

August 25, 2016

## AVOID PASTURE DAMAGE DURING FALL GRAZING

Extra rain this year compared to the past few years is making pastures greener and more productive. This extra growth is more than welcome. But as we approach the end of the growing season, don't get too greedy and try to completely graze off every green blade.

Do you have pastures dominated by cool-season grasses? Like brome grass, bluegrass, or wheatgrasses or maybe needlegrasses? Late summer rain and cooler temperatures could give these grasses some good growth in September.

It's tempting to keep cattle on these nice green pastures as long as possible to use all this growth. But grazing pastures short just before winter begins limits the plant's ability to develop the roots and tiller buds needed to fulfill their growth potential next spring. Those extra mouthfuls of grass harvested now could cost you many more mouthfuls next spring.

To help pastures recover from past stress and set the stage for abundant growth next spring, be sure to keep several inches of green leaves on your grasses all the rest of this growing season. At least do this with the pastures you intend to graze first next spring. These green leaves will convert fall sunlight into tiller buds, root growth, and root nutrient reserves. Next spring, these plants will green up early, be ready to grow rapidly, and yield much more than if grazed short this fall.

Don't be greedy. Protecting some of your grass from grazing this fall could pay big dividends next spring.

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