

## AUGUST MANAGEMENT TIPS

To date (July 28, 2015), this had been a good summer with adequate moisture widespread throughout the counties we serve. Most of the field crops look good except for some patches of corn that was pollinating during the two weeks of high 90 temperatures and no rain. It has been hot but it is supposed to be hot in the summer. That makes us appreciate those cooler temperatures coming in September and October. Speaking of cooler temperatures, **September 1 through October 15 is the ideal time to establish and renovate cool season pastures and hayland such as fescue and orchardgrass. It is also the time to stockpile fescue and plant ryegrass for late fall and early winter grazing. NOW (August) is the time to plan for those activities.** The window of opportunity for planting, especially if land preparation is necessary, is often short during this ideal planting time so we need to be ready when the opportunity strikes. With that in mind, here are a few tips to get ready for the fall opportunities:

1. Take soil samples now so they will be back in time for planting in September. As we get closer to planting time, the turn-around time for soil samples increases from 1-2 weeks to 3-4 weeks. In addition, they are free at this time but from November 26 – March 31, there is a \$4.00/sample fee.
2. Decide what kind of seed you want to plant and the variety. We have various popular seeds in stock but we can get any variety you desire. But **don't wait** until it is time to plant to place your order. Placing your order now will assure it is available at planting time.
3. Ryegrass for late fall/early winter/early spring grazing should be planted in warm season grasses such as Bermuda and/or worn out fescue pasture. It should **not** be planted in good fescue stands. Established fescue is too competitive for newly seeded ryegrass and it is generally more economical to stockpile fescue for late fall/early winter grazing than planting ryegrass.
4. Start the process of stockpiling fescue for late fall/early winter grazing by grazing down the semi dormant summer growth of fescue during August. Fescue starts actively growing again in mid-September when the nights start cooling down. We want to start the stockpiling process with fresh growth of fescue and not old summer growth. The cows won't like it but come December, they will love the stockpiled fescue. The summer growth of fescue is not very palatable but a fresh growth of stockpiled fescue in the late fall is very palatable and nutritious. Stockpiled fescue in late fall has been tested as high as 16% protein and in early winter as high as 13% protein. A mature brood cow requires 10% protein in her diet so cows can actually gain

weight on stockpiled fescue. Stockpiled fescue is also great for stocker calves with gains of 1.5 to 2 pounds per day. This is a very profitable gain when one considers most calves are over \$2.00/pound. The actual process of stockpiling fescue after the summer growth is grazed down starts with applying 50 pounds of nitrogen per acre in early September and removing the cattle/horses/sheep/goats to other pasture. I will discuss the details of stockpiling fescue in the September issue as that is a newsletter in itself.

Got Questions? Give us a call and we will be glad to try and answer them.

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