

LOUISIANA FORAGE FARMER

VOLUME 32, NUMBER 1

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FEATURED ARTICLE

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Louisiana Forage Farmer

Volume 32, Number 1

LFGC Membership Dues

The LFGC annual membership dues for 2017 are now due. If you did not pay your annual dues at the LFGC annual meeting in December, please fill out the form at the end of this newsletter and send it in as soon as possible. LFGC strives to put on some excellent programs and the organization needs your involvement. If you want to continue to receive this newsletter and other publications from LFGC and AFGC, please send in your dues today or you risk being dropped from the membership list.

Acadiana Beef Producers Field Day

Date: Saturday, March 18, 2017

Time: 8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Place: Iberia Research Station, Jeanerette

Registration starts at 8:00 a.m.

This field day has been approved for Master Farmer Phase 2 credit

Contact: Dr. Guillermo Scaglia gscaglia@agcenter.lsu.edu or call 337-276-5527 **Indoor Program**

-Market report: Dr. Kurt Guidry

-Update on BQA and antibiotic use: Dr. Christine Navarre and Dr. Stuart Gauthier

-Marketing Strategies for your calf crop: Panel discussion with beef cattle producers

“This newsletter is a place to share information among the Louisiana Forage and Grassland ”

Outdoor Program

- Impact of management on shrink: Mr. Andrew Granger, Mr. Stan Dutile and Mr. Blair Hebert
- Winter forage alternatives: Dr. Ed Twidwell
- Ryegrass varieties under grazing; nitrogen/clovers management in winter pastures on Bermudagrass sod: Dr. Guillermo Scaglia
- Master Farmer Program: Mr. Allen Hogan

Door prizes and lunch provided

Field Day sponsors: LCA, LFGC and LSU AgCenter

Southern States Forage Conference

Date: March 31, 2017

Location: Four States Fairgrounds Fine Arts Building, Texarkana, Arkansas

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.

Program starts at 9:00 a.m. and concludes by 3:00 p.m.

Cost: \$30 per person or \$50 per couple (includes lunch)

Contact: Dr. Vanessa Corriher-Olson vacorriher@ag.tamu.edu or call 903-834-6191

Program

- Leasing property: know your rights: Tiffany Dowell Lashmet, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
- Producing baleage: Dr. Mike McCormick, LSU AgCenter (retired)
- Management to extend grazing season: Dr. Paul Beck, University of Arkansas
- Annual warm-season legumes: Dr. Vanessa Corriher-Olson, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
- Alfalfa: Dr. John Jennings, University of Arkansas
- Wildlife nutrition & potential benefits of forage: Dr. Billy Higginbotham, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Sponsors: LSU AgCenter, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Oklahoma State University, University of Arkansas

New LFGC board member focuses on forage

J. A. Girgenti, who joined the LFGC board in December, is a seedstock producer who emphasizes forages as a key to success. He raises Beefmaster and South Poll cattle. The bulls and heifers he grows are sold as breeding animals, while the majority of his steers are sold to be finished as grass-fed beef.

“I’m a faithful rotator of pasture,” J. A. says. He uses stockpiling as a way to cut down on hay consumption. He takes animals off of some of his pastures in August and lets the grass grow. Then in November he puts the cattle on this stockpiled forage, moving the herd progressively across the pastures, using polywire to give them an additional strip each day. Depending on the weather, the cattle will generally graze stockpile until January. They get high protein molasses blocks as a supplement while on the stockpiled forage.

In January, the cattle eat hay and get one to three hours of grazing on ryegrass. J. A. uses just enough hay to reach the point where ryegrass hits rapid growth. Rotational grazing in ryegrass continues through May, when summer grasses take over. He prefers to use controlled grazing and clipping to keep down problem weeds, instead of using chemicals.

J. A. buys hay, to avoid “mining” his soil. His total herd of 45-50 mama cows, plus young breeding animals to sell, comes to 65 to 70. With about 80 acres of open land plus woods, he averages about 2 acres per cow. He uses about 160 4x5 bales during the winter.

J. A., who started raising his own cattle in high school, has grown Beefmasters since 1973. He is

pleased with their quality, achieved through rigorous culling. The South Poll animals, which he started with in 2005, are moderate in size and heat resistant. They fit well in meeting the demand for grassfed beef. He is now trying out South Poll bulls on Beefmaster cows. He considers the growing demand for grassfed beef a great opportunity for cattle producers.

His production goals are set on pounds of calf per acre sold each year, not individual weaning weights. The reproduction goal is a marketable calf per cow per year, beginning as a two-year-old, within 365 days, using minimal inputs.

Productivity of Forage Wheat and Annual Ryegrass Following Roundup Ready Forage Soybeans

David Lang, Glover Triplett, David Russell, Beau Varner, Graham Oakley and Ernest Flinn
Mississippi State University

Soybeans provide high quality forage for livestock and wildlife. Utilization of glyphosate tolerant (RR) soybeans provides the opportunity to kill toxic tall fescue and other plants. RR soybeans as a grain-type and “Gamekeeper” were no-till planted in June for two years that previously had tall fescue. Forage wheat and “Marshall” annual ryegrass were no-till planted into the harvested soybean stubble in late-fall of 2013 and 2014. Wheat and ryegrass were fertilized with N at 0, 30 and 60 lb/acre following each harvest beginning in March. Soybean as hay in 2014 was 5100 lb/acre for the grain type and was 12,000 lb/acre for Gamekeeper as forage. Soybean hay yield in 2015 ranged from 6500 lb/acre for the grain type and 8000 lb/acre for Gamekeeper as forage. Crude protein content of the soybean hay ranged from 13% for the grain type and 15% for Gamekeeper forage. Digestibility was

67% for the grain-type soybean hay and 69% for forage soybean hay. Ryegrass and wheat responded to N rates, but their yields were low: 3200 to 5000 lb/acre for ryegrass and 1500 to 2700 lb/acre for wheat. Wheat harvested as forage was absent in the May harvest and may be a better forage to grow before soybeans. Ryegrass continued to grow into May and would have competed with soybean planting. Delaying soybean harvest until late October or early November resulted in a late planting of ryegrass and wheat. Crude protein levels in ryegrass and wheat were 18 or 14%, respectively, indicating N from soybeans was similar.

Source: 2016 AFGC Proceedings

Impact of Shade on the Yield, Nutritive Value, and Botanical Composition of Forage Mixtures for Silvopastures

K.M. Mercier, C.D. Teutsch, J.H. Fike and K.K. Quick
Virginia Tech University

Interest in silvopastures in Virginia and other transition zone states is increasing. Silvopasture is the intentional integration of trees, forages and livestock into an intensively managed system. Forages established in silvopasture systems are subject to different environmental conditions than typical pastures as a result of the changes in



microclimate due to presence of trees. These conditions may impact both yield and forage diversity. The objective of this

experiment was to evaluate the impact of shade on

the botanical composition and yield of a simple, intermediate, and complex cool-season forage mixtures. The experimental design was a random complete block with four replications. Slatted shade structures were used to create three different light levels (25, 50 and 75% full sun) for comparison with a no-shade control. In early April, 2015, three different cool-season forage mixtures of varying complexity were planted. Immediately after planting, shade structures were placed over the corresponding plots. Yield at the first and second harvest decreased by more than 35% as shade level increased ($P < 0.03$). Mixture complexity had no effect on yield ($P > 0.59$). The amount of tall fescue, orchardgrass and red clover in the complex mixture tended to increase as shade increased. All three mixtures had fewer weeds with shade when compared with the no-shade control ($P < 0.04$). Shade appeared to hinder the growth of summer annual grasses such as crabgrass, which could enhance initial establishment in spring seedlings.

Source: 2016 AFGC Proceedings

Selecting Summer Annual Cultivars: It is About More Than Just Yield!

C.D. Teutsch, K.M. Mercier and K. Quick
Virginia Tech University

Summer annual grasses can provide high quality summer grazing for ruminant livestock in Virginia and other transition zone states. In the past, recommendations for cultivar selection have been to “find a reasonably priced, locally available variety and focus on management”. While good agronomic and grazing management are crucial when using summer annual grasses, recent advances in breeding may change how varieties are selected. The impact of the brown midrib (BMR) trait on digestibility and the relationship between yield and digestibility was examined for five years of data from summer variety annual trials conducted at Virginia Tech’s Southern Piedmont AREC, Blackstone, VA. Cultivars possessing the BMR trait were approximately 5% more digestible on average. In

2009 and 2010, no relationship between yield and digestibility was found. In 2011, 2012 and 2014, a negative relationship between yield and digestibility occurred. When yield and digestibility were indexed against the average yield and digestibility for a given trial and graphed, varieties with above average yield and digestibility could be visualized. These are cultivars that should be considered for forage programs. Cultivars that had above average yield and digestibility for three out of five years included AS6501, AS9301 and Xtragraze BMR. This research indicates that both yield and digestibility should be considered when selecting summer annual grasses for forage programs.

Source: 2016 AFGC Proceedings

Evaluation of alfalfa hay when using hay preservatives in Mississippi

J. White and R. Lemus
Mississippi State University

Alfalfa production in Mississippi has increased in recent years due to the increase in research and demonstrations outlining proper management strategies. However, the process of curing and baling quality hay can prove to be difficult in a humid climate. The use of hay preservatives such as Hay-Guard could help mitigate “bale heating”

observed while baling at higher moisture. A three-acre field of first-year alfalfa in Starkville, Mississippi was utilized for the study taking three separate harvests on April 29, June 16 and July 27.



Hay-Guard was applied at a rate of 0, 2 and 4 lb/ton at baling. The hay was square-baled when windrows

tested between 25 and 21% moisture and again when tested at 20% moisture or below. A total of 48 bales were taken for each harvest and arranged in a randomized complete block design with 3 replications. From these bales, the following data were recorded: (1) weights were taken at 0, 5, 15 and 20 days after baling. Bale temperatures and forage quality (lignin and crude protein) were affected by harvest date and timing of sampling. The use of the preservative and the moisture at which the hay was baled had no effect on forage quality and bale temperature. This was most likely due to abnormally dry summer weather that made it problematic in baling higher moisture hay. Crude protein (21%) was greatest, and lignin (8%) and bale temperatures were lowest (78^o F) in the first harvest.

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