

DIRECTIONS

June, 2008
Issue #95

Forage Feed

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The IFGC Annual Meeting was held at the Holiday Inn, Mt. Vernon, IL on February 25, 2008. Don Brown, Jr., a Stephenson County hay producer, was elected president for 2008-09 and Matt Bungler, NRCS Grassland Specialist from Bloomington was elected vice president for a 2 year term. Roger Staff and Jerry Millburg will continue as co-secretary/treasurers.

Newly elected board members include the following:
Education/Government: Jeff Hyett, NRCS, Decatur, 1 year term; Greg Clark, U of I Extension, Whiteside County, 3 year term.
Producer- Kendall Guither, Bureau County, 1 year term; Clint Smith, Johnson County, 3 year term.
Industry: Elected several weeks after the Annual Meeting include David Gentry, Project Manager/ Forage, Turfgrass & Retail Products, Growmark, Inc. from Bloomington and Jonnie Ulm, Territory Sales Manager with Kuhn North America.

Continuing IFGC board members include Jim Burrus, Jacksonville; David Schaefer, Beecher City; Frank Ireland, Simpson; Dale Baird, Rockford; Brad Halbrook, Shelbyville and Scott Jones, Macomb.

IFGC members and other leaders of the Illinois forage industry were recognized at the

Illinois Forage Institute which was held the following day in Mt. Vernon. IFGC co-sponsored the Institute which was attended by about 55 individuals.



2007 IFGC president, Ron Atherton (left), is thanked for his service by Don Brown, Jr., 2008 IFGC president at the Illinois Forage Institute.

IFGC awards included the *Outstanding Education/Government Award* presented to Greg Clark, Crop Systems Educator, University of Illinois Extension, Whiteside County. Greg was recognized for his efforts in coordinating the Quality Hay Contests at numerous Forage Expos and his leadership with the Northwestern IFGC.

The *Outstanding Producer Award* was presented to Tom Saxe, Thompsonville, Franklin County. Tom has utilized warm and cool
(continued on page 2)

- ### Important Dates
- June 28, Illinois Forage Expo, Smith Family Farms, Mt. Vernon area
 - July 9, Fencing & Watering Options for Grazing, Elizabeth, IL
 - July 24, 26 & 31 Multiple Species Grazing Conferences

IFGC News



Tom Saxe, Thompsonville (left) receives the IFGC *Outstanding Producer Award* from Jim Morrison, IFGC Director.

season grasses and legumes in his rotational grazing system. Tom, a retired U of I Animal Systems Extension Educator has also hosted numerous educational pasture walks at his beef cow/calf operation.

The *Outstanding Industry Award* was presented to Mike Hamilton, Hamilton's Madison County Auction for his weekly hay and straw auction. Mike contacts producers in several states to provide a variety of offerings for sale.



Mike Hamilton (right) of Hamilton's Madison County Auction receives the IFGC *Outstanding Industry Award* from David Schaefer, IFGC Director.

IFGC Membership Dues

IFGC membership options, available at <http://www.illinoisforage.org/>, include an *IFGC Individual Membership* for \$25 which includes membership to AFGC or an *IFGC Corporate Membership* for \$200 which includes an individual (not corporate) membership to AFGC and complimentary exhibit space at the Illinois Forage Institute and Illinois Forage Expo. Simply stated, an IFGC membership also includes individual membership with AFGC, HOWEVER, a membership paid and sent directly to AFGC by an individual or business does not cover IFGC dues and membership.

The Northwestern Illinois Forage & Grassland Council (\$30 membership dues per year) and the Western Illinois Forage & Grassland Council (\$25 membership dues per year) are affiliate councils of IFGC. Their dues include individual membership to their respective local council, IFGC and AFGC. The structure here is from the bottom up so to speak. If available, dues are paid at the local area *Council* first and include IFGC and AFGC dues as well.

Membership application (included on page 4) and dues should be returned to **IFGC, P.O. Box 233, Greenville, IL 62246**. Also, please indicate if you are a renewal member for either the ***Northwestern Illinois Forage & Grassland Council*** or the ***Western Illinois Forage & Grassland Council***. If you have any questions about membership please contact any of the IFGC board officers for clarification.

On-line Hay Market Reports

USDA/Agricultural Marketing Service *Livestock and Grain Market News* website contains the monthly *Illinois Hay Market Report*. Go to www.ams.usda.gov/LSMarketNews and then select "Hay" and then the *Monthly IL Hay Market Report*. Also, you may want to take a look at *Hamilton's Madison Co, IL AG Hay Auction*.

ILLINOIS FORAGE EXPO

Saturday, June 28

9 A.M. to 4 P.M.

Smith Family Farms, Mt. Vernon

Food
Available on
Site

Beef custom grazing operation using warm- and cool-season perennial grasses and summer annuals in a rotational grazing system.

Farm Manager, Tom Smith

Equipment Demonstrations

10:00 A.M. Mowing
11:00 A.M. Raking, Tedding
2:00 P.M. Baling

Quality Hay Contest

- Producers may enter one 2008 harvested bale per class. Entries are only accepted from 9 to 10 am. Compressed or re-baled bales are not eligible.
- Bales weighing more than 100 pounds need an official scale weigh ticket.
- Four hay classes: alfalfa—grass—alfalfa/grass mix—other
- Recognition presented to class winners

Educational Presentations

9:30 A.M. Managing Higher Fertility Costs in Pasture and Hayland
10:00 A.M. Controlling Weeds and Arthropods in Forages with Integrated Pest Management Principles
10:30 A.M. Matching Forage Species with Animal Nutritional Requirements in a Year-Long Grazing Program

Smith Farms Custom Grazing Operation Tour: 11:00 am and 1:30 pm

Industry and Equipment Exhibits

To display a commercial exhibit, contact Stacy Helm, Jefferson County SWCD, (618) 244-0773, ext 3
For more details about Forage Expo 2008, visit <http://web.extension.uiuc.edu/regions/ag/>



USDA Risk Management Agency

Directions

Go 7 miles west of Mt. Vernon on Route 15, then 1.5 miles south on Panzier Lane (4000 E Rd).
Watch for Expo Signs.

2008 Membership Application: Illinois Forage and Grassland Council

2008 INDIVIDUAL IFGC Membership Application (January 1, 2008 – December 31, 2008)
Make check payable to *Illinois Forage and Grassland Council*

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ County _____

Email _____

IFGC respects the privacy of its members, and does not sell its email address list to solicitors. IFGC and AFGC will email newsletters and other information to members routinely, as a cost-saving measure over regular mail. Thank you.

Membership category (check one): Farmer _____ University/Government _____ Industry _____
If Industry (check one): Machinery _____ Seed _____ Chem. & Fert. _____ Other _____

Check if member of IFGC affiliate council: Northwestern Illinois FGC _____ Western Illinois FGC _____

Individual membership dues are **\$25.00 (\$30 if member of Northwestern IFGC)** which includes membership to: 1) **Illinois Forage and Grassland Council** and 2) **American Forage and Grassland Council**. Membership is open to all persons interested in production and utilization of hay and pasture crops, soil and natural resources conservation, and livestock production. All members receive *Forage Feed*, the IFGC quarterly newsletter

Please mail to: Illinois Forage and Grassland Council
P.O. Box 233
Greenville, Illinois 62246
Ph: 618-664-3590 ext. 3 Fax: 618-664-3958

2008 CORPORATE IFGC Membership Application (January 1, 2008 – December 31, 2008)
Make check payable to *Illinois Forage and Grassland Council*

Name of Business _____

Contact Person _____

Business Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Business Phone(____) _____ Fax (____) _____ County _____

Email _____

IFGC respects the privacy of its members, and does not sell its email address list to solicitors. IFGC and AFGC will email newsletters and other information to members routinely, as a cost-saving measure over regular mail. Thank you.

Membership category (check one): Farmer _____ University/Government _____ Industry _____
If Industry (check one): Machinery _____ Seed _____ Chem. & Fert. _____ Other _____

Check if member of IFGC affiliate council: Northwestern Illinois FGC _____ Western Illinois FGC _____

Corporate membership dues are \$200.00 which includes membership to: 1) **Illinois Forage and Grassland Council** and 2) **American Forage and Grassland Council**. All members receive *Forage Feed*, the IFGC quarterly newsletter. Also, corporate members receive complimentary standard exhibit space at two IFGC sponsored events per year and are

Teff, an Annual Grass

by Jim Morrison
Crop Systems Extension Educator

The use of Teff, a warm-season summer annual grass, as a forage crop generated many questions during the 2007 growing season.

Teff is native to Ethiopia where it is mainly grown as a cereal crop. The grain is ground into flour, fermented, and made into sour-dough bread. References indicate the crop was domesticated 4000 to 1000 years BC.

Interest in Teff as a forage crop is due to several reasons. It is fine stemmed, very palatable, germinates quickly, and is ready for harvest 50 to 55 days after seeding (or at early boot stage). Teff can be baled, grazed, or ensiled.

It appears that optimum temperatures for growth are 50 to 85 degrees F. and the crop needs at least 17 inches of rainfall. Teff is day length sensitive. It does not tolerate frost or soil temperatures less than 70 degrees F. at planting.

The seed size is extremely small, approximately 1.25 M per pound or about the same number as timothy. A firm, well prepared seedbed is critical and seeding works well with a cultipacker or "Brillion" seeder. Shallow seeding is a must, ¼ - to ½-inch is recommended. Seed 4 to 5 pounds per acre or 8 to 10 pounds per acre if using coated seed. An application of 50 to 60 pounds of nitrogen per acre is generally recommended at seeding.

Teff has a relatively shallow, fibrous root system that if not well established before grazing can be pulled out of the ground by livestock. A stubble height of 3 to 4 inches should remain after harvest, and subsequent harvests can be made at 40 to 45 days.

Teff may be a valuable forage crop because it (1) fills the "summer slump" of cool-season grasses, (2) is a summer annual hay crop, (3) produces higher quality forage than commonly grown warm-season summer

annual grasses (sorghum-sudangrass, sudangrass), and (4) serves as an emergency forage crop.

Teff is new to the Midwest and there is limited data on variety performance and cultural practices. Adapted varieties and specific management recommendations will result from university research and grower experience. When growing Teff for the first time, consider it on a small acreage and document practices used.

Time to Fertilize Alfalfa Ground

by Jim Morrison
Crop Systems Extension Educator

As the old saying goes, "Put it (fertilizer) on don't put it off". Following the first harvest is an excellent time to apply fertilizer. Let's discuss some aspects about phosphorus, potassium, sulfur and boron fertilization for alfalfa hay. A soil test is the starting point for a fertilizer program for any crop. Depending upon the soil test values, build-up and/or maintenance amounts of phosphorus and potassium can be planned.

In terms of maintenance required, one ton of hay removes 12 to 15 pounds of P₂O₅ per acre and 50 to 60 pounds of K₂O per acre. This equates to 26 to 33 pounds of 0-46-0 and 83 to 100 pounds of 0-0-60. It works well to top-dress phosphorus and potassium split after the first and last cutting of the season. Fertilizer should be applied soon after harvest before regrowth resumes. Avoid contact with wet foliage.

Phosphorus is important for seedling establishment and energy transport while potassium is needed for legume persistence, disease resistance and water relations for alfalfa.

Potassium levels are good for the plant, but high potassium levels (above 3%) can cause health problems for early-lactating cows. High testing potassium fields need to be managed if concerned with high potassium levels in forage.

(continued on page 6)

Time to Fertilize Alfalfa Ground (cont.)

Some of these management factors include well calibrated, current soil tests to guide potassium applications, cut the alfalfa lower and allow alfalfa to mature a few days longer before harvesting.

Plant or tissue analysis should be used to determine sulfur and boron levels by sampling the upper six inches of alfalfa at the early bloom stage. Organic matter is the main source of these two nutrients, so sandy, shallow and low organic matter soils favor response to sulfur and boron. 20 to 25 pounds per acre of sulfur can be applied on established stands.

On sandy soils, one pound of boron per acre may need to be applied yearly, whereas on heavier soils, three to four pounds of boron per acre in the first hay year should be adequate for the life of the stand. Boron should not be applied to alfalfa the year proceeding corn and it should not be applied to the seedbed as it can damage germinating seeds. Other than boron, micronutrient deficiencies in alfalfa are rare in northern Illinois. Consult the *Illinois Agronomy Handbook*, available at Extension Offices and on-line at <http://iah.aces.uiuc.edu>, for more information.

Illini-Graze Pasture Planner CD is Available

A University of Illinois computer program, titled *Illini-Graze*, is available as a compact disc (CD) to help graziers plan management intensive grazing systems, allocate forages, and consider extended grazing season options.

Illini-Graze, developed by University of Illinois Extension and Illinois Natural Resources Conservation Service personnel, is an Excel-based spreadsheet allowing graziers to enter livestock types and forage crops to determine forage balance for their farm. Development was funded by an Illinois Department of Agriculture Conservation 2000 grant.

Users of the program enter livestock

information (type, number, average weight, and date to begin and end grazing) and forage information (type/species, acres, and grazing plan). Users also indicate the level of management either average or optimum which reflects soil fertility, weed presence, and forage density. Forage production figures, both total yield and allocation by month, are listed for northern, central and southern Illinois.

After livestock and forage information are entered, the amount of forage produced and required each month is shown. Like many computer programs, users can change (or "play what if") livestock, forage, and management level. Users have the option to enter their own forage production and consumption figures instead of using the program's "default" values.

The CD also includes "Cowboy Math", developed by the University of Georgia, which calculates the number and size of paddocks for a managed grazing system. Also included is the "Illinois Grazing Manual".

The *Illini-Graze* can be purchased for \$5.00. Checks should be made payable to *University of Illinois Extension* and sent along with requests to:

Illini-Graze
University of Illinois Extension
480 S. Deer Road
Macomb, IL 61455

Other Upcoming Conferences

National Hay Association Convention

September 17-20, 2008

Oak Brook Hills Marriott, Oak Brook, IL
www.nationalhay.org

Heart of America Grazing Conference

January 21-22, 2009

Holiday Inn, Columbus, IN

for further information contact

Brad Shelton, Purdue University Extension
812-883-4601

Forage Variety Selection

Grazing and PEAQ "Sticks" Available Soon

University of Illinois, Department of Crop Sciences has been collecting forage crop variety yield data for many years. The annual yield data from the 1997 through 2007 Forage Crop Variety Trials is available at

<http://vt.cropsoci.uiuc.edu/forage.html>.

Also, 2008 harvest data will be posted at this website shortly after each cutting this year.

Similar forage variety yield data is available from adjoining states at these sites:

Iowa State University

<http://www.croptesting.iastate.edu/alfalfa/results/>

University of Wisconsin

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/forage/alf07.htm>

University of Kentucky

http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage//Forage_VarietyTrials2.htm

IFGC is in the process of obtaining Grazing sticks and PEAQ sticks for members at no cost. The *Grazing Stick* is a 3 feet long, 4-sided yard stick. On the stick are calculations to determine pasture area carrying capacity and available grazing days. The stick contains charts for grazing efficiency, optimum grazing periods, and forage intake rates by livestock species. Additional information includes estimated pounds of dry matter per acre per inch of growth and the percent of dry matter in a harvested plant at various stages of growth for different grass species.

The PEAQ stick is a 4 feet long stick based on the Predictive Equations of Alfalfa Quality (PEAQ) technique that estimates pre-harvest quality in a field. The PEAQ method was developed at the University of Wisconsin and has been used in Illinois for many years. Relative feed value can be estimated based on the alfalfa height and maturity. The three different maturity stages that will be on the PEAQ stick are late vegetative, bud, and flower stage.

Members must attend an IFGC sponsored event in order to pick up the stick of their choice. IFGC members will receive either one of these sticks free and may purchase additional sticks. Non-members may purchase one or both sticks.

Fencing & Watering Options for Grazing Program, July 9, Elizabeth, IL

A *Fencing & Watering Options for Grazing* program, sponsored by U of I Extension, will be held on Wednesday, July 9 at the Hesse Beef Farm, 6209 S. Derinda Road, Elizabeth IL in JoDaviess County. The program will have two sessions, afternoon and evening, and participants have the option of attending one or both sessions. The afternoon session begins at 2:30 pm with *Fencing and Watering Planning Basics* followed by a *Pasture Walk* at 3:30 pm.

The evening session begins with registration and a ribeye dinner at 4:30 pm. At 5:00 pm *Farm Overview, Brief Thoughts on Grazing and Frequently Asked Questions* is followed by *Watering and Fencing Systems* at 5:30 pm. The program will adjourn at 8:00 pm. Registration can be made by contacting the JoDaviess County Extension Office at 815-858-2273. Pre-registration is required and the fee for both sessions is \$20 if received by July 2 and \$30 per person after July 2.

Extension Grazing Programs Survey

Numerous livestock producers throughout the state have attended one of the many University of Illinois Extension sponsored *Grazing Programs* during the past ten years. Past program participants are asked to take a five to ten minute online survey which will assist U of I Extension to make informed decisions about future needs and direction of livestock grazing education and programs. The on-line survey can be taken at www.tinyurl.com/32sh9x.

Multiple Species Grazing Conferences

Multiple Species Grazing Conferences, co-sponsored by University of Illinois Extension and USDA Risk Management Agency, will be held at three locations statewide during July. The *Conferences* will highlight the addition of meat goats to sheep, cattle or horse grazing operations for potentially more profit per acre. The program will focus on the advantages and risks of mixing pastured livestock species. The *Conferences* will begin with registration at 9:00 am and conclude at 3:00 pm. Conference topics include....

- *Understanding Livestock Species Grazing Behavior—Advantages and Disadvantages of Multiple Species Grazing.*
- *Pasture Weeds, Brush and Poisonous Plants—Know'em, Avoid'em, or Control'em.*
- *Health or Parasite Worries When Species Commingle.*
- *Do Sheep and Goats Offer Profits to Cattle Grazers?*
- *What Forages are Suited for Multiple Species Grazing?*
- *Fencing Considerations that Work for Hard to Control Species?*

The *Conferences* will be held on the following dates and locations.

July 24, Milan Community Center, Milan, IL. To register contact University of Illinois Rock Island County Unit Office, 309-796-0512.

July 26, University of Illinois Extension Logan County Unit Office, Lincoln, IL. To register contact the Logan County Unit Office at 217-732-8289.

July 31, Southern FS, Marion, IL. To register contact University of Illinois Extension, Williamson County Unit Office, 618-993-3304.

Advance registration is due one week prior to the program date. Registration fee of \$30 per person, second person from farm \$20. Late registration of \$35/\$25.

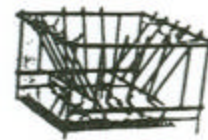
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Contributions for future *Forage Feed* issues or requests to receive future issues electronically can be emailed or mailed to the editor.



The mission of the Illinois Forage and Grassland Council is to provide the framework that unites industry, producers, and educational/governmental institutions for the production, marketing, and wise use of forages and grasslands.

2008 IFGC Officers and Board

2008 IFGC Officers

President (Producer)	Don Brown, Jr. (815) 238-8372 don.brownjr@yahoo.com
Vice President (Edu/Gov)	Matt Bunger (217) 621-4845 Matt.Bunger@il.usda.gov
Co-Secretary/ Treasurer (Edu/Gov)	Jerry Millburg Office (888) 458-4787 Jerry.Millburg@usda.gov
	Roger Staff (618) 664-3590, ext 3 Roger.Staff@il.usda.gov
Past President (Industry)	Ron Atherton Office (815) 589-2525, ext 328 Ron.Atherton@agriking.com

Board of Directors

Terms

Producers	Kendall Guither (815) 878-5175	2006— Feb 2009
	Jim Burrus (217) 886-2552	2007— Feb 2010
	David Schaefer (618) 487-5565	2007— Feb 2010
Edu/Gov	Clint Smith (618) 638-2120	2006— Feb 2011
	Jeff Hyett (217) 620-7508	2008— Feb 2009
	Dale Baird (815) 397-7714	2007—Feb 2009
	Frank Ireland (618) 695-2441	2007— Feb 2010
Industry	Greg Clark (815) 772-4075	2008— Feb 2011
	Brad Halbrook (217) 774-4794	2007— Feb 2010
	Scott Jones (309) 254-3556	2008— Feb 2011
	David Gentry (309) 557-6397	2008—
	Jonnie Ulm (309) 255-0044	2008—

Check out IFGC's web site at
www.illinoisforage.org