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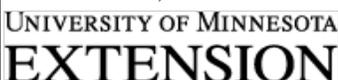


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Grazing Crop Residues

Jerrold Tesmer, University of Minnesota Extension

It appears forages will be at a premium this fall. One way to stretch your feed further into the winter is by having your beef cows graze harvested corn fields. I started to say cornstalks, but 12% of the residue is husk, 27% is leaf, and 12% cob. So there is much more than just stalks, and I'm not counting any dropped ears of corn that are gleaned. Nutritionally the leaf and husk both have high digestibility.

Iowa State University Beef Cattle data indicates that for each acre of corn stalks grazed; approximately ½ ton of hay will be saved. Crop residues are normally the least expensive feed source, because most expenses are charged against the row crop enterprise.

In the Midwest, corn crop residue will feed animals for an average of 65 to 111 days depending on weight gains needed to obtain the desired body condition. Low supplementation may be necessary in some cases.

Livestock select the residue with the highest digestibility first, so supplementation beyond trace minerals salt and vitamin A are not likely to be necessary the first month. As winter progresses and residue quality decreases additional supplementation may be necessary.

Before grazing crop residue fields it is important to check the labels of any pesticides used on the crop to see if they are cleared for grazing. Also, check the fencelines and waterways for poisonous plants.

Research conducted at several Midwestern universities show no difference in the performance of cattle that grazed Bt corn crop residue and those that grazed non-Bt corn crop residue. Research has also been conducted to determine if grazing crop residue has any affect on the yield the following year. Corn and soybeans have shown similar yields, particularly if grazed when soils are frozen.

Soybean stubble is low in quality and cannot provide adequate nutrition for beef cows or stockers. It should not be used as a feed source unless supplemented substantially.

The source of most of the information in this article came from two publications shared with me by Root River Grazing Specialist Dean Thomas. They are: *Extended Grazing and Reducing Stored Feed Needs*, by Don Ball, Ed Ballard, Mark Kennedy, Garry Lacefield, & Dan Undersander; and *Improving and Sustaining Forage Production in Pastures*, by Howard Moechnig.

Calving Pastures Now Showing Stress

John Zinn, USDA/NRCS Grazing Specialist

It seemed like it rained every day this spring and many beef producers were forced to turn their animals onto some good clean sod to calve. As one producer put it “I had a choice of beating up some of my pasture or losing calves in the mud.” Since then rain has been spotty and these emergency calving pastures have been baked hard as a brick. The forages look bad and there seems to be no easy fix.

This article offers some possibilities to deal with what is a common problem.

1. Start Over: Work up & reseed the pasture
 - a. Advantages- probability of success is good and you can soil test and add soil amendments if necessary. Chance of reducing weed pressure is good. Can add new species or desirable species to pasture.
 - b. Disadvantages- Cost. Tilling the soil increases the possibility of soil erosion. Pasture will not be available for grazing possibly until next year.
2. No till drill into existing stand:
 - a. Advantages- less disturbance than tillage. Can use herbicides to reduce weed pressure. Adds desirable species into pasture.
 - b. Disadvantages- harder to get good seed to soil contact unless drill is well adjusted for soil conditions. May have difficulty locating no-till equipment.
3. Plant cover crop for temporary grazing:
 - a. Advantages- chance of getting a forage crop earlier than options 1 and 2. Helps break up disease and pest cycles. Recycles nutrients
 - b. Disadvantages- Depending on species of cover crops used, may reduce seedling vigor of subsequent crop. Delays establishing perennial crop.
4. Rest and Wait: Allow area to totally rest until next year. Allow to head out next spring.
 - a. Advantage: Low cost option.
 - b. Disadvantage: Result of waiting is uncertain. Evaluate existing stand before trying this option. If there are not enough desirable species consider other options.

For specific seed mixes and options consult your local agronomist, seed representative, Extension Educator, or Grazing Specialist.



Pricing Corn Silage

Jerrold Tesmer, University of Minnesota Extension

Due to the late planting dates and a cooler than normal growing season this year, many corn fields will probably be harvested for silage. There is potential for corn in these fields to be too immature for proper corn silage harvest. How should the value of corn silage be adjusted for immature corn? Typical calculation methods for pricing normal corn silage include:

1. Relative feed value of known forage market.
Silage (\$/T) = $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ value of hay
Silage (\$/T) = 8 times the price of a bushel of corn. If already harvested, then 10 times.
2. Feed replacement or substitution costs
3. Use market prices for energy, protein, and digestibility (NE of corn, soybean meal, hay)
4. Contracted price above the cost of production (280 – 320 \$/A).

If the corn is immature a quality adjustment factor for maturity might be necessary. Some University of Wisconsin work suggests:
Pre-tassel = 90%; Silk = 80%;
Soft dough = 85%; Early dent = 90%;
 $\frac{1}{2}$ kernel milk line = 100%; and
Black layer = 90%

Two “quick and dirty” ways to estimate corn silage yield are:

Based on Grain Yield...for stressed corn, about one ton of silage per acre can be obtained from each 5 bushels of grain per acre. For example, if you expect a grain yield of 50 bushels grain per acre, you will get about 10 ton/acre of 30 percent dry matter silage. For corn yielding more than 100 bushels per acre, about one ton of silage per acre can be expected for each 7 to 8 bushels per acre.

Based on Plant Height...if little or no grain is expected, a rough pre-harvest estimate of yield can be made by assuming that one ton of 30 percent dry matter silage can be obtained for each foot of plant height (excluding the tassel. On this basis, “waist-high” corn 3-4 feet tall will yield about 3 to 4 tons per acre of silage at 30 percent dry matter.

Sample Weight Method...A more accurate way to estimate yields is to weigh the corn plants from a portion of an acre (1/100th) in several spots of the field. To do this, determine row width, then cut corn plants in one row for a certain length according to row width in the following table:

Row Length	Row Width
32.50 ft.	30”
28.75 ft.	36”
27.50 ft.	38”

Next, weigh the amount of whole corn plant material cut in pounds. Divide the pounds harvested by 4. That’s the estimated tons produced per acre. Follow this method for several areas and average the results.

In order to obtain actual tons harvested, weigh each wagon load or count how many feet of silage went into a silo after settling. If you know the silo size, how many feet of silage was put up and what the moisture was, silo charts can be used to calculate tons stored. Dividing stored tons by acres harvested will give you the yield per acre.

The information above was obtained from work done by University of Wisconsin Corn Agronomist Joe Lauer, and UW-Extension Agriculture Agent Greg Blonde.

Checkoff Delivers Measurable Results

MN Beef Council

Cattle farmers and ranchers are no different than the business men and women on Wall Street. Yes, we may dress differently but both are focused on the bottom line and the return on investment. Measuring the return on investment of a checkoff program is always difficult. A study was done by Dr. Ron Ward of University of Florida [Gainesville] in 2009 showed that for every dollar invested in the beef checkoff, the industry had a return of \$5.55.

Through recent Minnesota Beef Council beef promotion, in conjunction with South Dakota Beef Industry Council and the Minnesota Corn Growers Association, the beef checkoff was able to demonstrate results that Minnesota cattle farmers and ranchers can take to the bank.



- Promotions conducted throughout the month of May achieved well over 500,000 media impressions through various tactics, such as television segments, advertising, influencer events, social media and retail partnerships.
- GrillFest hosted nearly 4,000 foodies in downtown Minneapolis, where they came to sample beef, learn great culinary techniques and ask questions about how their beef is produced.
- The Minnesota Beef Council was featured in six television segments in May.
 - Three segments featured the 2013 Minnesota Beef Backer, Chef John Schlitz of the Lake Elmo Inn. On KARE 11, WCCO and KSTP, Chef John talked about his knowledge and experience cooking beef.

- Two segments featured MBC's Colleen Zenk's tips for consumers as they shop for beef in the supermarket.
- Two additional segments were run with concern for the rising beef prices during Memorial Day weekend. We were able to provide the media with factual information and make suggestions for how to buy beef on a budget.

To further reach consumers and impact their meat purchasing decisions, MBC partnered with Lund's and Byerly's grocery chain to offer \$1 off a package of fresh beef. Our efforts don't stop there. KSTP's Twin Cities Live program has asked to work with us on "The 12 Days of Grilling – Beef." This series will run July 29 through August 13, featuring 12 consecutive days of on-air beef recipes featuring previous and current Beef Backer award winners, MBC staff and well known chefs in the Twin Cities market. The show airs on KSTP at 3:00 p.m. (central). If you miss the segments, check them out online at: twincitieslive.com.

It is the mission of the Minnesota Beef Council to enhance opportunities for growth and success in the beef industry. We will continue to strive for maximum efficiency of the checkoff investment and make it a priority to communicate with each of you those results. Stay tuned, as there will be many more stories to share of how the beef checkoff investment works for you.

Kid Friendly Beef Recipe: ROCK & ROLL BEEF WRAPS

A colorful way to introduce quinoa to your kids with ranch-seasoned Ground Beef and slaw.

Total Recipe Time: 35 to 45 minutes
Makes 4 servings

INGREDIENTS:

1. 1 pound Ground Beef (93% lean or leaner)
 2. 1 cup water
 3. 1/3 cup uncooked quinoa
 4. 2 tablespoons dry ranch dressing mix
 5. 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
 6. 2 cups packaged broccoli or coleslaw mix
- 4 medium whole grain or spinach tortillas (7 to 8-inch diameter)

Toppings (optional):

Apple slices, red bell pepper strips, cucumber slices, carrot slices, sliced almonds or chow mein noodles

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Heat large nonstick skillet over medium heat until hot. Add Ground Beef; cook 8 to 10 minutes, breaking into 1/2-inch crumbles and stirring occasionally. Remove drippings.
2. Stir in water, quinoa, ranch dressing mix and pepper; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 10 to 15 minutes or until quinoa is tender. Stir in slaw; cook, uncovered, 3 to 5 minutes or until slaw is crisp-tender, stirring occasionally.
3. Divide beef mixture evenly among tortillas; garnish with toppings, as desired. Fold over sides of tortillas and rolling up to enclose filling.

Test Kitchen Tips: Cooking times are for fresh or thoroughly thawed Ground Beef. Ground Beef should be cooked to an internal temperature of 160°F. Color is not a reliable indicator of Ground Beef doneness.

MN Beef Research & Promotion Council Annual Meeting Results

The Minnesota Beef Research and Promotion Council (MBC) held their annual meeting on July 16 in St. Joseph, MN. The meeting included new director orientation presented by Todd Johnson from the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, along with a tour of the St. Joseph Meat Market which was awarded the Retail Beef Backer for 2013.

MBC recognized three retiring directors who had dedicated years of service to the organization. Carol Abramamzon of Caledonia in District 9, Paul Kent of Mora in District 6, and Ron Rinkel of Hillman representing District 5. New directors were also seated: Katie Brenny of Mazeppa in District 9, Duane Munsterteiger of Ogilvie in District, and John Schafer of Buffalo Lake representing District 5.

Brenny, Munsterteiger and Schafer were elected by producers to serve a 3-year term on the MBC board of directors. John Moon of District 4 and Mark Malecek of District 7 were re-elected to another term in their respective districts.

Election of officers took place during the MBC Annual Meeting. The MBC Directors elected Mark Malecek of Redwood Falls as chair, Darrin Arveson of Trail as vice-chair, Clarence Caraway of Lake Benton as secretary, Jay Bakken of Garretson, SD as treasurer, and John Schafer of Buffalo Lake as executive member at large.

UPCOMING EVENTS:



GLCA 3rd Annual Videoconference
Thursday, December 5

How grazing & cover crops benefit soil health.
<https://sites.google.com/site/minnesotaglca/home>

Driftless Region

Beef Conference Update

January 30-31, 2014

Grand River Convention Center, Dubuque, IA
<http://www.aep.iastate.edu/beef/>

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