



*Alabama A&M and Auburn Universities*

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*April 15, 2010*

### ***Beef Field Day***

The annual Beef Field Day will be held at the County Extension office in Florence this year. We have a great program lined up so mark your calendar and make plans to attend.

### ***Congratulations***

Congratulations are in order for our County Cattlemen President, Jim Akin , who was elected Regional Vice President for the State Cattlemen Association. He is following Brad Brooks who just completed his term as Regional Vice President. Lauderdale County is providing some great leadership.

### ***Bermuda grass***

Seeded Bermuda grass has received a lot of attention in the last couple of years and enclosed you will find some info from the University of Georgia which will be helpful in selecting the right variety. Also, there are a couple of new herbicides labeled for use in Bermuda grass that has a lot of promise. Learn more about these at the Beef Field Day.

### ***Limited Breeding Season***

The majority of beef producers are missing out on the advantages of limiting the calving season to no more than 90 days. Very few producers that go to a limited breeding season want to give it up. I have information to assist you on starting a limited breeding season. The first steps is to create a bull pen or paddock to separate the bull and second pull the bull in late June to prevent late spring and summer calves. Everyone knows summer calves never do well and research shows that both quality and volume of colostrums produced during the summer is lower than that produced other times of the year.



### ***Pasture Herbicides***

There is a new pasture herbicide that will kill everything that Grazon P+D will kill and it is called GrazonNext, formerly called ForeFront. Both are DOW Chemical products. The good part about GrazonNext it is not restricted use and you do not need a permit to purchase it.

### **Grass Tetany**

Don't forget we are in the grass tetany season. Cattle need to consume 4 to 5 ounces of magnesium oxide per day. Check your mineral mix to be use it contains 14 to 15% magnesium. This should provide the 4 to 5 ounces per day.

### **Rough Winter**

The cows have just experienced one of the worst winters in recent memory. The cows have a lower than normal body condition score and this will result in slower breeding back which in turn will reduce the weight of next year's calf crop.



### **Prolapses**

There are two types of prolapses that occur in beef cattle and both are problems. The first is vaginal prolapses that occur in very late gestation. Vaginal prolapse is as the name implies, a protruding of the vagina through the vulva and exposed to sun, wind, and infectious pathogens. Vaginal prolapses are very repeatable. In other words if the vagina prolapsed is repaired, the cow calves and rebreeds, then she is very likely to prolapsed again next year.

This type of prolapse is known to have genetic component, which means that daughters of cows that have this problem will have an increased likelihood of suffering a vaginal prolapse themselves. Therefore, when the producer finds a cow with this malady, she should be marked for culling and daughters should not be kept as replacements.

The second type of prolapse is uterine prolapse and it occurs shortly after calving. Many times they occur with a difficult birth. The uterus is literally pulled through the birth canal with the calf or afterbirth and again exposed to the weather elements. Uterine prolapses, when repaired by proper veterinary attention, can have a very successful result. Cows with properly cared for uterine prolapses are not more likely than others to have a prolapse next year. However, they will be slower to breed back.

### **Cow Numbers**

Cow numbers are down but it does not mean as much as it did in the past, because we are producing 41% more beef per cow than we did in 1980. Cow numbers have decreased 12 of the past 14 years.

### **Last Word**

A pessimist is one who makes difficulties of his opportunities and an optimist is one who makes opportunities of his difficulties. Harry Truman

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Randall Armstrong".

Randall Armstrong  
County Extension Coordinator





Lauderdale County

# Beef Field Day

FREE to all Cattlemen

Saturday, April 24, 2010

9:00 a.m.

## Learn About

- Political issues cattlemen need to know
- Where's the beef? After taking it for custom processing
- Updates from FSA and NRCS
- Updates from state Ag Dept
- How to use hay moisture meter
- Dangers of the sun
- Pasture fertility & brush control

*Presentations begin  
at 10:00 a.m*



*Fun, Food, Fellowship &  
Educational AG Exhibits & Equipment*



Greg Hamner – 2009 Beef Field Day Host



Lunch will be Served



Jim Akin – President,  
Cattlemen Association



# TIMELY INFORMATION

## Agriculture & Natural Resources

AGRONOMY AND SOILS, AUBURN UNIVERSITY, AL 36849-5633

*Alabama A&M and  
Auburn Universities*

### BROOMSEDGE IN PASTURES

In controlling broomsedge, the old adage, “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” applies. It is easier to keep broomsedge out of a pasture than it is to get it out, but elimination of this weedy pest can be accomplished easily enough over time with persistent application of the right management.

The selection and use of well-adapted, vigorous forage species and varieties are certainly helpful in keeping broomsedge from becoming established. In addition, soil testing on a regular basis followed by the application of recommended fertilizer and lime will, in most cases, keep broomsedge out.

The “spring undergrazing-summer overgrazing” situation described in earlier paragraphs should be avoided. This can be done either by adjusting stocking rates as necessary or by clipping pastures periodically. To the extent that pastures are grazed or clipped without exceeding the tolerance limits of the particular forages being grown, the more difficult it is for broomsedge plants to be competitive.

Broomsedge is a perennial, which means that established plants can potentially “come back from the roots” year after year. This is especially true if the low soil fertility levels, low soil pH, and/or the defoliation regimen that allowed them to become established continue. Eliminating these conditions will eventually eliminate the broomsedge, but it takes time to do so because broomsedge is more competitive once it has a good root system established.

In some instances, doing nothing other than liming and fertilizing a pasture well for several years will reduce a broomsedge population, but this may be a slow process. This will usually stop the spread of this weedy grass, but it may take a long time to significantly reduce the broomsedge population.

In cases in which there is a thick stand of broomsedge and only a low population of desirable forage plants, it may be desirable to renovate a pasture. This would normally require killing the existing broomsedge either with non-selective herbicides or with tillage, then replanting desirable forage species in the area.

If this is accompanied by fertilization and liming according to soil test recommendations and by frequent defoliation, any broomsedge plants that escape the tillage and herbicides or that come from seed present in the soil will be at a great competitive disadvantage. At present there are no labeled herbicides that will selectively remove broomsedge without harming desirable forage plants.

*Dennis W. Hancock<sup>1</sup>, Norman R. Edwards<sup>2</sup>, T. Wade Green<sup>3</sup>, and Deron M. Rehberg<sup>4</sup>  
University of Georgia Cooperative Extension*

## **Bermudagrass Seed Propagated Varieties**

Seeded bermudagrass varieties generally have low yields and low forage quality when compared to improved hybrids. However, sprigging an improved hybrid bermudagrass is expensive and risky, especially where small acreages drive up the cost per acre and rolling terrain leaves soil prone to erosion for a significant period of time. Producers often find that planting seed is the most feasible establishment option.

Ironically, the most hardy and persistent varieties will often produce little seed. These varieties can be expensive. Seed companies will often help offset this problem by offering seed blends, so it is important to closely evaluate and compare seed tags. These blends usually contain one or more of the top varieties in mixtures with varieties that are more prolific seed producers (Table [2](#)). Though these more prolific seed producers (such as Giant and Jackpot) grow very well in the establishment year, they are not usually persistent and are often very short lived in Georgia. However, by the time these components of the mix die out, the more persistent varieties may be capable of filling in the gaps. Unfortunately, these gaps often exist in early spring when weeds are growing but the bermudagrass is not. Alternatively, companies may fill out a blend by mixing in common bermudagrass, some or all of which may have been hulled to remove the seed husk for faster germination. These blends may be prone to revert to common (that is, common will ultimately dominate the stand). Despite the expense, seeding recommended cultivars alone (not in a blend) is more likely to lead to better results over the long-term because these varieties are more hardy, produce higher yields, limit weed intrusion, and maintain better quality.

### **Recommended Cultivars**

*Cheyenne*, a seeded bermudagrass cultivar, has exceptionally good persistence, is winter-hardy in Georgia, and consistently performed well in yield trials throughout the state (Tables [3a](#) and [3b](#)). The forage quality (protein, fiber, and digestibility) of *Cheyenne* is quite similar to *Coastal*, but it is slightly lower than *CD90160* and *KF-194*. *Cheyenne* has not been a prolific seed producer. This has limited the availability of seed from this cultivar. Recently, clones of *Cheyenne* were selected for improved seed production by Texas A&M University and Seeds West. The product of this selection, *Cheyenne II*, has been shown to match the yield and persistence of *Cheyenne* in initial evaluations. *Cheyenne II* is now being sold and used in seed blends such as *Ranchero Frio*.

*CD90160*, a seeded bermudagrass cultivar, is most often sold in seed blends such as *Vaquero*, *Gacho*, *Sungrazer Plus*, and *Sungrazer 777*. When grown alone, this cultivar matches the yield, winter-hardiness, and persistence of *Cheyenne*. *CD90160* has also shown to have higher protein (increased by 20%) and digestible nutrients (increased by 14%) than *Cheyenne*.

*KF-194* is often sold in seed blends such as *Sungrazer Plus* and *Sungrazer 777*. Like *CD90160*, this cultivar also matches the yield, winter-hardiness, and persistence of *Cheyenne*. *KF-194* shares the high forage quality characteristics of *CD90160*.

## Other Varieties

*Common* bermudagrass is certainly well-adapted to the humid South and quickly became a widespread weed in cultivated crops after its introduction in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. *Common* produces viable seed and spreads by stolons and rhizomes. Once established, it is difficult to eradicate. *Common* bermudagrass is present, usually in combination with fescue or as a contaminant in improved bermudagrass pastures, on more than 400,000 acres in Georgia. It is hardy, forms a dense sod, and can be established from seed and maintained on infertile soils. Although *Common* does not provide high yields (often 50% as much hay per acre as *Coastal*), it can be effectively used in forage programs to provide summer grazing. In north Georgia, it is best used in combination with fescue and clover. Though *Common* bermudagrass is an important part of pastures and hayfields in Georgia, it is not recommended for new seedings simply because improved seeded varieties (recommended above) will consistently out-yield and provide higher quality forage than *Common*.

Many other seeded bermudagrass varieties are available. Most of these releases are from private companies and turfgrass breeding efforts. Many have been shown to have persistence problems or yield poorly, such as *Giant*, *Guymon*, *Jackpot*, and *Wrangler*, and are therefore not recommended. *Mirage*, *Mohawk*, *Pyramid*, and many other varieties not listed have not been adequately evaluated under Georgia's conditions.

## Tables

**Table 1a.**

**Summary of the characteristics of the primary vegetatively propagated (sprigged) bermudagrasses in Georgia.**

Variety	Overall Rating	Yield*	Digestibility**	WinterHardiness	Persistence	Leaf SpotResistance
Alicia (Alecia)	◆◆◀	100	P	G	P	P
Coastal	◆◆◆◀	100	F	G	G	E
Coastcross II	◆◆◆◆◀	135	E	G	ND***	ND
Russell	◆◆◆◆◀	130	G	E	E	G
Tifton 44	tttt	90	G	E	G	E
Tifton 78	ttt	120	E	F	F	E
Tifton 85	ttttt	135	E	F	E	E

Ratings: E = Excellent, G = Good, F = Fair, P = Poor.  
 \* Yields are expressed as a percent of yields from Coastal.  
 \*\* Based on *in vitro* dry matter digestibility.  
 \*\*\* Insufficient data exists to accurately estimate these parameters. Coastcross II remains a relatively new variety and has not yet been evaluated as rigorously as other hybrids.

**Table 1b.**  
**Summary of the characteristics of the primary vegetatively propagated (sprigged) bermudagrasses in Georgia.**

Recommended for:				
Variety	Mountain	Upper Piedmont	Lower Piedmont	Coastal Plain
Alicia (Alecia)				
Coastal		✓	✓	✓
Coastcross II	ND*	✓	✓	✓
Russell	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tifton 44	✓	✓	✓	
Tifton 78				
Tifton 85		✓	✓	✓

\* Insufficient data exists to accurately estimate these parameters. Coastcross II remains a relatively new variety and

**Table 2.**  
**Blends of seeded bermudagrasses.**

Trade Name	Components
Morhay	Common, Giant
Pasture Supreme	Common, Giant
Pasto Rico	Common, Giant
Ranchero Frio	Cheyenne, Mohawk, Giant
Sungrazer 777	KF 194, CD90160, Jackpot
Sungrazer Plus	KF 194, CD90160, Giant
Texas Tough	Common, Giant
Tierra Verde	Common, Giant
Vaquero	Mirage, Pyramid, CD90160

**Table 3a.**  
**Summary of the characteristics of the primary seeded bermudagrasses in Georgia.**

Variety	Overall Rating	Yield*	Winter Hardiness	Persistence
Giant (NK37)	◀	55	P	P
Cheyenne**	ttt	60	G	E
CD90160	ttt	60	G	E
KF-194	ttt	60	G	E
Wrangler	◆◀	55	E	F
Common	t	50	G	G

Ratings: E = Excellent, G = Good, F = Fair, P = Poor.

\*Yields are expressed as a percent of yields from Coastal.

\*\*The original Cheyenne is no longer being sold. Cheyenne II, a variant of Cheyenne (selected for higher seed yield), is currently being marketed. Cheyenne II is expected to have characteristics similar to Cheyenne.

**Table 3b.**  
**Summary of the characteristics of the primary seeded bermudagrasses in Georgia.**

Variety	Recommended for Georgia	Comments
Giant (NK37)		Fast growing, but short-lived seeded variety. Northrup King has the only named variety of Giant.
Cheyenne**	✓	Most reliable of seeded varieties grown Georgia.
CD90160	✓	Solid performer, but most commonly sold as one of three components in a blend.
KF-194	✓	Another solid performer that is primarily sold as a component in seed blends.
Wrangler		Good variety for northern-most counties, but it has not persisted well in variety trials in most of Georgia.
Common		Default pasture species throughout most of Georgia, but it suffers from poor yields and susceptibility to disease.

Ratings: E = Excellent, G = Good, F = Fair, P = Poor.

\* Yields are expressed as a percent of yields from Coastal.

\*\*The original Cheyenne is no longer being sold. Cheyenne II, a variant of Cheyenne (selected for higher seed yield), is currently being marketed. Cheyenne II is expected to have characteristics similar to Cheyenne.