

RUCKER'S RAMBLINGS

ANIMAL AGRICULTURE NEWSLETTER

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2014

Our New Website: <http://yadkin.ces.ncsu.edu>

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AMAZING GRAZING SUMMER ANNUALS FIELD DAY

Make plans to attend this Beef Cattle Educational opportunity on Tuesday, September 2, 2014, at Mark Hollar's Farm, 3348 Woodruff Rd., Jonesville, NC 28642. The program will feature discussions about:

- * Base forages and other forage options (cool and warm season, annuals and perennials), native warm season grasses, their advantages, their limitations, and their challenges
- * The summer forage mix "Ray's Crazy Mix" and how it might fit into your operation
- * Rotational Grazing practices to improve forage health and animal performance
- * Temporary Fencing for rotational grazing programs
- * Soil Health as it relates to grazing management

The workshop will begin at 5:30 pm with a sponsored meal and some informal networking. After supper we'll join Johnny Rogers, Mark Hollar, Phil Rucker and others for some discussion of summer annual forages as well as a pasture walk to observe how these summer annuals have been used on Mark Hollar's operation. Bring a lawn chair and dress appropriately. We will proceed rain or shine.

To help us prepare enough food as well as handouts—reservations are requested by Friday, August 29. Call Cooperative Extension 336/679-2061 (Yadkin) or 336/753-6100 (Davie) or email phil_rucker@ncsu.edu to register or for more information. Directions are below:

From Hwy. 601 turn onto Hwy 67 (in Boonville) headed west toward Jonesville. Go about 1 mile and turn right onto Woodruff Rd. Go a little over 2 miles and the farm is on the right. Look for Cooperative Extension signs.

From I-77 head east on Hwy. 67. Go about 2.5 – 3 miles and turn left on Woodruff Rd. Go a little over a mile and the farm is on the left. Look for Cooperative Extension signs.

Special accommodations will be made for the physically disabled, vision or hearing impaired person upon request. If special accommodations are required, please call Phil Rucker 753-6100 or 679-2061, at least one week before the scheduled event.

HAY DIRECTORY

So far this year I have had only a few requests to purchase hay and/or hay for sell. If you have hay for sell or need to purchase hay, contact the Extension Office and maybe I can assist folks in meeting their needs. Please think about your hay needs for this winter and don't wait until you are feeding that last bale to start hunting hay.

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STOCKPILING FORAGES CHEAPER THAN FEEDING HAY

Extension livestock budgets show winter feed costs make up 60 percent of total expenses for the typical fall calving cow/calf producer who feeds hay. One way to lower feed costs is by stockpiling forages for winter grazing. Stockpiling is a process of allowing forage to accumulate growth during the late summer and fall to be grazed by cattle instead of the normal practice of feeding hay after the growing season has ended. Most cow/calf producers, who stockpile, will make the last hay cutting or remove cattle from pastures in early to mid-August to allow these fields sufficient time for regrowth before growth stops in the fall. Tall fescue is a common cool season grass found on most farms throughout the state and is ideal for stockpiling. It produces both higher yields and forage quality when compared to other cool season grasses used for stockpiled winter grazing. A 3-year study showed that stockpiled tall fescue contained more energy and crude protein than the average grass hay.

PESTICIDE LICENSE

If your pesticide license expires this year, plan to earn your credits by September 30. Contact me if you need to attend a class. There are still a few left to attend, in the area. Whether you need “X”, “V” or other credits, there are several pesticide update opportunities in surrounding counties.

Contact the Extension Office for more information on classes or to check on your credit status.

You can go to the following website to see a list of trainings throughout the state.

<http://www.ncagr.gov/aspzine/str-pest/pesticides/PesticideCalendar/calendar.asp>



WANT TO SAVE MONEY?

Be prepared to give your grass what it needs to recover and produce quality forage in 2015. Take the time to soil test your fields so you will know what fertilizers will give you the most bang for your buck. Don't look at fertilizer as an expense but more as an investment in the future for your grassland. Without the proper nutrients, grass will not be productive and applying proper nutrients this coming year will be very important to help your forage be productive. Like last year, the NCDA & CS will charge a \$4 fee per soil sample that arrives at the Soil Lab in Raleigh during the peak soil sampling season (December through March). The N.C. Cooperative Extension, Yadkin County Center, encourages producers to test early and not pay this soil sampling fee. Soil sample kits are available at the Yadkin County Extension Center. Please call 679-2061 or email phil_rucker@ncsu.edu if you have questions or need further information.



Forage quality has been compromised this year and to make sure you are meeting your animal's nutritional needs, sample your hay to see what your cattle are actually consuming. If cattle are lacking vital nutrients, production will suffer. If you feed more than needed, you will be wasting valuable feed resources. Contact the Extension Office to see how to get your hay tested. It only costs ten (\$10) dollars but the information you receive can help save you so much more as well as provide better feed for your animals.

MANAGEMENT TIPS

- # Check your feed inventory now and be prepared to purchase supplemental feed to assure you have enough for the winter.
- # Prepare for calving, foaling, lambing or kidding season. Have supplies and the veterinarian's number close at hand.
- # If in need of a new herd sire, don't wait until the last minute. **Start Looking NOW!**
- # Reduce Stocking Rate to reduce stress on grass and improve forage vigor.
- # Don't waste expensive feed on non-productive animals (Cull open cows).

