Louisiana Forage Farmer

Articles
"2018 Pasture and Warm-Season Forage Crop Variety Suggestions"

"Stockpiling Perennial Warm-Season Grasses In Mississippi"

"Mowing To Control Weeds in Pastures"

"Evaluation Of Fermentation Enhancers On Forage Preservation Characteristics In Annual Ryegrass Baleage in Alabama"

"LGLCI Louisiana Farms Bus Tour May 9-11, 2018"

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2018 Pasture and Warm-Season Forage Crop Variety Suggestions

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Introduction

Variety selection is an important decision producers must make when establishing forages in pastures. Many varieties of forage crops are marketed in Louisiana and scientists with the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center periodically conduct variety trials with warm-season forages. This information is used to make suggestions each year concerning warm-season forages for producers to consider utilizing. Suggested varieties listed are ones evaluated in Louisiana and found to perform satisfactorily. Suggested seeding rates are made assuming the use of good quality seed that meets the germination and purity seed standards as determined by the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry Seed Commission.

Perennial Grasses

Warm-season perennial grasses grown in the Southern region are of tropical origin and grow mainly during the late spring, summer and early autumn. These grasses become dormant and remain unproductive during the winter months. The optimum planting date for these grasses is from March 1 to June 1, but they can also be planted anytime during the growing season when soil moisture is adequate.

Bermudagrass

Bermudagrass can be grown throughout Louisiana, and is adapted to most soil types. Both seed-propagated and vegetatively propagated varieties are available. Seeded varieties should be planted at a rate of 3 to 5 pounds of hulled seed per acre. The hybrid varieties should be planted with enough plant material to give about 7,500 plants per acre.

Hybrids: Alicia, Brazos, Coastal, Grazer, Tifton 44, Tifton 85, Russell, Jiggs, Sumrall 007 and Little Phillip #1

Seeded: Common, Cheyenne II, Mohawk, Ranchero Frio, Sungrazer Plus

Bahiagrass

Bahiagrass is widely grown throughout Louisiana, and is particularly adapted to well-drained sites and will persist on low fertility soils. It should be seeded at a rate of 15 pounds per acre.

Argentine, Pensacola and Tifton 9

Dallisgrass

Dallisgrass is very productive on alluvial soils and more fertile upland soils in Louisiana. Dallisgrass is noted for having poor seed quality. Seed germinate slowly, often taking four weeks or longer for emergence. There are no varieties of dallisgrass; all seed is "common" and is imported from countries outside of the United States and seed availability is often limited. Dallisgrass should be seeded at a rate of 5 pounds per acre.

Annual Grasses

These grasses should be planted between April 15 and August 1. They will be killed by frost in the autumn. Specific variety suggestions for these species cannot be made because of insufficient data.

Pearl Millet

This species generally does best on well-drained, light, and upland soils. Pearl millet should be seeded at a rate of 25 pounds per acre if drilled and 30 pounds per acre if broadcast. This species does not cause prussic acid poisoning in livestock, but nitrate accumulation can cause toxicity under some circumstances.

Sorghum Sudangrass

This species generally does best on heavier soil types, although it can also be successfully planted on well-drained soils. Sorghum sudangrass should be seeded at a rate of 30 pounds per acre if drilled and 35 pounds per acre if broadcast. Nitrate accumulation or prussic acid can cause toxicity under some circumstances.

Warm Season Legumes

Alyceclover

This species is best adapted to well-drained soil types. Seed are planted at a rate of 15 to 20 pounds per acre in May or June. Establishment is slow and weed competition may be a problem. There are no varieties of alyceclover available; only "common" seed is marketed.

Perennial Peanut

This is a perennial legume that is adapted to well-drained soil types. It should not be planted on heavy soils that are prone to flooding or being water-logged for extended periods of time. Perennial peanuts would be better adapted in southern parts of Louisiana, but have been shown to survive for several years at locations just south of I-20 in north Louisiana.

The two varieties that can be planted are Arbrook and Florigraze. They should be planted at a rate of 60 to 80 bushels of rhizomes per acre from January 1 to March 15. Planting material is scarce, and producers may have to obtain their material from Georgia or Florida.

Warm Season Silage and Green Chop Crops

Specific variety suggestions for these species cannot be made because of insufficient data. Limited testing is being conducted at the Southeast Research Station near Franklinton.

Forage Sorghum

This species should be planted from April 15 to June 15 in south Louisiana and from May 1 to June 15 in north Louisiana. It can be planted at a rate of 8-12 pounds per acre if drilled and 15-20 pounds per acre if broadcast. It can also be planted at a rate of 6-8 pounds per acre if planted in 40-inch rows.

Corn for Silage

This species should be planted from March 1 to April 15. It should be planted at a rate of 12 to 20 pounds per acre planted in 30 to 40-inch rows.

Stockpiling Perennial Warm-Season Grasses In Mississippi

B. Rushing, R. Lemus, M. Thornton and J. Lyles
Mississippi State University

Stockpiling forage crops enables livestock producers to accumulate feedstuffs into the fall and winter, thus reducing stored forage needs while increasing forage utilization and grazing efficiency. A trial was conducted at Newton, MS in fall, 2015-2017 in which ‘Argentine’ and ‘Pensacola’ bahiagrass and ‘Common’ nad ‘Cheyenne II’ bermudagrass were evaluated based on their ability to generate nutritious feedstuffs following stockpiling. Four nitrogen (N) rates were applied to each variety: 0, 25, 50 and 75 lb N/acre. Four harvest dates were applied to each N rate at 30, 60, 90 and 120 days after N application. Dry matter (DM) yield was greatly affected by environment. Mean 2015 yield was 1,231 lb DM/across all varieties, harvest dates and N treatments. In 2016, however, mean DM yield was 408 lb/acre across all treatment combinations due mostly to severe droughty conditions. The two bermudagrass varieties out-yielded the two bahiagrass varieties in 2015 and 2016. The 75 lb N/acre rate and the 90 day harvest generated the greatest DM yields across all varieties in 2015 and 2016. In terms of forage quality, ‘Pensacola’ had the highest mean crude protein (CP) and total digestible nutrients (TDN) for both years, with means of 14.0 and 50.2% across all harvests and N rates. Based on data collected thus far, stockpiling warm-season perennial grasses has the potential to generate ample amounts of quality forage for fall and early winter grazing. However,

supplementation will be necessary to meet beef cow energy demands.

Source: 2018 AFGC Proceedings

Mowing To Control Weeds in Pastures

M.A. Landerfeld, C.D. Penrose, T.G. Wiseman and J.S. McCutcheon
Ohio State University

Weed control is an essential part of all forage production systems because unwanted weeds compete for nutrients, water and sunlight needed for optimum growth. Forage growth in Ohio pastures is a critical part of farm production because grazing livestock are present on more thatn 36% of Ohio farms. Weeds can reduce forage crop quality and productivity if left uncontrolled. The purpose of this study was to determine if weed populations in pastures could be changed or reduced by varying the

timing of mechanical mowing throughout the late-spring and summer growing period without the use of herbicides. This 32-plot randomized complete block study was conducted in 2015 and 2016 at the Eastern Agriculture Research Station, Belle Valley, OH. Treatments in this study consisted of: (1) Control; no mowing, (2) June mowing, (3) July mowing, (4) August mowing, (5) September mowing, (6) June/August mowing, (7) July/September mowing, and (8) June/July/August/September mowing. A scale of 0-9 was used (0 meaning 0% weeds present to a 9, meaning 90% weeds present). Results indicated all of the mowing treatments had significantly less weeds present ($P<0.05$) than the control except for the June-only treatment. The two-mowing treatment of June/August and four-mowing treatment of June/July/August/September were significantly less ($P<0.05$) than both the non-mowing treatment and the June-only treatment. This study suggests that the June/August mowing combination may be the best option to reduce weeds.

Source: 2018 AFGC Proceedings

Evaluation Of Fermentation Enhancers On Forage Preservation Characteristics In Annual Ryegrass Baleage in Alabama

M.K. Mullenix, L.D. Roth, J.B. Elmore and M.E. Griffin
Auburn University

Use of annual ryegrass for baleage production in the Southeast US represents a potential high-quality forage resource for beef cattle producers. Few studies have evaluated the effect of fermentation inoculants on storage preservation of cool-season baleage. The objective of this study was to evaluate two fermentation enhancers

(Forage-Mate VS-3 or Promote HayDefender, Cargill Animal Nutrition) and time of wrapping after baling on forage dry matter (DM), nutritive value, and bale temperature following a 90-day storage period. Final bale weight was less for delay-wrapped bales than those wrapped the same day as baling (mean 1025 vs 1140 lb DM/bale, respectively). No differences wee observed among forage inoculants in final bale weight. Forage CP, NDF, ADF and ADICP did not differ among forage inoculants or time of wrapping treatments. Overall, IVTD of annual ryegrass baleage was greater than 80% in this study across inoculant types. Delayed wrap time increased average bale temperature more rapidly when bales were opened at 90-days compared to those wrapped the same day. Control and VS-3-treated bales had greater temperature then HayDefender bales after opening over a simulated three-day feeding period. HayDefender-treated bales were more stable in terms of temperature at the time of feeding. Results indicate that time of wrapping had a greater impact on bale weight and temperature regulation than forage inoculants in annual ryegrass baleage.

Source: 2018 AFGC Proceedings

LGLCI Louisiana Farms Bus Tour May 9-11, 2018

From way up north in Pioneer, LA to the rolling hill country of East Feliciana, all the way west to Cajun Country, many farmers across the state of Louisiana are practicing holistic management on their farms. We hope you will be able to join us this spring as the Louisiana Grazing Lands Coalition and the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service sponsor a remarkable three-day excursion as we visit six of the best holistically managed farms in the state. You will be able to meet farmers who focus heavily on soil health by implementing mob-grazing, cover crops, silvo-pasture, prescribed burning and practice low-stress stockmanship.

We will load the bus in Alexandria, LA on Wednesday, May 9 at 7:00 a.m. We will then head to Pioneer, LA to Cliff and Karen Vining's Farm where we will see the effects of unrolling hay versus hay rack feeding and the distribution of the nutrients plus a lot more. Then we will travel to Ted and Melissa Miller's dairy farm in Baskin where they rotationally graze approximately 450 milk cows and 600 head of replacements and bulls on 1200 acres of pasture. Then we will head to Natchez, MS to eat dinner and stay the night. The next morning, we will travel to Cooper and Katie Hurst's Angus-based cow/calf operation, Hunt Hill Cattle Company. At this farm we will see how they utilize multi-species cover crops and mob-grazing to promote healthy soil. Next stop, we will see the land of brothers Wedge and Sammy Barthe, who are the fourth generation of their family to work the land or Richland Hill Plantation in East Feliciana Parish. We will wrap up day two in Morganza at Four Oaks Farm and enjoy their freshly caught, quality crawfish at a crawfish boil. We will spend the night in New Roads. On day three, we will head to Eunice where Vernon Fuselier and his son,

Justin have grown prairie native grasses on their land for several years. Our last farm stop will be in Ragley where for ten years Dave Daigle with Bunchs Creek Longleaf Tract has used prescribed burning and grazing to restore the longleaf pine habitat. There's lots to see and learn on these farm, and we hope you come along for the ride!

Registration is $220/person for double occupancy and $320/person for single occupancy, which includes lodging, bus transportation and meals except one lunch over the tour dates. Participants are responsible for their own transportation to and from Alexandria and any extras. Payment is due on April 30th.

For more information call 225-240-3376 or email info@louisianaglci.org

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