

Common Questions for Spring for Pasture Management

- 1. When should I turn the cows out?
- 2. Should I apply nitrogen to my pastures?

What is the effect of early spring grazing when the grass is still short



3. What should I plant in my pasture?4. What is the value of pasture?

What is the effect of early spring grazing when the grass is still short

- Grasses and forages grow roots and tillers from carbohydrates
- New carbohydrates Photosynthesis
 Old carbohydrates stored sugars in basal stem/crown
 In Spring, plants ONLY have stored carbohydrates

3

Dairy Forage Research Center Study

5

- What is the effect of early spring grazing when grass is still short?
- when grass is still short?

 Spring Grazing was initiated at 3-4" height
 Compared with 12" initial height

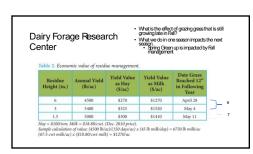
 Yield during treatment
 Yield for the rest of the season
- Table 4. Timing of grazing effects on annual past

Treatment Period	During Treatment (lb/ac)	If your growing 5 If you have 100 a What is that value	= 10% more grass 25 tons	
May (early spring)	400	100	500	\$140
July (summer drought)	200	600	800	\$225
October (late fall)	0	0	0	0

Early Spring Grazing

6

- Directly impacts yield
 Plants catch up, some. . . but not entirely
- Economic decision cost/value of alternative feed





Transition to Spring Grass

- Cows will tell you if they have adequate fiber
 - Manure
 Behaviour
- May need a supplemental fiber source
- Hay
 Taller Fall stockpiled forage (dead grass)

Should I apply Nitrogen to my Spring pastures?

- Spring N "may" result in more pounds of forage

- Spring in Time 1 resume in Time by During on Integer

 Orbardyras, Meadow Rescue, Bromegras, etc

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 Unlikely to get an economic response on bluegrass

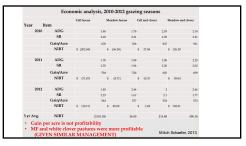
 Economic decision is the value of the production greater than the cost of the alternative heay
- Do we need more grass in Spring?
- Do we have a plan and an the ability to harvest extra grass?

10 9

Should I Apply Nitrogen to my Spring pastures?

• Role and value of Clover in a pasture sward

Location/Years/Type of Cattle	Treatment	Average Daily Gain, pounds/day	Gain/Acre, pounds
Lancaster, 1998-2000, Holstein	Kura clover + grass	2.66	909
stocker steers ¹	Red clover + grass	2.18	713
Arlington, 2010 - 2012, Beef	Grass (tall or meadow fescue) + nitrogen	1.85	607
crossbred stocker steers ²	Grass (tall or meadow fescue) + white clover	2.16	696



12 11

Clover and Legumes in Pasture

- Captures atmospheric nitrogen and improves grass production
 Improve digestibility of forage by increasing rate of gain especially in summer
- Evens out forage supply throughout the season
 Improves pasture resilience in drought
 Improves profit
 Provides pollinator habitat

- Nitrogen is antagonistic to legumes

If we manage for Clover (legumes) in pasture

- 30-50% legume content goal
 Evaluate Summer/Fall before
- Evaluate Summer/Fall before
 Methods of establishment
 No till drill
 Frost seeding
 Broadcast and trample
 Feeding to livestock

14 13

What should I plant in my pasture?

- Sort of answered that question with Clovers.
 Alfalfa/trefoil, less competitive and not very successful
 Grasses?
 maybe ryegrasses, annual/perennial

- Any Exceptions?
 Heavily damage/pugged up winter areas, without much grass

What should I plant in my pasture?



15 16

Questions

17