

# OFGC – Ohio Forage and Grasslands Council

## Fall/Winter 2012

### About OFGC:

We represent a collective voice for issues affecting forage-animal agriculture.

We develop present and future leaders in the forage industry.

We encourage research, education, and service efforts to improve forage production, utilization, and marketing.

OFGC strives to provide a forum or means for the exchange of ideas, problems/opportunities, and solutions in forage-animal agriculture.

### Our Mission:

The Ohio Forage and Grasslands Council, Inc. exists to enhance the profitability of Ohio farmers through the use of forage and grasslands resources, and to facilitate the opportunity for collective interaction between producers and other forage workers, both public and private.

## It's Always About the Weather – president's report

Seems like most farm related newsletter articles comment about the weather. This one is no different. The weather is, as it has always been, on every farmer's mind. But is it more so today? The extremes seem more extreme! It's either wetter or drier than ever, or colder or hotter than ever.

When we started grazing, 12 years ago, we worried about those few days in August that got above 90. But July 2011, we had 20 days above 90 and 20 nights above 70. That's tough on our milk cows. We've changed; we've adapted. We had to, to keep our cows happy. Last fall was extremely wet,

and we were glad to have our concrete feed pad and spacious open sided barn... The early spring was great to have the grass, but then last summer happened! Dry and hot like many of us have never experienced. We tore up a cool season grass hay field and planted warm season annuals. Hope it was the right thing to do. At least we have feed for our cows this winter. We would not have it if we hadn't changed our ways.

So, is the weather really changing or are we more aware? Do we just hear more about it? I don't consider 10 years grazing enough time to be

a weather expert, but I feel weather patterns are changing, becoming more extreme and we will need to adapt. But... what are the correct adaptations and how do we know if we are making the right choices?

These weather pattern issues will be the focus of the next OFGC annual meeting in Reynoldsburg, February 8, 2013. Join the conversation and let us know what adaptation strategy you have chosen. We'd like to hear about the steps you've taken so we can learn from each other. Hope to hear from you!

- Perry Clutts  
addyg1000@gmail.com

## Winter Feed after summer 2012? – what can we do about it?

The hot and dry of the 2012 growing season has reduced forage supplies for many producers. Some growers have planted emergency annuals to fill the "gap". (sorghums, sorghum/sudans, forage oats, etc) These annuals can produce quite a bit of feed with limited rainfall and do it in a short time of 60-90 days.

The biggest concern with emergency annuals is forage quality. This year I have tested oats at 8% - 21% protein and sorghums at 5% to 17% protein. You will not know unless you forage test! Low protein forages are easily fixed, but protein is expensive

– just price soy bean meal.

Another concern with annuals is fiber levels. Neutral Detergent Fiber (NDF) is the total fiber in forage and it limits animal intake by rumen fill. Most animals can eat 1.2 lb. of NDF per 100 lb. of animal weight. Corn silage and alfalfa/grass forages usually contain 40-45% NDF if harvested at a good stage of maturity. Animals can eat 2.7 – 3% of their body weight of these forages. Annuals run 55-70% NDF with intakes of 1.7-2.2% of body weight. This is not a concern for dry stock animals at maintenance, but

can greatly reduce performance of growing and lactating animals. Once again, a forage test will give valuable information on fiber, protein and energy levels of the annuals.

Annuals can be a great asset in a short forage year. Some producers produce all their stored forage needs with annuals. The only caution is to be sure to get a forage test so you are not disappointed in your animal's performance.

*Gene Debruin is an animal nutritionist for Premier Feeds and is also an organic dairy farmer in south central Ohio.*

# Board Member Val Jorgensen Hosts Grazing School



Board member, Val Jorgensen says, "We are grateful for the land that is in our care and humbly try to provide the highest quality food, fiber, and herbal products for the people of central Ohio."

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> OFGC's newest board member, Val Jorgensen, hosted a Grazing school at her farm in Westerville, Ohio. The school was well attended with participants from varied backgrounds.

Val's diversified farm not only raises sheep and beef stockers on grass, but grows vegetables and herbs that supply Columbus area restaurants and stores, such as Jeni's Ice-cream. Her farm also produces honey and flowers that are sold at the Clintonville Farmers Market. She partners with Lynne and Roger Genter of Clintonville, Ohio for much

of the labor and management. This partnership gives Val the opportunity to manage her farm based CSA (Community Supported Agriculture), which includes Sunday Supper at the Farm events each month. These events allow Val to sell her produce to visitors who come to the farm for a meal produced from ingredients that are seasonally grown, harvested, and served right from the farm. Jorgensen Farm's premier summer event is the *Girasole Dinner*. This year's sold out event was August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012. *Girasole* (Italian for

Sunflowers) line the outdoor space where a long table with over 100 guests enjoyed slow food after a tour of the farm.

Specialized personal events are also available at the farm.

Her newest enterprise is 5 greenhouses, which will allow year 'round vegetable production.

All aspects of Val's farm are certified organic by the Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association of Columbus, Ohio.

The OFGC board welcomes Val to the board and thanks her for hosting a premier grazing school!!

## Save the Date OFGC Annual Meeting

"Adapting to our Changing Climate"  
February 8, 2013

Ohio Department of Agriculture, Reynoldsburg, Ohio

The Ohio Forages and Grasslands Council Annual Meeting will be February 8, 2013 from 8:30 to 4:00. The focus will be "Adapting to our Changing Climate" with Dr. Chris Teutsch, Forage and Livestock Specialist, from the Southern Piedmont Research and Extension Center at Virginia Tech near Blackstone Virginia.

Dr. Teutsch's research focus is on filling in cool season grass summer slump with bermudagrass, crabgrass, eastern gamagrass, switchgrass, and summer annual grasses.

Dr. Teutsch's extension program focuses heavily on improving the management of existing pastures. He stresses the importance of evaluating and actively managing soil fertility and grazing. Teaching that by simply fertilizing pastures and implementing rotational stocking, pasture production improves by more than one-third. Stressing that this management also increases the drought tolerance of pastures by strengthening the plants' root system.

Dr. Teutsch will host 2 sessions during the day and we will also have our farmer panel of Beef, Sheep and dairy producers that extensively utilize forages in their operations. We'll also announce this year's winners of Ohio State Grazing Essay Contest, and our annual award winners!

## OFGC Calendar of Events

OFGC's Annual Meeting, OFGC Summer Farm Tours, partnering with American Forage and Grasslands Council and the Ohio Sheep Improvement Association are the premier events of the Ohio Forage and Grasslands Council. Plan to attend as many events if possible. Keep an eye out for the OFGC farm tour schedule - 2013. Building friendships that will help you better understand forage can help you become a better forage manager. Hope to see you there!

Date	Place	Event	contact
Dec 4,6,8, 2012	Jackson Ohio	Grazing Management Workshop	Jackson SWCD 740-286-5208 Vinton SWCD 740-596-5676
Dec 8 2012	Wooster Ohio	Buckeye Shepard Symposium	Ohio Sheep Improvement Assoc. 614 246 8299
Jan 6-9 2013	Covington Kentucky	AFGC Annual Conference	800 944 2342
Feb 8 2013	Reynoldsburg Ohio	OFGC Annual Meeting	740 248 1448
Mar 18, 25, 2013	Mt Hope	Grazing Workshop	(330) 674-2811
Mar 26, Apr 2&9	Noble County	Grazing Workshop	740-732-4318
Mar 21,28, Apr 6	Tuscarawas County	Grazing Workshop	330-339-7976

# OHIO FORAGE AND GRASSLAND COUNCIL SPONSORS

## GRAZING EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

### **The Ohio Forage and**

**Grassland Council** sponsored a Pasture for Profit Grazing School at OFGC Director Val Jorgensen's Farm in April and A Forages for Horses Workshop in July at AC Acres, Vicki Ayotte farm near Groveport, Ohio. The Forage for Horses workshop covered information on Pasture Management, Pasture Soil Fertility, Forage Species Selection, Tall Fescue Management, Horse Nutrition on Pasture, Manure Management, and a pasture walk where plants were identified and how to design a grazing paddock system was discussed. Bob Hendershot, retired NRCS State Grassland Conservation and now part-time ODNR-DSWR Grazing Specialist lead the discussion. Bob helped develop the Forage for Horses program and has presented this material across the country. The Ohio Forage and Grassland Council is the source of the 3-ring binders full of information that is used for both the Pasture for Profit and the Forage for Horses.

The Forage for Horses Workshops provide grazing management concepts to make better use of pasture to reduce the amount of hay needed. A well managed pasture can provide a large portion of a horse's forage requirement mid-April through mid-November. Horses grazing well managed paddocks will spread their manure over the pasture instead of in loafing areas or in their stalls. Healthy grass and legume plants are more productive if given the opportunity to re-grow in-between grazing events. You can improve forage growth by dividing the pasture into smaller paddocks and rotate the animals among the separate paddocks. Managing the forage is an important concept to understand to protect the environment, soil, water, plants and animals.

Weeds compete with forage plants for moisture, sunlight and nutrients. Good

grazing management can keep most weeds out. Horse owners need to be aware of toxic plants and their control measures. A pasture that is continuously grazed, over grazed, or has inadequate soil fertility can make weed problems even worse. Selecting the right forage species for the use and the soil type can help in providing a healthy pasture. Horse grazing areas should be long and narrow rectangles because horses tend to graze in a linear fashion which is different than cattle. The location of animal watering facilities is also a concern in designing a grazing system.

The Pasture for Profit grazing school is designed for the producer to provide valuable information in a fun atmosphere that can be used to ensure your farm is environmentally responsible as well as economically viable. The goal is to make this educational event a one of a kind experience. These grazing schools are educational programs taught by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and Ohio State University Extension. The schools serve three purposes: 1) educate producers and agency personnel in the art and science of grazing management; 2) transfer new technology in grassland management to producers and agency personnel; 3) improve the producers' ability to better manage the natural resources. There have been 205 Grazing held since 1994 with over 3600 participants through December 2012.

There is a Grazing School Scheduled for December 2012 in Jackson, Ohio. The **South Central Ohio Grazing School** "Pasture for Profit" will be held the evening of December 4 and 6, 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm and concludes on Saturday, December 8, 2012 9:00 am until noon. The program will be held at the Jackson Agricultural Research Station, OARDC, 019 Standpipe Road, Jackson Ohio 45640.

The topics to be covered at the three day grazing school include; What is MiG and What are Your Goals and Objectives of Your Grazing System?, Evaluating Your Resources, Understanding Plant Growth, Grazing Economics, Forage Species Selection, Grazing Systems and Contingency Plans for the Good, Bad and Ugly, Paddock Layout and Design, Pasture Soil Fertility. Saturday, the last day of the school will include a farm visit to view grazing management practices, including fence and livestock watering systems in the field. In addition to this school being held next month, more have been planned around Ohio beginning in March. They include: Mt. Hope on March 18, 25 and April 1, 2013; a joint Belmont, Guernsey, Monroe & Noble County school on March 26, April 2 & 9; and Tuscarawas County on March 21, 28 and April 6. More details on these will be posted here and in the Beef Team web Calendar as they become available. <http://beef.osu.edu>

Grazing School Info:

Go to: [extension.osu.edu](http://extension.osu.edu) and search Jackson Grazing School

***Bob Hendershot*** is retired USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) state grasslands conservationist and state (GLCI) Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative coordinator. He was one of the founders of the Ohio Forage and Grassland Council and served as their second president and still is a director and treasurer. He helped develop the Pasture for Profit Grazing Schools, the Ohio Forage for Horses and the Equine Environmental and Liability Awareness Programs and continues as an instructor and Pasture Walk Leader. Bob and his wife Connie live and farm in Pickaway County, Ohio near Circleville. They have three grown children and three grandchildren. They have a pasture based sheep operation and occasionally graze some stocker cattle.

# AFGC WILL HOLD ITS ANNUAL MEETING THIS JANUARY IN KENTUCKY

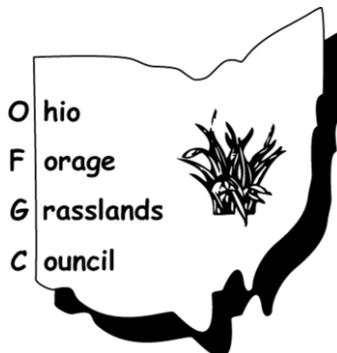
## OFGC

20361 Florence Chapel Pike  
Circleville, Ohio 43113

PHONE:  
(740) 248-1448

FAX:  
(740) 474-2840

E-MAIL:  
[addyg1000@gmail.com](mailto:addyg1000@gmail.com)



We're on the Web!

See us at:

[www.ohioforage.org](http://www.ohioforage.org)

The American Forage and Grassland Council (AFGC) will host its Annual Meeting January 6-9, 2013 at the Marriott River Center in Covington, Kentucky.

The conference will feature symposia, offering extended content on specific topic areas; scientific posters; an outstanding exhibit hall representing seed, chemical, fencing and other industry companies and organizations; many networking opportunities; and several competitions such as the Forage Spokesperson, Emerging Scientist, Photo and Essay Contests.

The conference opening session moderated by Dr. Garry Lacefield will focus on *Forage Research, Teaching, and Extension: Challenges and Opportunities* with presentations by key leaders from industry, education, producer and government perspectives. In addition, AFGC is proud to partner with Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) to provide workshops on *Forage Suitability Groups – The What, Why, How, When, and By Whom for Successful Development* and *Developing Grazing Plans with Contingency for Drought and Wildfire*.

There are over 60 educational opportunities over the two day conference, several networking opportunities and an exhibit hall with several industry representatives from seed to equipment. Educational sessions qualify for CEU credit in the Certified Forage and Grassland Professional designation program offered by AFGC.

Details and registration are available on the web at [www.afgc.org](http://www.afgc.org). Or, contact AFGC at 1.800.944.2342 for information or questions.

The American Forage and Grassland Council is an organization made up of 21 affiliate councils with a total membership of about 2,500. Founded in 1944, its primary objective is to promote the profitable production and sustainable utilization of quality forage and grasslands. Contact AFGC, PO Box 867, Berea, KY 40403. Telephone 800.944.2342. Fax 859.623.8694. E-mail [info@afgc.org](mailto:info@afgc.org). [www.afgc.org](http://www.afgc.org).

**OFGC will be awarding \$50 sponsorships** towards the AFGC Annual Conference registration. Be one of the first 20 members to reply to redeem this special incentive. Call or email Perry at 740 248 1448 or [addyg1000@gmail.com](mailto:addyg1000@gmail.com) for details. Another great reason to attend the AFGC Annual Conference in Covington Kentucky!

### **Perry Clutts on the Ballot for AFGC Board of Directors**

All OFGC members need to be sure to vote for our own Perry Clutts to be on the American Forage and Grassland Council (AFGC) Board of Directors. Arriving shortly in your mailbox, each member will receive the ballot which is included in the AFGC newsletter entitled "The Forage Leader". Presently serving on the AFGC Board from OFGC is Bob Hendershot presently serving as Past President and Gary Wilson serving as Vice President.

Please refer to another article in this newsletter promoting the AFGC Conference to be held in Covington, KY on Jan. 6-9, 2013. Also participating from OFGC is Alan Brinker from Coshocton County who will be participating in the AFGC Forage Spokesperson Contest.

This meeting is very close to us this year so we're looking forward to great attendance from Ohio. See you at the Conference!!

## OFGC

20361 Florence Chapel Pike  
Circleville, Ohio 43113