

Marion County Extension Service
2232 NE Jacksonville Road
Ocala, Florida, 34470
(352) 671-8400



MARION COUNTY LIVESTOCK NEWS

Vol. 13, No. 8

OCTOBER 2007

2007 Fall Forage Update

Cool-season forages can supply excellent grazing for livestock. They are usually higher in total digestible nutrients and protein than our summer perennial grasses. Planting and growing these forage crops can involve considerable expense and labor. Because rainfall is often unpredictable during fall months, planting cool season legumes becomes risky at times. Winter forages may be grazed to supplement frosted perennial grass pastures or low quality hay, or harvested as a high quality hay or silage crop. Some livestock producers reserve winter forages for young livestock that need higher quality forages. Winter forages cannot be grown everywhere in the state and on every soil type. Some areas and some soils are too dry during the cool season to successfully grow plants. Therefore, the type of winter forage and the site where it is grown should be carefully selected. We provide annual updated information on variety recommendations for forages that have been adequately tested under Florida growing conditions.

Remember the following:

- Planting cool-season forages on a clean-tilled seedbed will result in earlier and more total production compared to overseeding on a grass sod. If overseeding bahiagrass, the sod should be disked or chopped for 30 to 50 percent disturbance. For overseeding bermudagrass, a pasture drill or no-till drill can be used alone. Excess warm-season forage should always be removed as hay or by grazing before planting the cool-season forage. Recent experience suggests that planting of cool-season annual grasses on bahia should be delayed until mid-November or later.

- Success of winter pastures depends on rainfall. This is especially true when overseeding.
- In central and south peninsular Florida sod seeding (overseeding) of cool-season annuals into an established grass sod often fails due to insufficient soil moisture and this is generally not recommended unless irrigation is available.
- Look for opportunities to plant on a clean-till seedbed, such as following vegetables or a row crop, after lifting sod, or in a pasture renovation program where the sod is plowed or turned under.
- In south central Florida, small grains and ryegrass have been successfully grown on flatwoods in a pasture renovation program. If the sod is turned with a moldboard plow (late October-early November), the soil harrowed, planted, and packed the same day, there will usually be enough moisture conserved to establish the new planting. If equipment and labor does not allow for such a rapid progression of work, then it may be best to turn the sod and then disk in early- to mid-October and wait (hope) for a good rain before planting.
- Winter legumes are more dependable on the heavier clay soils of northwestern Florida or on sandy soils that are underlain by a clay layer compared to deep upland sands or sandy flatwoods. However, white clover and ryegrass overseeded can also be grown successfully on certain flatwoods areas in northeast

(continued on pg. 2)

Florida and south central Florida where the soil remains moist throughout the growing season. Do not forget to add the correct inoculant (nitrogen fixing bacteria) to the legume seed before planting.

Recommended Cultivars (Varieties)

Grasses

Rye - Rye is the small grain most widely used for winter grazing. Rye is more cold tolerant than oats and generally produces more forage than either oats or wheat. If rye is planted very early in the season, it is often hurt by various seedling diseases. It is often best to wait until cool weather prevails ([Table 1](#)). Normally rye developed from northern states will produce little forage in late fall or early winter and will usually be severely damaged by leaf rust; therefore, plant only varieties recommended for the Southeastern U. S.

Recommended varieties (by maturity):

Early: FL 401 (for early grazing or for use in blends), AGS 104.

Medium: Wrens 96, Wrens Abruzzi, Pennington Wintergraze 70, and Early Graze.

Late: Bates, Oklon

Oat -Oat is very palatable forage but is susceptible to freeze injury. Oat may be planted and grazed earlier than rye. Maturity shown in parenthesis Horizon 321, Horizon 474, Horizon 270, and TAMO 406 are relatively new varieties that have improved crown rust resistance, winter hardiness, and good grain and forage production. In some years, some varieties, like NK-Coker 227, may be injured by Barley Yellow Dwarf Virus (BYDV).

Recommended varieties (by maturity):

Medium: Horizon 270, Horizon 321, Horizon 474, SS76-40, and NK-Coker 227.

Late: TAMO 406

Wheat - Wheat is similar to oat in forage yield and palatability. Wheat is less susceptible to freeze injury than oat. Wheat should not be planted for grazing before October 15 and precaution to plant only Hessian-fly-resistant varieties for grazing should be taken.

Recommended varieties (by maturity): These varieties are all grain types that may be used for forage

Medium: AGS 2000 and Pioneer 26R61

Medium - late: USG 3592

Ryegrass - Ryegrass is a valuable winter and spring grazing crop for use on flatwoods soils or the heavier sandy loam soils in northwest Florida. Ryegrass may be seeded alone or with a small grain on a prepared seedbed or overseeded onto permanent grass pastures. Seeding ryegrass with a small grain crop lengthens the grazing season.

Recommended varieties (by maturity):

Late: Jumbo, Prine, Big Daddy, Passeral Plus

Mid to late: Florlina, Surrey II, Jackson, TAM 90

Other varieties: Ed, Brigadier, Fantastic, Graze-N-Gro, King, Beefbuilder III, Thunder, Bruiser, Striker, Attain, and Big Boss. (Other new varieties may be suitable but have not been adequately tested in Florida.)

Tall Fescue - In general, fescue should not be planted in Florida. It does not persist as a perennial, and as a cool-season annual, small grains and ryegrass are more productive.

Legumes

White Clover - White clover is usually a winter annual but may act as a perennial under optimum soil fertility and moisture conditions. It is adapted to moist soils throughout Florida. Production and persistence of white clover can be limited by nematodes and other pests.

Recommended varieties: Osceola (developed in Florida), Louisiana S-1, and Regal Ladino. Durana and Patriot are also well adapted but have a prostrate growth habit and lower initial forage yields.

Red Clover - This clover behaves as a winter annual under Florida conditions and usually does not reseed itself. It does not tolerate flooding; however it provides long-season forage production in north Florida.

Recommended varieties: Cherokee, Southern Belle, Kenland, and Redland III. Cherokee and Southern Belle (nematode resistant) were developed in Florida and both are non-dormant (earlier forage production) types that produce greater total-season forage yields than dormant varieties.

Alfalfa - Alfalfa is usually grown as a winter short-term perennial in Florida. Alfalfa is used for haylage, green chopping or hay. Alfalfa requires good management and high soil fertility. It is not tolerant of flooding or high water tables. Acreage is low in Florida because of the cost of production and management requirements.

Recommended varieties: Florida 99, Bulldog 805, and Amerigraze 702.

Crimson Clover - This clover is a reseeding annual that is adapted to fertile well-drained soils. It has a relatively short grazing season. Crimson clover may be grown in combination with ryegrass or a small grain crop.

Recommended varieties: Dixie, Flame, and AU-Robin. Also, Chief and Tibbee but their seed may be limited.

Arrowleaf Clover - Arrowleaf clover is an annual that is similar to crimson clover in soil adaptation, management and fertility requirements. It is mainly grown on heavier soils in northwestern Florida. Arrowleaf clover makes more growth in late spring than crimson clover.

Recommended varieties: Apache. It has improved virus resistance compared to Yuchi

Sweetclover - Sweetclover grows on slightly drier soils than white clover. It will not tolerate flooding. Sweetclover has an earlier but shorter grazing season than white clover. It should be reseeded each year.

Recommended varieties: Hubam and Floranna (seed may be limited).

Austrian Winter Peas - (Common). This annual legume is best suited to well-drained soils with high clay content.

Recommended varieties: Common

Vetch - Vetch grows best on well-drained, fertile, loamy soils. It has not generally been highly productive in Florida.

Recommended varieties: Americus, AU-Early Cover, Cahaba White, and Nova II.

Source: A. R. Blount, R. D. Barnett, G. M. Prine, K. H. Quesenberry and Y.C. Newman

The entire 2007 Fall Forage Management Guide including planting dates and rates may be viewed at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AA266>

“Beef Cattle Management Tips”

September

- Cut hay.
- Heavily graze pastures to be interplanted to cool season pastures.
- Check mineral feeder.
- Check for mole crickets, spittlebugs, and grassloopers and treat if necessary.
- Check dust bags.
- Wean calves and cull cow herd if not already done. Remove open, unsound, or poor producing cows.
- Train cowboys to observe normal and abnormal behavior and signs of disease.
- Be sure any replacement purchases are healthy and have been calfhood vaccinated for brucellosis.
- September or October is a good time to deworm the cow herd if internal parasites are a problem.
- When replacement heifers are weaned, give them required vaccinations and teach them to eat – then put them on a good nutrition program.
- Determine bull replacement needs, develop selection criteria, and start checking availability of quality animals.
- Review winter feed supply and feeding plans so that needed adjustments can be made before supplies tighten and prices rise.

October

- Plant cool season legumes.
- Plant small grain pastures.
- Check mineral feeder.
- Check for external parasites, especially lice, and treat if needed.
- Check for spittlebugs and grassloopers and treat, if needed.
- Watch condition of cow herd; maintain adequate nutrition.
- Isolate any additions to the herd for 30 to 60 days and observe for signs of disease; retest for brucellosis and leptospirosis.
- Be sure you have adequate handling facilities, and they are in good working order.
- If you are raising bulls for the commercial market, October thru December is the main bull-buying season for cattlemen in south Florida and now is the time to have your promotion program fully activated.

John Mark Shuffitt
Livestock Agent III
Marion County Extension

The Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences is an Equal Employment Opportunity-Affirmative Action Employer authorized to provide research, educational information and other services only to individuals and institutions that function without regard to race, color, sex, age, handicap or national origin. Persons requiring special accommodations should contact the Extension Service one-week in advance of program for assistance.

TOWN HALL MEETINGS

Florida Beef Council, Chairman,
Brad Etheridge
Florida Cattlemen's Association President,
Larry Rooks

Want to hear what's on the mind of cattle producers

Subjects to be discussed include:
Current Status of the Beef Checkoff Program
Update on State and Federal Legislative Issues &
Initiatives, Membership Program
This open forum will provide an opportunity to
learn and to be heard.

Town Hall Meetings

Location Phone Date Time

Ocala Livestock Market

Ocala (352) 732-4454 October 9 Tuesday 7:00pm

Tri-State Livestock Market (Graceville) (850)
263-3001 October 10 Wednesday 7:00pm

Hardee Livestock Market (Wauchula)

(863) 773-9747 October 16 Tuesday 7:00pm

Okeechobee Livestock Market (Okeechobee)

(863) 763-3127 October 17 Wednesday 7:00pm

Townsend Livestock Market (Madison)

(850) 973-4094 October 11 Thursday 7:00pm

North Florida Livestock Market (Ellisville)

(386) 755-3576 October 15 Monday 7:00pm

Arcadia Stockyard (Arcadia)

(863) 494-3737 October 18 Thursday 7:00pm

Columbia Livestock Market (Lake City)

(386) 755-2300 October 23 Tuesday 7:00pm

Sumter County Farmers Market (Webster)

(352) 793-2021 October 24 Wednesday 7:00pm

Cattlemen's Livestock Market (Lakeland)

(863) 665-5088 October 25 Thursday 7:00pm

**Plan to attend one or more of these
meetings**

**Contact individual meeting locations for
directions**