

The Forager

THE NORTH CAROLINA FORAGE AND GRASSLAND COUNCIL
IN COOPERATION WITH
THE NRCS -GRAZING LANDS CONSERVATION INITIATIVE AND
NCSU-NORTH CAROLINA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

Introducing

Dr. Miguel S. Castillo – New Forage Agronomy Faculty in Crop Science at NCSU

In August 2013, [Dr. Miguel S. Castillo](#) joined the faculty at the Department of Crop Science in NCSU as an Assistant Professor in Forage Agronomy. His appointment is in Research and Extension. Dr. Castillo graduated with a B.S. in Agricultural Science and Production from Zamorano Pan-American School of Agriculture in the country of Honduras, Central America, and M.S. and Ph.D. in Agronomy (minor in Soils), both degrees from the University of Florida in Gainesville, FL.

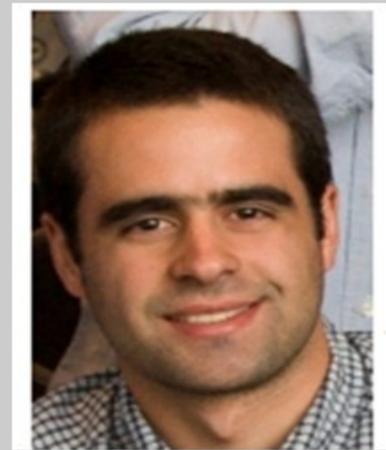
"I was born in Loja, Ecuador (a valley in the mountains, ~2000 m altitude, south of Ecuador). This region is characterized for a temperate climate, where C3 forage species (i.e., ryegrass, orchardgrass, oats, alfalfa, white clover) and a few C4 species adapted to temperate climate make the foundation forage for grazing dairy operations. Also, the time spent in Zamorano and University of Florida trained me to work with tropical and sub-tropical forages (i.e., bermudagrass, bahiagrass, stargrass, guineagrass, rhizoma peanut) that make up the foundation of beef and dairy livestock production systems in those areas".

Dr. Castillo's overall area of study has focused in the dynamics in the soil-plant-animal continuum that determine productivity and sustainability in forage-livestock agro-ecosystems. Specific areas of research interest are: forage management and utilization, the role of grasslands to provide ecosystem services to society, the use of grass plants as bioenergy crops, soil fertility, fertilization, nutrient cycling, the use of alternative sources of nutrients for plant production, and development of sustainable and cost-effective strategies for establishment and management of grass-legume mixtures in forage-livestock systems.

"It is an honor to join the Crop Science Department and the [Forage Program](#) at NCSU".

Dr. Castillo is married to Catalina, who is also from Loja, Ecuador. They have no children yet, and look forward to discovering Raleigh and the State of North Carolina as their new home.

For more information on Dr. Castillo's program please visit: http://www.cropsci.ncsu.edu/personnel/castillo_miguel/



Dr. Castillo's contact information is:

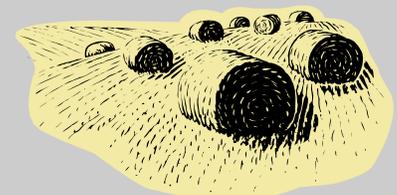
Dr. Miguel S. Castillo
Assistant Professor – Forage
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Email: mcastil@ncsu.edu

The NC Forage and Grasslands Council welcomes Dr. Miguel and Catalina Castillo to North Carolina!



Improve Your Pasture Through The Fall

Pasture improvement doesn't have to end when football starts. In fact, fall is one of the *best* times to spray blackberry briars. Blackberry plants are most susceptible to herbicides after fruit drop in late spring or early summer *and in the fall prior to frost*. Spray blackberry only under good growing conditions. Don't spray blackberry in the same growing season that the briars have been mowed— that's a recipe for poor control. If you have to mow blackberry before you spray, give the briars at least six months of active regrowth before the herbicide application.

For blackberry control in North Carolina pastures, we recommend PastureGard[®] HL herbicide at the rate of 1.5 to 4 pints per acre. The optimal rate will depend on brush size. For small brush 1.5 to 2 pints may be adequate, but for bigger, dense brush, go with 2 to 4 pints per acre.

Don't skimp on water in broadcast applications—use at least 15 gallons or more. Even 20 or 30 gallons per acre is not too much. All the foliage should be wet with spray solution. The bigger the blackberry, the more im-

portant total volume of spray solution is to the application.

For hand-spraying blackberry, use a 1% solution of PastureGard[®] HL with 0.25% surfactant in water. That's 1 gallon of PastureGard[®] HL with 1 quart of surfactant in 100 gallons of water. PastureGard[®] HL is safe on fescue, bermudagrass and other desirable grasses.

Don't mow dead-looking blackberry too soon after spraying. Allow the herbicide time to reach the roots. Wait at least six months after spraying to mow blackberry.

For more information on fall spraying, contact me or your agricultural chemical dealer.

Sarah Milteer
Dow AgroSciences sales representative
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Outstanding Stewardship Should Not Go Unrecognized

By Matt Poore

Are you a steward? One of the things I believe we have a responsibility for is stewardship of our land. Webster's defines stewardship as "the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care". Each of us that are entrusted with a land resource, (whether we own it or rent it) has the responsibility of taking care of it in a responsible way and leaving it better than we found it. This may mean making major improvements such as installing watering systems and fencing, taking the time to learn about critical grazing heights and moving cattle to a new pasture before overgrazing occurs, or just taking time to do routine maintenance like fence repair or spot spraying fencerows or patches of noxious weeds.

Too much of our grassland here in the Carolinas and around the globe suffer from lack of stewardship. It is not that the folks running cattle on the land don't care about it, it is more that the time and energy needed for "careful and responsible management" is not available in a lot of cases. We all need to strive to improve our stewardship skills, and one thing we can do is to recognize and learn from those producers that have gone the extra mile. Because of that need 10 years ago the North Carolina Cattlemen's Association, the North Carolina Forage and Grassland Council, and a key industry supporter founded the NC Environmental Stewardship Award.

North Carolina Environmental Stewardship Award.

Again this year, Merck Animal Health, The North Carolina Cattlemen's Association, and the North Carolina Forage and Grasslands Council will sponsor the NC Environmental Stewardship Award. This award is given in recognition of a beef producer's stewardship efforts on their farm, and for their leadership in promoting the stewardship concept among other producers. We greatly appreciate Merck Animal Health's continued support that has made this award possible. The award will be presented at the North Carolina Cattlemen's Association annual conference in February, and will consist of a plaque, and \$250 in cash.

The 2013 award was given to Mike Jones from Surry County who was nominated by Dr. Sharon Freeman and his Livestock Agent Bryan Cave. Mike started with a badly eroded farm and working through cost-share programs installed best management practices including a piped watering system, cross fences and travel lanes. Mike uses a great deal of portable fencing to Mob-Graze his cows across improved mountain pasture and new ground seeded to a variety of warm-season grasses.

Mike attends many of our educational events and continues to try new things to improve his farm. Mike was recognized last year with the first prize in the Profit Tips competition for Drovers with an idea he had to organize and transport all of his temporary fencing equipment.

There are many beef producers in the state that deserve recognition for the improvements they have made to their farms, and for the good example they set for other producers. Being environmental stewards is a key to maintaining a good relationship with the general public, and in feeling good about how you are treating the land that you are temporarily charged with caring for.

We encourage you to talk to your extension agent and identify someone in your community that is deserving of this award. The nomination package takes a little effort, but it is one little step you can make in supporting the cattle industry and showing the general public that cattlemen are being proactive when it comes to taking care of the land. Nominators are encouraged to go to the NC Cattlemen's Association website and take a look at the past winning nominations.

The rules and format for the award package follow. Nominations are due **January 10, 2014**. For more information on the award and to see packets of past winners visit the NC Cattlemen's Association web site,

www.nccattle.com



THE FORAGER

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To receive **The Forager** via email, or to submit a question or post an upcoming event: contact: ronnie@hardrockbeefcattle.com

N.C. Forage and Grassland Council Membership Form

Name _____ Name of Operation _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____ Phone: _____

Occupation: Farmer ___ Industry ___ Agency ___ Other _____

PASTURE ACRES _____ HAY ACRES _____ Type(s) of Livestock _____

_____ I prefer to receive a **printed** copy of The Forager in my mailbox. _____ I prefer the Forager be e-mailed to me.

_____ Student—\$10 (High school or College)

_____ **Individual** — \$25 (producers, professional agricultural and industry personnel, etc.)

_____ **Corporate** — \$300 (businesses, organizations; manufacturers, etc.)

Make check payable to: N.C. Forage and Grassland Council Mail to: NCFGC 2228 N. Main St., Fuquay-Varina, NC 27526

2014 Midwinter Conferences Scheduled for January 28-30

Put these dates on your calendar.

On **January 28, 2014** the Eastern Conference will be at the Lois G. Britt Agricultural Service Center, 165 Agriculture Drive, Kenansville.

On **January 29, 2014**, the Piedmont Conference will be at the Iredell Cooperative Extension, 444 Bristol Drive, Statesville.

On **January 30, 2014** the Mountain Conference will be at the WNC Regional Livestock Center, 474 Stock Drive, Canton.

Our Keynote speaker will be Greg Brann, Grazing Lands Specialist with the Tennessee USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Check out times, other speakers and topics and credits will be available on our website at:

<http://www.afgc.org/affiliate/northcarolina.php>

American Forage & Grassland Council Annual Conference To Be Held in Memphis, Tennessee By Mark Hucks

The American Forage and Grassland Council (AFGC) is the national organization for grassland farmers and those who make a living off forage crops. Each year the AFGC conducts an Annual Conference. This conference moves around the country from one location to another. Last year it was in Covington, Kentucky. The 2014 Conference is in Memphis, Tennessee on January 12-14. Last year, Ronnie Holman and I attended. I was really impressed with the activities and the educational experiences. A lot of the presenters are heavy hitters that you read about across the country. Some of the activities include: educational seminars, poster presentations, a forage spokesperson contest, an Emerging Scientist Competition, and a photo contest. You get the opportunity to hear about a lot of research first hand. If you enjoy working with forage crops, I would encourage you to attend. There may not be an annual conference this close for a while. You can gather more information about this event at: www.afgc.org/docs/events/2014_Conference_FlyerAnnual.pdf

You might say, "Well I'm not part of the American Forage and Grassland Council." One of the benefits of joining the NC Forage and Grassland Council is part of your NC membership fee goes to purchasing membership in the AFGC. So if you are part of the NC Forage and Grassland Council, you are part of the American Forage and Grassland Council. Check it out.,