

Bermudagrass Showing Good Results

(Continued from Page E4)

cows, ewes, goats, and horses.

Horses especially love bermudagrass. Horseowners who purchase Phillips's bales declare the animals will consistently choose bermudagrass over alfalfa.

"A hundred percent of my hay is spoken for," Phillips said.

"Be prepared" is his motto. He has learned wisdom from the biblical account of Joseph in Egypt, stockpiling grain during the fat years so that, when the lean ones came, enough was stored to carry the ancient country through them.

Knowing there will be years of low production, Phillips maintains a quantity of hay for his own livestock in reserve, so when the inevitable lean times come he's ready for them.

According to Phillips, the cows and sheep complement each other in the pasture because what one species likes the other dislikes. Next spring, after appropriate fencing is installed for them, the Phillips plan to run the ewes with the cows.

The attention the Phillipses pay to caring for the land and environment is known and respected. Among the awards they've received are the 2002 Shenandoah Valley Complex Environmental Stewardship Award, the 2001 Bay Friend Clean Water Farm Award, and the Outstanding Forage Producer award.

Their diverse operation on Valley View Farm includes the annual production of 252,000 broilers. The farm is composed of some 210 owned acres and an equal number that are rented.

The Phillipses depend on

a few trustworthy seasonal helpers.

Daryl Lohr holds a public job, but is also indispensable as Valley View Farm's repairman, Phillips said. And his father, Johnnie Phillips, "is my main hayraker — at least 90-percent of time."

Roy Billhimer, Susan's father, occasionally looks after the chickens for them.

Phillips said he is "cautiously optimistic" about bermudagrass.

"Susan and I are not afraid of failure," he said. "Failure is not trying."

"I call bermudagrass a 'risk management tool,'" he said. "Now you have a forage that is taking up phosphorus, plus it regenerates, plus it has a high percent protein, plus you don't disturb the ground. It's environmentally sound."

Numbers, Quality Low At PFGC Hay Show

ROCKSPRING (Centre Co.) — This year's PFGC Hay Show at Ag Progress Days had the fewest number of entries in more than 15 years. The total number of entries (69) was almost 100 fewer than entered the show last year.

"I believe that this is a direct reflection of the poor haymaking weather that we have had this year," said Dr. Marvin Hall, forage extension specialist at Penn State. Hall coordinates the Hay Show and expected the number of samples to be lower than last year, but not as low as they were.

"I was hoping that good hay had been made in spite of the poor haymaking weather, but I had no idea we would get this few entries," Hall said.

The visual appearance of the samples that were entered in the Hay Show looked poor and this was reflected in the chemical analysis for quality. Averaged across all samples, crude protein was 15.4, acid detergent fiber (ADF) was 38, neutral detergent fiber (NDF) was 53, and relative feed value (calculated from ADF and NDF) was 110. The relative feed value was 28 points lower this year than last. Numerous exhibitors and visitors at the Hay Show echoed Hall's feelings that the rainy weather made haymaking nearly impossible this year.

Champion in the field-cured division was Marcus Zook, Mifflin, Juniata County, with an entry of later-cut alfalfa hay.

R.M. Klein Hay Farm, Northampton, was champion in the heat-dried division with an entry of first-cut alfalfa.

Champion in the preservative division was Wilmer Kuhns from Chambersburg, Franklin County, with a first cutting alfalfa sample.

This is the second year in a row that no champion winners were repeats from the previous year.

"I think people are coming to the hay show, seeing what it takes to make champion quality hay and going home and applying what they have learned. This certainly makes the PFGC Hay Show exciting," Hall said.

Next year's show will run from August 17-19.

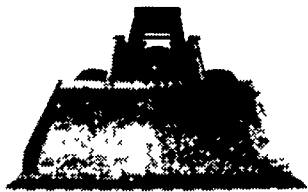


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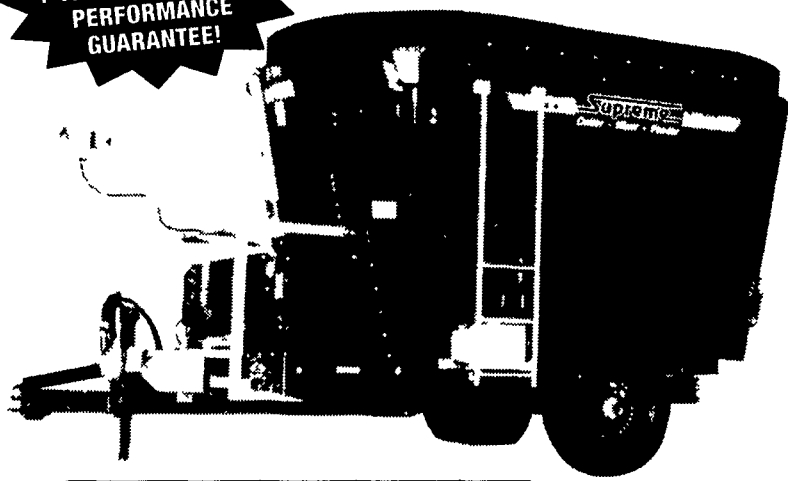
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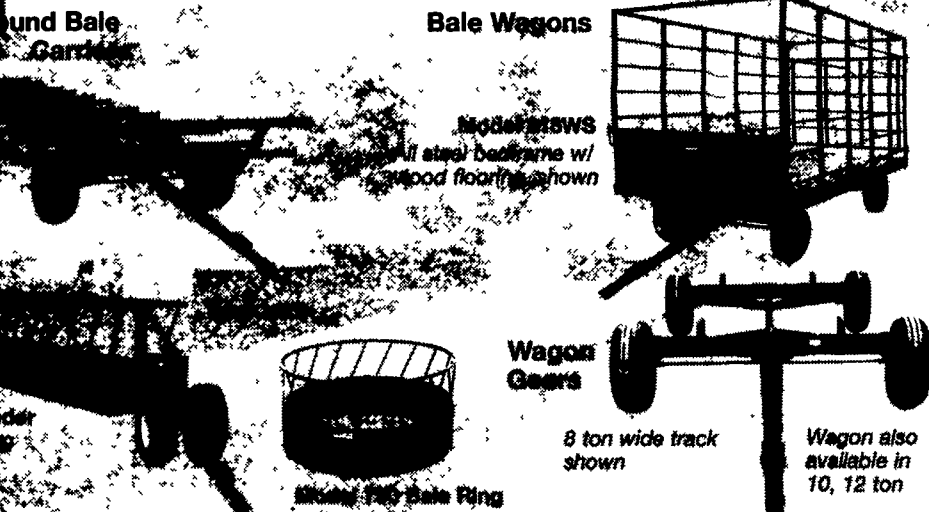
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