



Western
New York

CROP MANAGEMENT



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Emergency Forages

Henry Kelsey

With the lack of rain and tremendous insect pressure this summer, forages will be in tight supply. Many growers are wondering how they will feed their livestock in the coming year. There are several options that may be pursued in order to make up this deficit.

First and foremost, take full advantage of crops already in the ground. Grass stands will show an increased yield with a nitrogen application. The nitrogen stimulates late season growth of cool season grasses. Average or mediocre stands can use 50 to 60 units of nitrogen and excellent stands will see a yield bump from 100 units of nitrogen. Stream bars have proven an effective way to apply liquid nitrogen to grass stands. This nitrogen application has the added benefit of increasing the tillering for next year as well.

Taking a fifth cutting is highly recommended for any hay stands that will be turned over for corn next spring. A fifth cutting on stands that will continue is usually not recommended, but if you need the forage, have your crop consultant evaluate the fields to determine action.

Early harvest schedules present another opportunity. Wheat stubble or corn harvested in August offers a window to seed spring oats for a fall cutting. When seeding pure oats, our recommendation of 4 to 5 bu/acre would produce tremendous growth and high forage quality. A manure application with incorporation is recommended before seeding, and a tall variety should be selected. Unlike seeding oats in the spring, we recommend mowing the oats as soon as the flag leaf is out. Another option would be to seed oats and triticale together. Our recommendation is 3 to 5 bu/acre of oats and 80 to 100 lbs/acre of winter triticale. If you choose this option, Tom Kilcer notes that it is critical to mow the oats at a minimum of 3.5 inches so the triticale can survive and grow. This option gives you two very high quality forage crops with one planting.

After a year that has provided us with some unusual challenges, it may be necessary to think outside of the box to meet your forage needs. The ideas presented above appear to be good options. If you would like more information on these or other crop needs, please contact your consultant.

A NOTE ON CORN

Corn in some areas is turning brown and not looking very healthy. When evaluating your crop, a key item to focus on is the ear leaf. If it is still green, then the corn should develop an ear. If all the leaves are browning, plan on an early harvest. When the time comes, we have chippers available to chop up corn for moisture testing. Contact your crop consultant to schedule chippings or address other concerns.

New York State Is Remapping Freshwater Wetlands

Written by: Jim Seiler

There are approximately 2.4 million acres of freshwater wetlands in New York State. New York began regulating these areas with the passage of the Freshwater Wetlands Act of 1974, also known as Environmental Conservation Law – Article 24. This law defines, classifies, maps and regulates freshwater wetlands 12.4 acres or larger in size, as well as smaller wetlands of unusual local importance, and minimum 100 foot buffers around the identified wetlands.

The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) identifies all regulated wetlands on Article 24 Freshwater Wetland Maps. DEC is authorized to determine whether amendments are required. Amendments may include adding, deleting or modifying areas from the jurisdictional mapping. Maps are available for review at each DEC Region Office, County Clerk and Town Clerk Offices, and the online DEC Environmental Resource Mapping website. Before amendments are complete, a public hearing with open comment period will be held and, most importantly, notices will be sent to the landowner.

Not only does the DEC have jurisdiction over these wetlands, but they are also regulated by the US Army Corps of Engineers. Additionally, the United States Department of Agriculture identifies wetlands as part of the Swampbuster provision of USDA Conservation Compliance Program. These wetland determinations are based on hydric soil classification, vegetation, crop history and hydrology.

What does all this mean to me as a landowner? Before clearing land or adding drainage improvements, it is advisable to contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service or Farm Service Agency at the USDA Service Center to determine wetland status of the proposed work area. With the value of land and crops increasing like never before, farmers are clearing land to increase tillable acreage, limit wildlife damage, and raise production due to decreased shading effect. Although the benefits are enticing, the repercussions for amending wetlands are steep. Fines are not limited to, but may include the cessation of crop payments and repayment of prior crop payments with interest and penalties.

In other words, it pays to be safe. Check with your local NRCS office before delving into any projects that involve tiling or clearing of land.

Additional information can be found at the following sites:

Freshwater Wetlands Mapping: www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5124.html

Environmental Resource Mapper: www.dec.ny.gov

SAVE THE DATE

Pasture Walk

When: Wednesday, September 19th, 2012
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Where: John Kramer Farm
11093 Holland Glenwood Rd., Holland

Hosts: Sharon Bachmann, Community Educator Agriculture, Erie County CCE
Lori Whittington, Jr. Farmstead Consultant, WNY Crop Management
assisted by Nancy Glazier, Small Farms Specialist Team, NWN Dairy, Livestock
and Field Crops Team.

John Kramer grazes his dairy herd and has been doing so successfully for more than 10 years. Please join us as John tells about his pasture grazing system and experiences.