



NETFC NOW



SULPHUR SPRINGS GREENVILLE CANTON CLARKSVILLE



GENERAL MANAGER'S VIEWPOINT

by Brad Johnson

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Green grass and hay cutting have not been this prevalent in Northeast Texas in several years on July 1st. June was one of our better fertilizer volume months to show for it. Grasshopper insecticides are in high demand. Good grass spells lower summer feed demand, but it also gives our Feed Mills a chance to maintain & overhaul equipment we will need this Fall & Winter to perform to meet your needs.

TxDot is presenting our current Canton F&R Center location with construction issues. We cannot get our new Canton location built fast enough. You will see some pictures in this newsletter of the foundation pour we had on June 22nd. With footings, they poured over 530 yards on concrete as the base for our 250' x 75' Farm & Ranch Center. We expect the steel to be delivered July 14th. Building erection should be complete by 2nd week of August. Completion date is still set for October. Local and Midwest crops continue to show good to great potential for Fall harvest. Summer feed prices are not as high as we had thought they would be 3 months ago, so we are holding the line on prices. Having good crop yield potential 5 years in a row is a Blessing to us all in animal agriculture. Keep the rains coming.

The 4th of July reminds us each year how Blessed we are to live in America and enjoy our freedoms. We are especially blessed to live and work in Northeast Texas and be a part of a rural & agricultural setting. Don't believe me? Watch all the city folks flock to the country this holiday weekend.

Have a great July.

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RETAIL FARM SUPPLY & SULPHUR SPRINGS FERTILIZER

by Jim Ratzlaff
903 885 3143 Store

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- Many are spraying herbicides and some may be having some problems with ingredient compatibility. Some ingredients may be compatible with each other but when added to a third or more ingredients it may cause problems by either flaking up or gumming up. This is the reason we need to do a compatibility test before we mix up a big tank load of stuff that will plug up nozzles. I just had one such case. He was using three ingredients, N, H & G. I had mixed H & G together with no problems and mixed N & H together with no problems, but the problem came up when the customer mixed all three together. He had not done a compatibility test. So I decided to do one. Since I had never mixed G and N together I weighed out the proper amounts of each and put them together. Big problem, flakes occurred in the solution, that would cause a lot of problems. So I mixed ingredient H with ingredient G and they were very compatible together, then I took that mixture and added it to ingredient N and all three were compatible when mixed in this order. So what we learn from this, is that mixing order of ingredients can make a big difference. One may have to do a couple of trials to get the proper mixing order so that all ingredients are compatible together. As a last step to insure good success it would also be good to have a small 100 mesh screen to run the final test through to see if there was some very small particles formed in the mix.

RETAIL FARM SUPPLY & SULPHUR SPRINGS FERTILIZER

by Jim Ratzlaff

- A soil with a 2% or less organic matter can increase the moisture holding capacity as much as one and one half inch of rain fall by increasing the organic matter another 2%, plus keep nutrients from leaching out of the root zone, and most of all help maintain a good level of soil microbes which release tied up NPK to the plants. We are getting a flood of articles again in farm publications on the value of organic matter in the soil and cover crops. The old timers say that the soil is wore out, when actually what has happened is that the organic matter has been oxidized out or burned out of the soil. To rebuild the organic matter in the soil in an affordable way is not difficult to do especially where we are raising grass for either grazing or haying. All we may need to do is change up some of our management techniques.
- Hay meadows first, and these are the hardest to increase organic matter in because we cut the grass short allowing the sun UV rays to hit directly to the soil, this kills off many of the microbes needed to build back organic matter. Secondly the direct sun light heats up the soil in the middle of the summer and this heat also kills off more microbes. It is not uncommon to find the soil temperature to be 50 degrees different from a bare soil and a soil that is covered. That not only kills off soil microbes but there is a lot of moisture evaporation from the warmer soil. That is kind of the nature of the beast, however, we can do some things that will help replace those microbes that were lost by planting a winter cover crop that we may use for hay next spring. Soil Microbes are fed by green growing plants, if we can feed the microbes when the warm season grasses are dormant we can regain some on the microbe population in the soil. Some like to apply a gallon or so of molasses after every cutting to supply a energy source for the microbes. Sounds good, but there is no data proving this works even though some producers claim it dose. Using a legume as a cover crop and for hay gives better results than wheat, rye or ryegrass for building organic matter. There is a lot of differences between types of legumes each with its short comings and positive affects. So pick one that works best for your conditions.
- Rebuilding the organic matter in pastures is easier, first we can get clovers or a mix of ryegrass and clovers growing in our pastures and gain a lot of benefits from them while the warm season grasses are dormant. Also we can save organic matter and maintain a good microbe population if we do not over graze and allow the sun light to directly hit the soil. The only way I know to keep from grazing the grass too short is by rotational grazing. Graze a third and leave two thirds, or do not allow the animal to take the second bite on the same plant. This leaves enough leaf to support the root system and also to feed the soil microbes so that they never go into a period of time where there is no food source from the plant via its sap. The second thing this does is the root system never has to give up its energy for re-growth for the leaf system because it was grazed too short. This allows the plant to be more productive during longer periods of stress like when it gets dry July through September. Add the factor or the increase in organic matter that is holding additional moisture and you can see the benefits starting to compound in your favor. Better quality grass, more of it, higher rates of gains plus a soil that is more productive with less inputs. Now if you got a lot of free acres of grass and some one else is paying the taxes on it, then none of this matters to the bottom line.
- Things are changing for fall planting. For one thing ryegrass seed is going to be higher then ever before, but small grains such as Elbon Rye, oats and wheat will not cost as much as they have in the past. The shock of the cost of ryegrass may scare many off to planting small grains. However, at this point it appears that the cost per acre for seed will be about the same for ryegrass and small grains. There are two big differences between the ryegrass and small grains, planting costs are higher for small grains, as they will either need to be no-tilled in or have a prepared seed bed, where as ryegrass will not, so that will lower the cost of planting ryegrass. Secondly ryegrass will out yield in both quantity and quality forage over small grains. We have not gotten clover pricing as of yet. Clover may be a little higher but we do not look for it to go up near as much as ryegrass may go up.
- Just about every article I have read on rotational grazing is that they adjust the stocking rate based upon the amount of grass they have. To me this is not very practical. This means if we have cattle and the grass is getting short because of the hot and dry July and August we got to move some of the cattle, put them on hay or sell them. How many do we move is another question and what is the cost of that and if we sell them, they aren't at the weight we need them to be. And in most articles they all make it sound so good but yet you will read that they are trying something, which means to me, they haven't got it figured out yet if they are still trying. So the article is a wishful dream of what they would like to have. What is the right approach? For us here in Bermuda grass and Bahia grass country, plan for a hot and dry July, August and September so that you do not have to sell, or move or hay cattle during that period of time. I have been living in Northeast Texas since 1993 and in that period of time I have only seen it wet in this period of time twice. So to bank on rain during this period of time is not wise, stock accordingly. Here is the deal, stock pile grass April through June by leaving more than you take. I have found it is easier to stock pile during

RETAIL FARM SUPPLY & SULPHUR SPRINGS FERTILIZER by Jim Ratzlaff

this period than trying to stock pile grass in the fall for winter grazing. If we get the rain for growing grass in the fall ryegrass would make more forage out of the fall moisture. Plus the cattle seem to eat the stock piled grass during April through June better than they do of the stock pile grass in the fall months. To stock pile in April, May and June we got to understand, grass just grows better when it has the needed NPK with the spring moisture. So get a soil test and apply accordingly. This also assure us that the stock piled grass will have the needed protein so we do not have to feed a protein supplement. Just get the proper mineral out there. Does this work every year? Of coarse not! But the years this does not work are not very often. Lets see, it did not work in 2006 & 2007 or was it 2007 & 2008? and again in 2011. An old timer told me one time, there is a time to sell and a time to buy, do not confuse one for the other. If we can control our grazing method so we are not forced to sell when it gets hot and dry and hold our expenses down we have set ourselves up for a better future.

- **When do we jump ship?** It would have been better never to have been on the ship if it was going to wreck then to figure out how we are going to survive ship wreck in the middle of the ocean. Every business needs an exit or a contingency plan. When the old sailors seen the rats run off the ship before it left the port for over seas they could count on a rough journey ahead. Most in agriculture want to stay in for life rather than a means for life. An exit/contingency plan does not mean we totally quit but we adjust ahead of time. Some times we have some great big sign post along our path, we just need to be reading them and develop a strategy on what to do. When things go south generally there are several things that go against one and the same thing is true when things go the other way. Most of the time we miss them because we are not watching for them. That is why there is a need for an exit plan, or a contingency plan that allows us to watch and develop a strategy to maintain our net worth during that period of time. Many have actually increased their net worth in tough times with their contingency plan. The worst plan is to plan to sell at the top of the market. The odds of selling at the peak of the market is very low, we wait and when the market peaks we wait one more day with the hope of even more and the market drops, we kick ourselves and wait another day and before we know it we are on the bottom of the market. Some one said, that they never went broke selling at a profit, but went broke by being greedy. Opportunities never leave or disappear, they just change with the times. We need to be watching for them and be prepared to take advantage of them.
- **What to do to help our livestock during the hot weather:** Control anything that adds stress to the livestock. First, provide plenty of clean drinking water, keep it cool if possible. The biggest factor after heat that adds to stress are the flies. Use a 1% Permethrin spray and be sure to get the belly and leg areas, this will control the stable flies that suck blood. Provide shade during the day time. Trees trimmed high above the cattle allows for good air movement and trees provides some of the best shade because trees stop any radiant energy from the sun. During hot periods cattle eat less so their nutrient levels went down while their requirements for nutrients go up to cope with the extra stress therefore be sure to be feeding a good mineral that provides the proper vitamins, major minerals like calcium, phosphorus and trace elements. Beef Cow Plus with IGR would be an excellent mineral choice.

SULPHUR SPRINGS FARM & RANCH CENTER By Donnie Peters

903 885 3143



Seems like lots of our producers and customers are staying extremely busy this year. We have been blessed with rain that has allowed many to get at least one cutting of hay and some moving towards their third cutting. I have had some elder producers tell me before that in years when they had a lot of hay, the winter typically required lots of hay. Time will only tell. One piece of advice that I would give is to not sell any hay until you have enough for your own needs. Remembering the 2012 winter should remind you of this reminder. I still remember one of our Co-op members saying " When I paid as much as I did for the stuff that I paid, I will never sell a bale of hay again."

WEED CONTROL PAYS BIG BENEFITS!

Now, what I wanted to discuss is controlling weeds in your pastures. Many producers have been spraying in June but there may still be some that haven't noticed the weed pressure in pastures. A good rule of thumb is that for each pound of weeds controlled, you can grow another pound of grass. We are still running our special again in the month of July. If you purchase a bottle of Patriot, 2- 5 gallon buckets of Humate and a 2.5 gallon of surfactant, you will get \$34 off the total bill. We also have other herbicides for those harder to kill weeds. Whether you have a pesticide license or not, we have herbicides that will work for all. Let us know how to help you in your herbicide selection. And keep an eye out for grasshoppers. Though small now, they will mature. 3-5 mature Lubber grass hoppers per square yard is the equivalent to a cow to the acre.



Greenville Farm and Ranch Center and Fertilizer Plant

By Freddie Dale

903 455 6365

Summer is here and grass growing weather has taken over. We at Northeast Texas Farmers Co-op invite all of our members and customers come by today and take advantage of our many opportunities for improving your yard, pasture, garden or farm with our wide range of fertilizers, herbicides and soil amendments. Spray your pasture with our Patriot herbicide program for less than \$2.00 per acre. We also have many other herbicides available for your choosing.

With the moisture we are getting, now would be an optimum time to fertilize your pastures and hay meadows. We have many blends that would fit any situation, or we will custom blend others to your liking. Now is the time to soil test for your Fall pastures and next year's summer pastures. If ag-lime is required, late summer is the optimum time to get it applied.

Hope you had a safe and happy July 4th!!!

MISSION STATEMENT

"The mission of Northeast Texas Farmers Co-op is to be the preferred provider of quality products complimented by excellent service and education to customers at a fair and competitive price, allowing the Co-op to lead in the changing face of agriculture."

We're Your Co-op!

Northeast Texas Farmers Co-op belongs to the people who use it- the dairymen, the farmers, and the ranchers of Northeast Texas who have organized to provide themselves with the goods and services they need. We operate for the benefit of our members.

The Co-op exists to serve the needs and encourage the success of Northeast Texas producers by providing the highest quality products, services, and support. We are committed to exploring technology to provide our members and affiliates with knowledge, opportunities, and solutions for the betterment of agriculture industry in Northeast Texas.

FRESH FEED

QUALITY

VALUE

CANTON FARM & RANCH CENTER PROGRESS



We are working hard to get your new Canton location Farm & Ranch Center ready for you! Coming this fall! Thank you for your patience as we undergo highway construction at the current location!