

The 'Take Half—Leave Half' Adage

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overgrazing.

Gerrish states the general rule is that high utilization rates in a single grazing period result in lower forage intake leading to reduced animal performance, but may result in increased animal output per acre. A higher

degree of utilization can be achieved with shorter grazing period without adversely affecting intake.

In research at FSRC, they have studied daily and week-long rotational grazing and its effects on utilization, intake, and bite size. In the week-long grazing period, the

first few days the grazing animals selected only high quality material and intake was quite high. Halfway through the grazing period they were consuming more stems, fewer leaves, and diet quality and intake declined. By the end of the week, quality of diet was even worse and physical

availability had restricted bite size and intake was significantly lower.

In the one-day grazing period, stocking density was higher and selection was reduced. This caused the lower quality stem material to be eaten with the higher quality leaf material and enhanced the overall quality of the diet. The cattle on the daily rotation had higher intake levels despite the initial forage mass and the target residual being the same as for the cattle on the weekly rotation.

If we are going to aim for a 50 percent utilization rate, we need to know how to measure it. This doesn't need to be

anything too complicated. You will not have an exact figure, but you can get close enough to aid your management decision-making.

Forage mass can be calculated by measuring average height of the pasture with a yardstick and calculating a rough estimate of dry matter using the standard of 300 pounds of dry matter per acre per inch of forage height. This figure can be adjusted 50-100 pounds either way based on your assessment of forage density. There are plate meters commercially available which are designed to more accurately assess forage mass than just a yardstick.

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PREMIUMS

Premiums will be awarded for the first five places in each class as follows:

- 1st - \$5.00 plus ribbon and forage analysis
- 2nd - \$3.00 plus ribbon and forage analysis
- 3rd - \$1.00 plus ribbon and forage analysis
- 4th - Ribbon and forage analysis
- 5th - Ribbon and forage analysis

A special plaque will be given to the champions of each section at the annual forage conference.

RULES

1. Entries officially close at 10 a.m., Tuesday, Aug. 20, 2002. However, to facilitate handling of samples, exhibitors are urged to deliver their samples to the hay show tent on Monday, August 19. Hay shipped or delivered prior to Aug. 1 should be clearly identified as Hay Show Sample and addressed as follows:

Dr. Marvin H. Hall, Dept. of Crop and Soil Sciences, 116 Ag. Sci. and Ind. Building
Penn State University, University Park, PA 16802

2. No entry fee will be charged.
3. The hay shown must have been grown by the Exhibitor in Pennsylvania in 2002.
4. Exhibitors may enter in as many classes as they wish, but no exhibitor shall make more than one entry in a class, either in his own name, the name of the farm, or the name of some other person.
5. Exhibitors must attach an entry blank, giving name, address, county, social security number and class in which the exhibit is to be entered. Exhibitors can secure additional entry blanks at their County Agricultural Extension Office.
6. LONG HAY FROM RECTANGULAR BALES ONLY THAT HAS BEEN CURED (adequately dry). An exhibit shall consist of a bale section between 6 to 8 inches thick and weighing at least 6 pounds for legumes and 5 pounds for grasses. Undersized or moist samples will be disqualified. PLEASE TIE THE SAMPLES WITH TWINE.
7. Judging will be in two parts. On Tuesday beginning at noon, samples will be judged on the basis of visual characteristics and tested for chemical analysis. On Wednesday at 9:00 a.m., the samples will be judged on the basis of visual and chemical characteristics.
8. Unless disapproved by the exhibitor, samples will be stored for exhibit in the Hay Show at the 2003 Pennsylvania Farm Show.

HAY SHOW ENTRY BLANK (Please print clearly)

Hay Class Number (see other side): _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____, PA Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____

County: _____

Social Security # of Exhibitor: (We must have this to issue cash prizes)

To the best of my knowledge, the above information is correct.

Signature of Exhibitor



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Tim Fritz, former Penn State Extension Agent, joins the King's AgriSeeds Team. Tim has over 11 years of experience with grazing and forage systems. Tim grew up on a Lancaster dairy farm and has a B.S. and M.S. degree in Agronomy.

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