

Cool-Season Annuals Protocol **300 Day Grazing – Emphasis Program**

Objective:

Demonstrate the benefits associated with increasing the number grazing days by utilizing cool-season annuals.

Methods & Procedures:

- Soil test by August 1
- Pasture inventory by August 1
- Clean off summer growth by September 1
- Select annual based on farming operation and soil
- Prepare grass sod for planting appropriate cool-season annual
- Plant between mid September and late October
 - For adult livestock plant 1/3 acre per animal unit and limit graze 1 to 2 days per week in January.
 - For growing livestock plant 1 acre per animal unit and allow continuous access in January providing supplemental hay and/or grain as required.
- Apply 50–60 lbs. N in mid-November and again in early to mid March
- Defer grazing until 6 to 8 inches of forage growth has accumulated
- Rotationally graze
- Measure forage quality & yield of cool – season annual pasture at turn in
- Record the number of acres, stocking rate, grazing method and turn in and turn out date.
- BCS or Weigh livestock at beginning and ending of grazing period
- Record rainfall events and amounts or utilize local weather station data

Data Analysis:

1. Determine cost of planting annual
2. Determine cost of hay and supplemental feed
3. Determine animal performance
4. Determine number of grazing days
4. Determine economic cost difference between grazing cool season annuals vs. feeding hay plus supplement (if needed)

Outcomes:

1. Total cost comparison as a result of grazing cool season annuals
2. Number of days grazing cool season annuals
3. Average daily gain while grazing cool season annuals

Outputs:

1. Number of producers reached through field days, news letters and presentations.
2. Number of producers adopting the practice

Cool Season Annuals

Agent Name: _____
Producer Name: _____

Field

Acres _____
Soil Test (by August 1) _____
Soil Type (by August 1) _____
Forage Inventory (by August 1) forage inventory sheet included

Seed

Type _____
Date Applied _____
Rate per acre _____
Cost Per Acre _____
Total Cost _____

Fertilizer

Type _____
Date Applied _____
Rate per acre _____
Cost Per Ton _____
Total Cost _____

Grazing Period

Beginning Date _____
Ending Date _____

Grazing Method

Strip – How often were cattle moved _____
Continuous _____

Yield Estimate (*At turn in*) yield estimate worksheet included

Forage Quality (*Routine Analysis*)

March _____
April _____
May _____
June _____

Rainfall

Record Daily Amounts Aug. – Dec. (*calendar included*) _____

Hay Fed (*During Grazing Period (if any) or would have been fed*)

Hay Analysis (*Routine*) _____

Hay Type _____

Hay Age _____

Hay Storage (*Inside or Outside*) _____

Bale Value _____

Bale Wt. (*try to get actual weight*) _____

Number of bales fed & date _____

Supplemental Feed

Type _____

Cost per ton _____

Pounds fed per day _____

Number of days fed _____

Livestock

Type _____

Number _____

Estimated average weight _____

Beginning Wt or BCS _____

Ending Wt or BCS _____

Livestock Weighing or BCS Guideline

Weighing: Calves or small ruminants

- Make sure you have a scale that is in working condition
- Try to do the beginning and ending weights at the same time of day
- Record weights and keep in project folder

BCS: Mature cows, bred heifers or horses

- Have the same person do the beginning and ending BCS
- Try to do a representative cross section of the herd
- Score a minimum of 5 head or 25% of the herd if over 20 head
- Score the same individual animals for beginning and the ending BCS
- Record BCS and keep in project folder

Forage Yield Estimate Worksheet

Date: _____
County: _____
Agent: _____

Yield Estimate: (*At turn in*)
(Cut 6-17" squares to 1 1/2")
(Dry and weigh forage in grams)

Weigh forage when completely dry.

	<u>Ht – Inches</u>	<u>Density – (Thin, Medium or Thick)</u>	<u>Wt. Grams</u>
#1	_____	_____	_____
#2	_____	_____	_____
#3	_____	_____	_____
#4	_____	_____	_____
#5	_____	_____	_____
#6	_____	_____	_____
Avg	_____	_____	_____

Forage Inventory Sheet

Name:				Date:			
County:							
Field ID:				Number of Acres:			
Species	County	Total	%	Species	Count	Total	%
Cool-Season Grasses				Legumes			
Fescue				White Clover			
Orchardgrass				Red Clover			
Ky Bluegrass				Annual Lespedeza			
Small Grain				Hairy Vetch			
Annual Ryegrass				Hop Clover			
Other Cool Season Grasses				Other Legumes			
Warm-Season Grasses				Weeds/Other			
Bermudagrass				Perennial Broadleaf Weeds			
Bahiagrass				Annual Broadleaf Weeds			
Dallisgrass				Perennial Grassy Weeds			
Crabgrass				Annual Grassy Weeds			
Other Warm Season Grasses				Sedge/Rush			
				Woody/Thorny Brush			
				Bare Ground			

To conduct a pasture inventory, walk a zip-zag pattern across a pasture and record what is found at the end of your toe on every 5th step. Record at least 50 tally marks, preferably 100 tally marks for each field.

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