

Cattle Newsletter

Ashe County Center

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Contact Us

North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Ashe County Center
134 Government Circle, Suite 202
Jefferson, NC 28640

Phone: (336) 846-5850
Fax: (336) 846-5882

<http://ashe.ces.ncsu.edu/>

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Getting More Out Of Your Pasture

Could I get more out of my pasture? Well it depends, but more than likely, yes. Here is a list of steps that you may need to take to get more out of your pasture.

- ✓ **Do you allow your pasture rest?** Pasture grasses need rest to restore carbohydrates in the plants. This is important to allow the plants energy for maximum growth and yield. Allowing plants to rest and not be overgrazed increases the root mass. In periods of dry weather, plants with increased root growth will be more likely to receive and locate water. In the spring the rest can be as short as 10-14 days. In the summer, rest increases to about 35 days. Allowing rest can be accomplished easily with temporary fencing. If you see your cattle several times per week then multiple paddocks may work well for your schedule and definitely for your grasses. I only see my cattle once a week and multiple paddocks wouldn't work for me because of my schedule, however, I know the benefits of allowing your grasses rest periods. What worked for me this past season was dividing my pasture into two large paddocks. While the cattle grazed one side for several months it allowed the other pasture rest.
- ✓ **How long has it been since you pulled a soil sample?** This is a free service through spring, summer and fall. The only expense is postage to mail the samples. I will come out and pull the samples and all you have to do is show me the fields you want sampled and take the soil to the post office to mail. It takes approximately two weeks for the soil report to process. You will need to go online (<http://www.ncagr.gov/agronomi/pals/>) to obtain your report or contact me (336-846-5850) and I will print your report for you. I can help you determine how much fertilize to put down or you can take your report and have a custom fertilize made. This report will also tell you how much lime you need. The pH needs to be between 5.8-6.2 or if you have grass clover mixed pasture then the pH should be 6.2-6.4. Acidic conditions reduce nutrient availability, root growth and nitrogen fixation by legumes. Calcitic lime will provide calcium and magnesium and reduce the availability of toxic nutrients such as aluminum and manganese. No more than 1.5 tons of lime per acre should be applied at one time. If your soil needs two tons per acre I would split that between two applications, one in the spring and one in the fall.
- ✓ **Weed control is very important to minimize the competition of your grasses.** Weeds occur for a variety of reasons such as: poor fertility, overgrazing and using forages that are not adapted to our region. Its important to take care of these situations as you are controlling your weed population. If you have questions about a weed or spray please contact me at (336) 846-5850.
- ✓ **Frost seeding clover is a good agricultural practice.** Make sure you reduce plant residue to ensure proper seed to soil contact. Thawing and freezing of the ground helps incorporate the seed in late winter/early spring. This practice does not work well with grass seed. Do not apply nitrogen just before or after seeding. Important seeding dates for grass seed are:
 - ✓ *Orchard Grass:* March 20–April 20 or July 25–August 10 at a planting depth of 1/4 - 1/2 inches and a seeding rate of 12-15 lbs/acre broadcast or 8-12 lbs/acre drill.
 - ✓ *Fescue:* March 20–April 20 or July 25–August 10 at a planting depth of 1/4–1/2 inches and a seeding rate of 15–20 lbs/acre broadcast or 10–15 lbs/acre drill.

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Hauling Cattle



Recommended maximum number of cattle* for trailers of different lengths**								
Cattle Weight, Lbs								
Trailer Size	400	600	800	1000	1200	1400	1600	Total Weight***
Inside Dimension	Number of Head							
16 ft x 6 ft	18	12	9	7	6	5	5	<7400
18 ft x 6 ft	21	14	10	8	7	6	5	<8400
20 ft x 6 ft	23	15	12	9	8	7	6	<9300
24 ft x 6 ft	28	18	14	11	9	8	7	<11100
20 ft x 7 ft	27	18	13	11	9	8	7	<10800
24 ft x 7 ft	32	22	16	13	11	9	8	<13000
32 ft x 7 ft	43	29	22	17	14	12	11	<17300

* This chart represents the maximum number of polled/dehorned cattle for trailers of different lengths; when hauling horned/tipped cattle reduce the number of cattle by 5%.
 ** The number of cattle loaded during hot conditions should be reduced.
 *** The maximum weight of cattle for each trailer size with these calculations. Do not exceed the Gross Vehicle Weight Rating for your truck and stock trailer.



Upcoming Cattlemen's Association Meetings

April 10

Pasture Renovation

7:00 p.m., Family Central

May 8

Vaccinations

7:00 p.m., Family Central

June 12

Fetal Programming

7:00 p.m., Family Central

July 10

Carolina Farm Credit

7:00 p.m., Family Central

August 14

Southern States

7:00 p.m., Family Central

September 11

7:00 p.m., Upper Mountain Research Station

October 9

High Country Cattle Conference

6:00 p.m., Family Central

November 13

Farm Bureau

7:00 p.m., Family Central

December 11

Annual Christmas Meeting

7:00 p.m., Family Central



Sincerely,

Micah Orfield
Extension Agent, Agriculture