

2023 National Forage Week – Press Release and Announcement

June 18 – June 24, 2023

“Forages Feeding the World”

The American Forage and Grassland Council is excited to celebrate the 9th Annual National Forage week on June 19 - 25, 2023 as an effort to raise awareness on the impact of forages and grassland agriculture serve in working towards a more sustainable world.

What are forages, and why are they important to society?

Forages are crops used to support livestock production and are located in almost every county within every state in the US. Pastures and hayfields are more than part of our everyday landscape — They support animal agriculture and provide a host of other benefits to society. The American Forage and Grassland Council is celebrating the role of forages in our daily lives from June 18 through June 24 as part of National Forage Week with the theme of “Forages Feeding the World.”

How do forages impact the food we eat and products we consume?

The UN Food and Agricultural Organization describes food systems as containing “the production, aggregation, processing, distribution, consumption and disposal of food products that originate from agriculture, forestry or fisheries, and parts of the broader economic, societal and natural environments in which they are embedded.” These systems are made up of sub-systems, like farming, that interact with external systems, like the trade system. Grassland agriculture makes up a large part of land use in the US and as a result, forage products can be animal proteins and the byproducts of those.

Forages feed the world by:

Making use of land...

In the USDA’s last study of major land uses in the US, it found that as of 2012, grassland pastures and rangeland represent 29% of US land. This grassland may be in inhospitable areas of the country that cannot support industry in another way. Forages can be used to feed animals or produce biomass to be used in non-edible products.

Creating a more sustainable future...

As animals consume forages, their waste products are recycled within the forage system and can be utilized by the plant. Erosion and water retention are helped by the cover of the forage. With a growing worldwide population to feed and house, this will be essential as agriculture becomes more efficient to care for that population.

Driving the economy...

Forages can be fed in pastureland or preserved for later use. Land can be leased, labor can be hired for management and products can be sold for individuals and entities to profit. Meat, milk and other animal products can be sold from the animals grazing the forage. These products can also sold internationally, stimulating the global and domestic economies.

As the leader and voice of economically and environmentally sound forage focused agriculture, AFGC understands the impact of forages on the world and invites you to join in on and share our educational efforts during National Forage Week. Join our social media campaign by using #NationalForageWeek to tag posts, promote our theme of “Forages Feeding the World” by highlighting a part of your forage story, and share forage facts with friends.