annual Grasses

These grasses should be planted between April 15 and August 1. They will be killed by frost in the autumn. Specific variety suggestions for these species cannot be made because of insufficient data.

Pearl Millet

This species generally does best on well-drained, light, and upland soils. Pearl millet should be



seeded at a rate of 25 pounds per acre if drilled and 30 pounds per acre if broadcast. This species does not cause prussic acid poisoning in livestock, but nitrate accumulation can cause toxicity under some circumstances.

Sorghum Sudangrass

This species generally does best on heavier soil types, although it can also be successfully planted

on well-drained soils. Sorghum sudangrass should be seeded at a rate of 30 pounds per acre if drilled and 35 pounds per acre if broadcast. Nitrate accumulation or prussic acid can cause toxicity under some circumstances.

Warm Season Legumes

Alyceclover

This species is best adapted to well-drained soil types. Seed are planted at a rate of 15 to 20 pounds per acre in May or June. Establishment is slow and weed competition may be a problem. There are no varieties of alyceclover available; only “common” seed is marketed.

Perennial Peanut

This is a perennial legume that is adapted to well-drained soil types. It should not be planted on heavy soils that are prone to flooding or being water-logged for extended periods of time. Perennial peanuts would be better adapted in southern parts of Louisiana, but have been shown to survive for several years at locations just south of I-20 in north Louisiana.

The two varieties that can be planted are Arbrook and Florigraze. They should be planted at a rate of 60 to 80 bushels of rhizomes per acre from January 1 to March 15. Planting material is scarce, and producers may have to obtain their material from Georgia or Florida.

Warm Season Silage and Green Chop Crops

Specific variety suggestions for these species cannot be made because of insufficient data. Limited testing is being conducted at the Southeast Research Station near Franklinton.

Forage Sorghum

This species should be planted from April 15 to June 15 in south Louisiana and from May 1 to June 15 in north Louisiana. It can be planted at a rate of 8-12 pounds per acre if drilled and 15-20 pounds per acre if broadcast. It can also be planted at a rate of 6-8 pounds per acre if planted in 40-inch rows.

Corn for Silage

This species should be planted from March 1 to April 15. It should be planted at a rate of 12 to 20 pounds per acre planted in 30 to 40-inch rows.

Breeding Of Annual Ryegrass For Improved Heat Stress and Disease Resistance

Eric Billman, Jesse L. Morrison and Brian Baldwin
Mississippi State University

Cool-season forage grasses are the backbone of a majority of pasture and hay production systems across the country. However, in the South the ability of these grasses to grow vigorously and persist are limited due to both adverse climate conditions and disease-causing organisms. These abiotic and biotic stress factors pose major risks for the short and long-term production of annual ryegrass, which is a staple of most southern forage systems. Of most concern with abiotic stresses are high temperatures at planting. Annual ryegrass grows very poorly in temperatures in excess of 90°F, which are common south of Tennessee until late September or early October. Annual ryegrass is also very susceptible to a disease known as gray leaf spot or “ryegrass blast” that can decimate annual ryegrass stands if planted in conditions that proliferate disease. Plant breeding can be utilized to improve both annual ryegrass growth under hot conditions and disease resistance. To that end, this research has two objectives: 1) Develop a heat tolerant annual ryegrass variety that can be planted earlier in the growing season by screening populations of “Marshall” annual ryegrass for the

ability to germinate and grow at high temperatures (100°F); and 2) Screen populations of a heat tolerant annual ryegrass in the lab and greenhouse for resistance to gray leaf spot and select individuals that are resistant. Early results indicate significantly increased germination over Marshall at high temperatures, and that improvement through further selection and breeding is viable.

Source: 2017 AFGC Proceedings

Potential of Forage Brassicas For Use In Pasture-Based Livestock Systems

S. Leanne Dillard, Ana L. Roca-Fernandez, Melissa D. Rubano and Kathy Soder
Pasture Systems and Watershed Management
Research Unit, USDA-ARS, University Park, PA

Brassicas are gaining popularity as high-quality forage for pasture due to production during the summer forage slump and in the fall. Inclusion of brassicas in the diet can be limited by



glucosinolates, a class of plant compounds that can reduce weight gain and cause off-flavors in meat and milk. The objective of this study was determine yield, nutritive value and glucosinolate content of 3 brassicas (turnip, rapeseed and canola) and annual ryegrass grown in central Pennsylvania. Forage yield, nutritional composition and glucosinolate concentration were determined every 2 weeks. Seasonal forage yield was similar among brassica

species and lowest in annual ryegrass. While crude protein was greater in annual ryegrass than the brassica species, both degradable and soluble protein fractions were lower in annual ryegrass than in all brassicas. While all forages were relatively low in NDF and ADF, ryegrass had greater NDF and ADF than brassicas. Turnip had the greatest total glucosinolate concentration and rapeseed and canola were 40 and 67% lower, respectively. Annual ryegrass contained no glucosinolates. Including brassicas in a cool-season pasture rotation can increase animal productivity and reduce the need for stored feed during mid-summer and late fall, but, glucosinolate levels must be considered to reduce potential negative impacts on animal health and off-flavors in milk and meat.

Source: 2017 AFGC Proceedings

Pasture Herbicide Stewardship, Our Efforts To Reduce Off-Target Damage To Sensitive, High Value Crops

G.N. Rhodes, Jr. and D.W. McIntosh
University of Tennessee

Off-target movement of pasture herbicides to high value crops continues to be an issue. Damage can result in lost productivity for growers, expensive fines and/or lawsuits, and negative publicity for the industry. We began a comprehensive educational program in 2011 that stresses the importance of proper stewardship with the use of pasture herbicides. The program was created to reduce the occurrence and impact of off-target damage to sensitive, high value crops, and to make available tools to help with the diagnosis of suspected cases of off-target damage. Funding was obtained via grants from Philip Morris International, Altria Client Services, Dow AgroSciences and DuPont Crop Protection. Four crops (tobacco, cotton, tomato and grape) and five herbicides (2,4-D, dicamba, aminopyralid, aminocyclopyrachlor and picloram) were selected for the development of

educational materials and diagnostic tools. These included still images, time lapse videos, and fact sheets that were created and made available when our initial website, herbicidestewardship.utk.edu, was launched in 2014. In 2015, the website was completely redesigned in an effort to make it more attractive and user friendly. Additionally, a shorter, less cumbersome address, herbicidestewardship.com, was created. Use of the website has steadily increased since its inception. The website has been visited over 9,600 times since launched, and approximately half of these visits were from 2015-2016. Visits came from the United States, China, Japan, Germany, Canada, United Kingdom, India and Brazil.

Source: 2017 AFGC Proceedings

Field Evaluation Of 42-0-0 Foliar Fertilizer On Improved Bermudagrass Varieties For Forage Production

R.A. Speir, C.S. Talton, R.C. Waladorf and D.W. Hancock
University of Georgia

Foliar fertilizers are used by producers to provide micro and macronutrients to various crops when needed. Recently, Grasshopper Fertilizer Company (Mount Vernon, TX) has marketed a liquid N product to forage producers as an alternative to conventional granular or liquid fertilizers. Three on-farm trials were established in bermudagrass hayfields in Madison, Banks and Elbert counties in Georgia. Grasshopper's 42-0-0 foliar fertilizer product applied at the labeled rate and their product at an N rate equivalent to UGA recommendations were compared with conventional ammonium nitrate, urea-ammonium nitrate and urea. Fertilizers were applied and forage harvested at 4-week intervals. In each location, yields were significantly lower from the Grasshopper's 42-0-0 foliar fertilizer product applied at the label rate and no different

than the untreated control. We conclude that the use of Grasshopper 42-0-0 at the labeled rate will not provide yields that are comparable to conventional N fertilizer at recommended rates, and that using

this foliar fertilizer at recommended rates of N is not cost-effective or practical.

Source: 2017 AFGC Proceedings

LOUISIANA FORAGE AND GRASSLAND COUNCIL

ACTIVITIES:

- * ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN DECEMBER
- * TOURS AND FIELD DAYS
- * STATE HAY SHOW
- * QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER
- * RECEIVE THE FORAGE LEADER, A NATIONAL PUBLICATION FROM AFGC
- * RECOGNIZE OUTSTANDING PRODUCERS

Membership Application Form
Louisiana Forage and Grassland Council

NAME _____ DATE _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____

ZIP _____ PHONE NUMBER _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

Annual Dues are \$35

Make checks payable to LFGC or the Louisiana Forage and Grassland Council

Mail to: Ed Twidwell
LSU School of PESS
220 Sturgis Hall
Baton Rouge, LA 70803