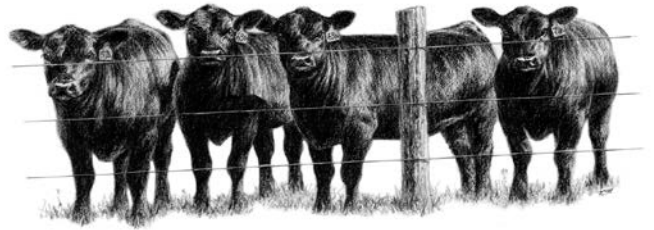


The Cattle Corner



BAXTER COUNTY U OF A COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE NEWSLETTER

Spring 2022

In this Issue.....



- ❖ E-Newsletter Sign Up
- ❖ Winter Weed Control
- ❖ Farm Pond Management
Workshop
- ❖ 2022 Twin Lakes Beef and
Forage Conference

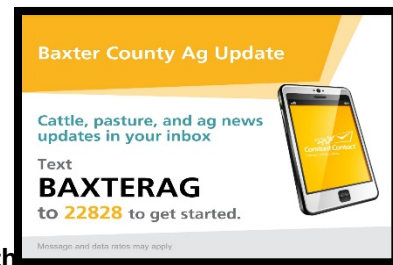
ATTENTION!!!

Sign up for Baxter County Ag Email Updates

This paper newsletter is going away and being replaced with a new, "Baxter County Ag Update" email e-news. It'll be the same kind of content, maybe in a little shorter form, that'll you'll receive in your email quarterly (maybe monthly).

Different Ways to Sign Up

Text (easiest option):



Or, scan the QR code with your phone app



Or, follow this link
<https://tinyurl.com/2mu2ptd7>

online:

Or, if all else fails, call us at 870-425-2335 or email me at brunsick@uada.edu, and I'll add you myself.

Spring Weed Control in Fescue-Cool Season

Mixes and Dormant Bermudagrass

Brad Runsick, Baxter County Extension Agent

This article or something similar ran in past newsletters and/or newspaper articles, but it bears repeating nearly every single February because it is such a valuable tool in improving pasture and ultimately cow herd performance.

Dormant Bermudagrass Applications

It may be only mid-January, but now is the time to start thinking about spring weed control. Drag out that sprayer, and make sure everything is working as it should. Ensure that nozzles are in good shape and screens are clean. If it has been a while since it was calibrated, get that done too. I can help calibrate. Just give me a call. Due to wind, rain, and soggy ground conditions, there are limited good days in February and early March. Don't spend those days on maintenance and repair.

One of the cheapest, easiest ways to clean up unwanted plant species out of a bermudagrass field is through a late season, dormant spray application of glyphosate. The early season cheat, ryegrass, and winter annuals will, of course, greenup long before the bermudagrass breaks dormancy, and that's the time to hit them. Many folks get a little worried about applying glyphosate on bermudagrass, but it's a contact herbicide that really has limited soil activity as an herbicide. It'll affect what green plant material it touches. It's not very bioavailable once it's in the soil. In fact, you can spray a field with glyphosate one morning and seed it that evening without any concern for the soon to be germinating seed. Soil contact inactivates its herbicidal chemistry. Is it detectable in the soil after application? Yes. Will it affect plants that greenup later or those that have not yet germinated? No, not at the low rates needed for early season control.

Once both the cool season species and the bermudagrass are greened up together, in late March-April, there isn't much of a control option for that ryegrass and cheat. It is possible to have a first cutting that is not composed of 50% or more ryegrass, cheat, and henbit. Additionally, probably the biggest benefit is that you take off that ryegrass and cheat, giving the bermudagrass the light and water it desperately needs to get going. The cool season species are holding your bermuda back! This results in an earlier first cutting of hay that is actually bermudagrass hay and an earlier second cutting before we run out of rain in late June (on average).

Now, some will say, "But the cheat and ryegrass will make hay and pasture too and are of fairly good quality when they're small." That is true, but they're annuals. Their potential for regrowth is pretty low. They're holding your bermuda back...in more ways than one.

Are you trying to grow bermudagrass hay and market it as such? Perhaps the biggest concern with having hayfields that have mixed cool season and warm season species is the inability to use efficient, targeted fertility management. This isn't as big of a problem in pastures that already have good fertility where cattle are grazed and nutrients are cycled through the cow and back onto the pasture. However, in a hayfield, the most efficient timing for fertilizer applications is different for cool season vs. warm season plants. If you're fertilizing early in a bermudagrass field, then you're only feeding the species that you don't want and further inhibiting spring bermuda growth. Available nutrients and water is being utilized by those unwanted species. So, are you losing the soil nutrients that the unwanted species are using? No. However, those nutrients are tied up in the tissues of those unwanted species until they decompose down, making them unavailable to the desirable forages (i.e. bermudagrass) at the time when they need them most.

So, what to do? First of all, the bermuda cannot be breaking dormancy when making this application. Typically, any application prior to March 10-15 in northern Arkansas is safe, but every year is different. Bermudagrass needs about 3-4 days where night temperatures are above 60°F before it'll start to wake up. The best bet is to get down and look at the bermudagrass plant itself. The greenup will start near the soil surface, so look there. If you see very much green at all, you're probably too late. You may seem some green early, but that's likely some winter annuals that are trying to break out...not the bermudagrass. Conversely, you need to make sure that the plants you are trying to control have broken dormancy. Have a well calibrated boom sprayer, preferably.

Apply 1 qt./acre of 41 % active ingredient glyphosate. Throw in an additional 0.25 oz./acre of metsulfuron 60DF for additional control of harder to control weeds that glyphosate won't get. If using glyphosate only in a boomless sprayer, expect some streaking. Our recommendation is to use glyphosate in a boom sprayer only, but that's not always practical on these hills. A boomless, cluster type nozzle will still provide good results, assuming its spray pattern is uniform and well calibrated. Also, don't do this if you have any legumes (clovers and lespedezas) or fescue in the field that you wish to keep.

Fescue and Cool Season Mixed Grass Pastures

Between now and late March is an ideal time to get most of the winter annual weeds that becomes bigger problems later in the spring in fescue fields. Weed control is one of the cheapest, most beneficial practices that a livestock/pasture farmer can do, yet many don't. At present prices, a rate of 1 quart/acre of 2, 4-D amine will run you right around \$4 per acre. No other practice out there will give you more bang for your buck than a good spray program. Weed control allows for thicker stands of beneficial grasses, and it improves the overall quality of the forage's TDN and crude protein numbers. Not to mention the problems associated with toxic weeds, such as perilla mint.

For northern Arkansas, a treatment of 2, 4-D amine or Grazon P+D/Next at a rate of 1 quart per acre in late February-early March will clean up the majority of your winter annual weeds, including buttercup and thistles. 2, 4-D and Grazon, which contains 2, 4-D, are restricted use pesticides in Arkansas, and they requires a license to purchase. Bear in mind, you'll probably need to plan on spraying again in April-May to catch those late season winter annuals and warm season weeds.

In addition to the correct weed identification and herbicide selection, timing is equally important. These dates are rough estimates, but let your own eye be your guide. Soil temperatures and moisture play a big role in the germination of weed seeds. Late February and early March may sound too early. You look out there in the field as you drive by and say, "I don't see any weeds. Spraying can wait." However, get out there and look close under that dormant grass and you'll usually find small, green, actively growing buttercups and thistle rosettes. Most winter annuals are readily controlled when the plants are at 2-4". Thistles are best controlled in the rosette stage when they are lying flat on the ground. Wait until they get too tall and you're looking a buying a more expensive herbicide or not controlling them at all. Keep in mind, these are fairly general recommendations. If you have questions about a specific weed problem or if you want me to come out and take a look, feel free to give me a call at 870-425-2335.

Upcoming Events in March



FARM POND MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

Date/Time: March 15th; 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Location: Baxter County Library
300 Library Hill Ln., Mtn. Home, AR
Knox Rooms A&B

- Pre-register by Friday, March 11th
- No cost to attend
- Lunch sponsored by:



TOPICS/SPEAKERS

Water Considerations for Cattle
- Brad Runsick, Baxter Co. Extension Agent

Pond Weed and Algae Control
- George Selden, UAPB Extension Aquaculture Specialist

Leaky Ponds and Fish Stocking and Management
- Scott Jones, UAPB Extension Small Impoundment Specialist
- Jeremy Risley, AGFC District 2 Fisheries Supervisor

Panel Q&A

**TO REGISTER: CONTACT THE BAXTER COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE AT 870-425-2335
OR STOP BY 3 E. 9TH ST., MTN. HOME, AR**

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UofA
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System

Twin Lakes
**BEEF & FORAGE
CONFERENCE**

March 3, 2022 ■ 5:30 p.m.

ARVEST[®]



FARM CREDIT
ASSOCIATIONS OF ARKANSAS

Cotter High
School Cafeteria
Cotter, Arkansas
Meal Provided

Cost: \$10

Registration is open
to all. Pre-registration
is required. Deadline
to register is Feb 25th.

Brad A. Runsick

Brad Runsick
Baxter County Extension Agent
870-425-2335

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