

CLEMSON EXTENSION

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LIVESTOCK & FORAGE FOCUS

Testing Rained-On or Late-Cut Hay is Important

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Many parts of South Carolina have received a lot of rain over the past month. This moisture is fantastic for bermudagrass production, but frustrating for hay curing. Most bermudagrass cuttings have either been delayed or rained on. Both of these situations decrease hay quality. It is probably more important to forage test low quality hay as opposed

- certainly high quality. Well fertilized hay that is cut at four week intervals and cured without rain is generally going to meet the nutrient requirements of dry beef cows. Rain damaged or delayed harvest hay will *probably* need supplementation.

Questions which must be addressed when feeding this hay follow:

- (1) How much supplement is needed?
- (2) What type of supplement is needed?
- (3) will the rained-on hay support dry cows without the need for supplementation? Unfortunately, there is not an accurate visual or even a "rule-of-thumb" estimate for the nutrients lost from rained-on hay. Losses vary depending on initial forage quality, the amount of rain received, timing of rain (was hay

almost cured or not), increased handling from raking and tedding, and increase in number of drying days. All of these factors impact leaf losses and how much digestible material was lost to respiration or leaching. *Forage testing* is the only method to determine if supplementation is truly necessary to achieve needed animal

performance.

Local Farmer Depends Upon Hay Analysis

A farmer that appreciates hay quality is George Langdale. George submits samples for analysis from every cutting. His record for this season is C.P's (crude, protein) of 17.6, 16.1, 12.9 and 11 %. The average crude protein for these four cuttings is 14.4%.

George's goals are to reduce feeding costs by making a higher quality hay which also enables him to feed less winter supplement.

He feeds his best quality hay to first calf heifers after calving and to nursing cows if he has enough.

George says, "how do you know how much of what to feed, if you don't know what you have?"

George uses turkey litter for fertilizer and cuts the hay at early boot stage. It works for him.

Read the label

Recently a farmer from Lugoff called to talk about spraying herbicides on her Coastal Field. She had Grazon P&D, Crossbow, Ally and Weedar. She wanted to know the rates to use these materials. What do you think was my first question?

Hopefully you said what weeds do you need to control? Always start with that basis. Next, decide what is the best material to do the job.

When we talked about the herbicide Remedy, Ms. Dolly told me it was too expensive. Maybe, maybe not.

Consider this, Remedy contains four lbs. of active ingredient (triclopyr) per gallon of material. Crossbow contains one lbs. of active (triclopyr) per gallon plus two pounds of a.i. (2-4-D) per gallon.

They both contain triclopyr but Remedy is four times as concentrated as Crossbow. Consequently, recommended rates of Remedy are .5 to 3 pints per acre, while Crossbow's rates are 1-6 quarts per acre. If you need to control something difficult like, pigw-4-D's ability to kill young common broad leaf weeds.

In this farmer's situation, plantain and dandelions were not the target, so 2-4- D was not appropriate.

Weedar is 2-4-D; Crossbow and Grazon P&D both contain 2-4-D. 'Our conclusion was to not use the above listed, take back the unopened Grazon P &D and purchase Remedy.

If you don't know the identity of the weed, dig up the whole plant, place it in a bucket of water and bring it by the office or to the next Cattlemen's meeting so I can identify it.

'One other foot note, Remedy gives better control of woody type, upright weeds. Grazon P&D gives better control of herbaceous type weeds.

Booming North Carolina Hog numbers 'not ruining water quality'

Cecil H Yancy, Jr.

Farm Press Editorial Staff

At the same time North Carolina farmers were expanding in hog production, water quality improved or remained stable in four river basins, according to an analysis of 32 years of data.

Forty-six percent of all sampling stations showed a trend toward improvement of water quality. Another 23 percent showed stable water quality. Only 5 percent showed a trend toward deteriorating water quality, and the location of the monitoring stations pointed to urban growth as a possible factor.

On the steps of the Legislative Building in Raleigh, N.C., Frontline Farmers, a group of hog farmers in North Carolina, released results of a study that analyzed water quality data over 32 years -roughly from 1970-2000- from the state's Department of Environment and Natural Resource. The group sent all of the major environmental groups in the state a copy of the analysis and presented the findings to three top North Carolina legislators.

"Water quality has improved," says Chuck Stokes, a hog farmer and director of public affairs for the group.

The group discovered the data in the basement of a state building and hired Dwayne R. ' Edwards, a professor in the biosystems and ag engineering department at the University of Kentucky, to analyze the data over a two-year period. By and large, the group funded the study from donations. Edwards specializes in assessing surface water quality of ag production practices and developing technology to aid water quality.

The study analyzed data from 1970-2000 looked at water quality in the Tar-Pamlico, Cape Fear, White Oak and Neuse river basins. These river basins occur in eastern North Carolina, where the increase in hog production has taken place. The study looked at almost 200 water quality parameters from 65 monitoring stations."Overall, the data used in this study do not indicate the presence of a generally problematic relationship between hog production and river quality in the basins of interest," Edwards wrote in the executive summary of the report. "Even though there may be very isolated instances in which hog production has adversely impacted water quality, the quality of water in the basins' main

streams appears to be largely improving or remaining stable.”

In a few instances, hog production appeared to be a major contributor to decreasing water quality. But there were as many cases where urban activities appear to play a substantial role in water quality trends as hog production did.

"It would be difficult to tell exactly where the deteriorating water quality is coming from," Edwards says.

The expansion of the hog industry in North Carolina has been marked by controversy. Damage from hurricanes in the 1990s caused lagoons to overflow and led to a search for alternatives to lagoons.

In the 1980s, North Carolina's hog population went from 226,200 to more than 2.5 million. By 1995, the total hog numbers in North Carolina has risen to 7 million. The explosive growth alarmed environmentalists and citizens who lived in eastern North Carolina.

"As farmers, we are tired of being caught in the cross fire," Stokes says. "As Paul Harvey would say, 'Here's the rest of the story.'"

"For the first time, we have untainted data," Stokes says.

Stokes called it a "launching pad" for potentially a new day where groups work together.

"By no means does this let farmers off the hook," Stokes says. "Our industry needed cleaning up. We have made great strides in becoming more responsible and we look forward to a practical option to lagoons. This indicates our proactive behavior toward solutions."

Lamont Futrell of Wilson, N.C.

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think it's great to put out the positive news."

Baird Kilpatrick, a Kenansville, N.C., hog producer said farmers have done a good job protecting the environment.

Frontline Farmers is a non-profit group of 150 hog producers in 25 North Carolina counties. Its funding comes from dues paid by the producers.

Mark J. Talbert, County Extension Agent

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