

Ohio Forage Grasslands Council Newsletter



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Dear OFGC Members,

As the editor of the Ohio Forage Grasslands Council (OFGC) newsletter, I would like to thank you for your interest in our organization. Our goal for the upcoming new year is to better communicate with you and provide updates and information that will not only help you but give you welcoming news and events happening both at a local and national level. Our mission is to enhance the profitability of Ohio farmers through the use of forage and grasslands resources, and to facilitate the opportunity for collective interaction between producers and other forage workers, both public and private. The visions of OFGC are the following:

- Provide a forum or means for the exchange of ideas, problems/opportunities, and solutions in forage-animal agriculture.
- Encourage research, education, and service efforts so as to improve forage production, utilization, and marketing.
- Represent a collective voice for issues affecting forage-animal agriculture.
- Develop present and future leaders in the forage industry.

We have a website:

<https://ohioforage.com>

Inside this newsletter you will find information on the state's annual meeting as well as information on both the nation and international parent organizations. There are also articles from our members and our keynote speaker for the state's annual meeting. We hope you enjoy the newsletter and that it provides welcoming information into your life.

Sincerely,

Dan Lima – OFGC Board Member

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Dear OFGC members,

It is exciting that your board has decided to restart a newsletter to better stay engaged with you, our members. Your board has spent the past year working to promote forage production around Ohio. OFGC works closely with researchers and extension educators at The Ohio State University to build new programs and make sure research is conducted that benefits Ohio farmers. Your board also works closely with The Ohio Division of Soil and Water and Ohio NRCS to be sure forage and rangeland is part of Ohio's conservation efforts.

A few of the educational efforts your board assisted with this past year include partnering with many organizations to update the Forage for horse's curriculum and teach a virtual Forage for horses' program. This program helps horse owner make better use of their pastures and make more informed decisions about forage quality needs for their horses. We also assisted with a virtual Pasture for profits program and are beginning the process of helping with an update of those educational materials. Your board members have also served as a resource for multiple pasture walks and field days this past year.

We have provided consultation and numerous letters of support for forage research projects around the state. These projects are investigating the carbon sequestration benefits of forage, forages for wet soils, utilizing annuals to maximize forage production per acre, and pasture management for improved weed control.

Another point of pride for Ohio forage growers is that we currently have two members, Chris Penrose and my self-serving on the American Forage and grassland council board making sure Ohio's unique needs are brought to the national forefront.

As part of Ohio State University Extension, I find membership to our organization and American Forage and Grassland Council to be very beneficial as a networking tool to stay up to date on forage research being conducted across the county. I also help with my family's dairy, forage, and grain farm. As president of your organization, I am always asking myself why producers across Ohio should be a member of OFGC. While OFGC is a small commodity organization we still work for our members for advocacy, research, and education. Making sure forages are included in policy discussions and research is conducted to benefit Ohio producers along with working to bring education opportunities to Ohio producer. I hope to see many of you at our annual meeting on February 17th in Cambridge Ohio.

Jason Hartschuh, OFGC President

Jason M. Hartschuh

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2023 Ohio Forage and Grasslands Council Conference

The Ohio Forages and Grasslands Council Annual Conference will be held February 17, 2023, from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm at Deerassic Park Educational Center, 14250 Cadiz Rd, Cambridge, Ohio. The program theme is “**Feeding Forages and Forages Feeding Us**”. The Keynote speaker will be Dr. Ed Rayburn, State Forage Specialist for West Virginia State University. His talk is titled: *“What I have learned about forages over the last 40+ years”*.

Other featured speakers to provide a Forage Research Update will be Grad Students at Ohio State University.

Several producer talks will also be presented which will include Beef, Sheep and Dairy producers speaking on how they use forages.

To finish the program will be a very popular discussion entitled “**Hot Topics in Forages and Grazing**”

Registration cost will be \$40 per person for OFGC or any state affiliate AFGC members and \$70 per person for nonmembers. OFGC Membership cost remains at \$35 per year. Details of the program and a registration form will soon be available. Vendors are welcome to join the organization or set up a booth for an additional \$20.

Registration will be due by February 10th, 2023. For more information contact Gary Wilson at osugman@gmail.com or 419-348-3500



**FORAGE FOR THE WORLD:
THINK GLOBALLY. GROW LOCALLY.**

WELCOME by Ronnie Holman,
AFGC President & OPENING
KEYNOTE with Ray Starling.

EARLY BIRD
REGISTRATION
deadline is

December 19th!

Stay up-to-date with
all events, contests
and information and find
an affiliate council
by visiting the AFGC
website at:

[WWW.AFGC.ORG](http://www.AFGC.ORG)

2023 AFGC ANNUAL MEETING

January 8-11, 2023 in Winston-Salem, NC

**Featuring workshops, exhibits, competitions
and contests that are dedicated to promoting
and advancing forages in agriculture**



SOIL, ANIMAL, & HUMAN HEALTH

NORTHERN KENTUCKY

PRE-CONGRESS TOURS

Central Grasslands

Tour ranches, native prairie hay meadows, and other grassland-centered agricultural productions in Texas, and Oklahoma. Additional stops include the Cesar Kleberg Wildlife Center, the National Weather Service Station, and more iconic sites.

Subtropical

This tour focuses on operations and venues across Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina. Stops include a behind-the-scenes tour of Desert Farms, multiple agricultural research centers, and the 250-room, French Renaissance chateau Biltmore Estate.



IGC

International
Grassland Congress

KENTUCKY, USA 2023

MAY
14-19,
2023

Northwest

Visit one of the most productive agricultural regions in the world with diverse climates, rich soils, and large-scale irrigation systems. See forage productions, dairy operations, and the growing wine industries of Oregon.

Northeast

Explore the most historic area of the United States. The tour begins in Philadelphia, PA, and then moves on to Delaware, Washington D.C., and Virginia. Along with historic sites, the tour will also stop at New Holland and Wye Angus.

Sub-Themes

Sub-Theme 1: Grassland Ecology

Sub-Theme 2: Grassland Production & Utilization

Sub-Theme 3: Livestock Production Systems

Sub-Theme 4: Grassland Sustainability, Innovations & Initiatives

Sub-Theme 5: Grassland Policies, Social Issues & Policies, Social Issues & Ecosystem Services



For more information and registration scan the QR code with your mobile device or visit

INTERNATIONALGRASSLANDS.ORG



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Constructively Thankful

In the season of Thanksgiving, we gravitate to each other to express gratitude for blessings of all kinds. It feels good to be thankful and to be with grateful people. I hope that as you prepare for the Thanksgiving holiday that you take the time to meditate on the blessings in your life and on the farm and that it fills you with satisfaction.

When listing our many blessings, we often skip expressing thankfulness toward the learning experiences we gain through less than perfect scenarios. Yet, I think those scenarios are often more worthy of recognition than our obvious successes, because through challenges, we grow.

Along with your lists of blessings, I suggest making a list of things that went less than perfect in your operation this season, recognizing lessons learned in the process, and identifying ways to improve moving forward. It sounds a lot like “constructive criticism”, but I prefer to think of it as “constructive thankfulness”.

Here are some examples:

“I am thankful that our new hayfield made 100 round bales this year. Next year, I’ll fertilize after first cutting and aim for 150 bales.”

“I am thankful I signed up for the spotted knapweed program so that I could get my herbicide cost reimbursed. Next year, I’ll scout for new seedlings and treat them in the rosette stage.”

“I’m thankful I had enough pasture for my animals to graze from March to September. Next year, I’ll stockpile some tall fescue and try to graze until December.”

With constructive thankfulness you can turn shortcomings into goals. Every manager has room for improvements in their operation, but if you only focus on what needs to be improved, you will miss out on the joy and impact of what you already have and why you do what you do. Reflecting on your purpose and celebrating your successes will keep you motivated to improve.

To effectively track your successes and shortcomings, recordkeeping is essential. Day to day, week to week, month to month, and year to year, keeping track of what management strategies were employed, how, and why is critical for the health and wellness of our animals, our pastures, our families, and our economic standing. If you do not have a recordkeeping system you like, find one without delay.

There are templates available for written records kept in a notebook, digital records kept on the computer, and mobile apps designed to use on your phone. Using a combination of multiple

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systems may be helpful. For assistance finding a recordkeeping method that works for you, reach out to your local OSU Extension personnel for advice. We can also help you set realistic goals for improvement.

At a time when less than two percent of our population are farmers, we are especially thankful that there are still people who dedicate their lives to feeding others. We at OSU Extension are here to help you get through the day to day and improve along the way. Providing resources for recordkeeping is just one way we can say “Thank you!”.

-Christine Gelley

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Are You Still Grazing?

I still am but I am not sure how much longer. My goal is to make it well into December then stop feeding most of the cows hay in early March. I started to stockpile some of my fields in August and everything was going great and growing through September. I even tried a technique that has been used on the east coast to lightly graze well stockpiled fields while there is still time for regrowth. The principle behind that is to stimulate new growth on the stockpiled grass that has slowed down. I took the cattle off the field around the first of October assuming another month of growth but guess what? Grass does not grow much when you get no rain. I actually had one of the best forage growing seasons I can recall until October, so I do have plenty of hay. The way things are going, I will likely start feeding hay by the end of November. When you farm, things rarely go as planned.

I do have a nice, stockpiled field on fairly level ground (for Morgan County, Ohio) that I will save until early March and place my spring calving cows there. My goal is to feed no more hay and have a nice, thick sod for the cows to calve on.

At this point, what can we do to help get us through the winter (going to Florida gets more appealing to me every February!)? I think having equipment in good working order is critical, hope is not a good plan. Equipment breaks down at the worst possible moment and have a backup plan in case it does. For example, I was looking at the worn-out tread on the front tires of the tractor I feed rounds bales with and ordered new front ones knowing the hill I have to go

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up to feed hay. Over the years, I don't know how many times tires have gone flat just after noon on Saturdays!

Plan now on where you feed hay. I try to consider the ease to get to the feeding site, minimizing damage to the field and the ability to spread the nutrients where they are needed the most. Do you have the ability to set out some round bales while the ground is firm and bring the livestock to the hay at a later date? One of the best systems I have seen was to place round bales at least 20 feet apart, then use electric fence to provide hay as needed.

Match your animals needs to the hay you have. I will start feeding my poorest quality first and keep the best hay back until February when the pregnant cows needs are at the highest and the weather tends to be the worst.

Were there herbicides used on your hay fields? I have a set of round bales from a field that was sprayed with a residual herbicide for spotted knapweed. The restrictions are very specific, and I have a field identified where I will feed knowing that I may lose some legumes there (and hopefully some broadleaf weeds).

Do you have enough feed and is the quality adequate? Take inventory and develop a strategy if you may not have enough grass and hay. Hay is typically less expensive now then in February, especially if we have a rough winter. Are there harvested corn fields you can graze or a neighbor's field where you could set up a temporary fence to graze? Supplementing with some corn can help stretch out hay supplies. When the quality of the hay is not good enough, typically it is more of an energy issue than a protein issue, so again, supplementing with some corn could be an option. If protein is an issue, protein tubs are an option, but be aware of the source of protein: urea-based protein tubs are best for high energy diets and not poor quality hay, and not for calves under 120 days old or less than 400 pounds, there could be an ammonia toxicity issue.

The weather has been great the past month for harvesting crops, but forage growth has virtually stopped in my part of southeast Ohio. It is unlikely we can do much to grow more but we can plan for when the unexpected happens. My cows are still grazing but it will not be as long as I had hoped, so I am planning on feeding more hay this winter.

-Chris Penrose

A Quick Guide to Hay Feeding on Meadows and Pastures

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Ed Rayburn, Forages and Agronomy Specialist
 WVU Extension Service, Agriculture and Natural Resources
 February 2019

Livestock often need to be fed hay during part of the winter or in the summer during droughts. Hay, pasture and supplemental feeds contain nutrients needed by both plants and livestock. The majority of these nutrients are excreted by animals in their manure and urine. To recover and recycle these nutrients where they can be effectively used again, hay feeding needs to be managed in tune with soil fertility.

Use the following management guidelines for winter feeding on meadows and pastures:

1. Soil test all meadows and pastures to determine their fertility status every three to five years.
2. Feed hay in hay meadows to return nutrients removed in harvest and build soil fertility into the optimum range.
3. Feed hay in pastures to build soil fertility into the optimum range.
4. Feed 50 feet away from fence lines, water tanks and wind breaks, 100 feet away from streams and 200 feet away from household wells and springs.
5. Do not feed more than one bale in the same spot in one feeding season.
6. Rotate feeding areas across hay fields in a four- to six-year cycle.
7. Feed bales in feeders during wet, muddy weather.
8. Unroll bales on dry or frozen ground.
9. Do not winter feed on wet soils that will not take the animal traffic.
10. Feed on wet ground when frozen or during summer droughts to return nutrients.
11. Spread seed and chain harrow in spring after the feeding season to revegetate the area.
12. If needed, cultipack or roll the feeding area in spring to smooth the area.

Table 1. Number of 800-pound hay bales fed uniformly across an acre of land and the rotation return period needed to recycle the nutrients for a 2-ton (five-bale) yield per acre. This represents first-cut yield with aftermath being grazed. If second-cut hay is taken, increase the number of bales fed per acre proportionally to total bales made per acre.

Number of bales fed per acre in the feeding year	Bale spacing in feet	Rotation return period in years
20	50 x 50	4
25	45 x 45	5
30	40 x 40	6

Table 2. Fertilizer value of hay, pasture and supplemental grains (pounds of nutrients per ton of 90% dry matter). Nutrients in hay and pasture is related to forage quality measured as crude protein (CP). Nutrients in grains and grain by-products are less variable than hay and pasture.

Hay and Pasture					
CP	N	P ₂ O ₅	K ₂ O	CaCO ₃	MgCO ₃
6	17	9	30	23	10
8	23	10	34	25	11
10	29	11	38	26	12
12	35	12	42	28	13
14	40	12	45	30	13
16	46	13	49	31	14
18	52	14	53	33	15
20	58	15	57	35	16
Range covering 67% of observations		±3	±11	±11	±4
Grains and By-product Feeds					
Corn	29	12	10	1	8
Corn gluten feed	69	44	32	4	27
Distillers grain	90	36	23	4	20
Soybeans	105	22	37	10	14
Soybean hulls	39	7	30	28	16
Soybean meal	147	30	50	18	20

Table 3. Fertilizer nutrients recycled during grazing a pasture is much greater than those removed in exported animal products.

Recycling or removed	P₂O₅	K₂O
6 AUM grazing (2.3 tons dry matter)	40	152
500-pound steer	7	1
100 cwt milk	23	17

The economic value of conserving nutrients in hay, pasture and supplemental feeds varies from year to year but averages about \$1 per day for every 1,000 pounds of livestock fed. For 30 head of cattle, this is about \$3,700 for a 100-day feeding period. Management that keeps fertilizer nutrients where they do the most good makes economic sense.

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