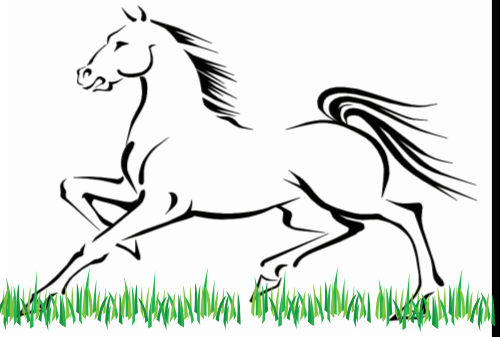
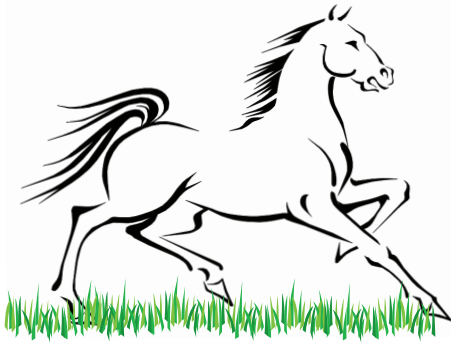


# April Pasture Acre Management



## Weeds – persistent & frustrating

Probably the most serious and frustrating pest problem in the pasture is weeds. No pasture is immune. Weeds are the opportunists of the plant world, always ready to take advantage of any failure in the pasture maintenance program. They thrive in thin turf and unfertilized compacted soil.

The proven and best way to control weeds is to develop a healthy and dense pasture turf. It is also the most cost-effective solution to the problem. Lush and thick pasture grass greatly reduces the need and expense of herbicides.

Reduce the weed competition. Regular overseeding with improved forage varieties and routine fertilizer applications will create a dense and healthy grass stand.

## Perfect Pasture – grow your own

The perfect pasture doesn't just drop out of the sky. It is the result of seeking the best, abandoning the comfortable and exploring the unknown. This idea can be scary for the farmer or rancher who feels most comfortable using the same mix that his father planted in years past. To improve your pasture, you must do something different. The only thing that is going to fall out of the sky and grow in your pastures is weed seeds!

How do you get the perfect pasture? It begins with those little things that we sometimes take for granted; seed. Is there much difference? Is it best to buy the same seed we've been using? How do I know if there is anything better? Will it work on my place? These and many other questions cause hesitation and sometimes fear. Heck, pasture seed is all the same; ain't it?

## Improved Varieties – better stuff

Over sixty years of research and hundreds of thousands of dollars have generated many improved forage seed varieties. These varieties will yield better, feed better and meet your needs better. Maybe you and your neighbor have continued to use Kentucky-31, and maybe you are still using it because of the price? Folks, you get what you pay for.

Since it is officially springtime, dormant and frost-seed times are past. There are some thin and bare spots in your pasture that should be addressed. These areas will fill with weeds if you don't seed them.

A good choice for spring over-seeding is a combination of annual and perennial ryegrass. There is a tremendous difference between the new varieties and the old varieties. Now you can get the endophyte-free tetraploids that not only yield, they also provide extremely high feed value. Your animals will be gaining as they are grazing. In the past survivability has been a downfall. Tests have shown that "Rival Brand Annual Ryegrass" and "Tonga Tetraploid Perennial Ryegrass" varieties are very persistent and are being used with great success. Grass Pad's "Renovator Special Mix" combines these ryegrasses with *DUO Festulolium* to renovate existing pastures and is the best choice to use in the springtime of the year.

## Forage Program – develop one

In a particular area, forage production may be very similar. At the same time there are vast differences in the levels of production, efficiency and profitability of forage programs.

Many factors influence the success of a forage/livestock operation, and the approaches taken in developing a forage program rank high on the list. The approaches taken are influenced by the concepts and attitudes of the producer.

There is no one plan that fits all forage production programs. There are many factors to be considered before developing a program; soil types, topography, other farm successes, financial resources, labor resources, type of livestock operation, and your objectives. There is no one right or wrong forage program. There are many options and one must make careful choices.

Forage/livestock production is complex. Development of a good program takes thought and planning. It is wise to make a written plan as it helps clarify objectives, identify problems and define needs and opportunities.

A producer's overall forage production philosophy has an important influence on the type of forage program developed.

All of these basic concepts should be considered and deserve some thought if you want to develop and maintain a good forage program.

## Forage – the basic commodity

While the USA has a livestock industry we can be proud of, some parts of the world out-produce us and many times the reason is because they are more efficient. Differences in climate may explain part of this, but philosophy in management is often the deciding factor.

The difference in philosophy is that most of us see ourselves as 'livestock managers' who run our animals on pasture. In other parts of the world where there is outstanding forage/livestock production, they see themselves as 'forage producers' who are using livestock to harvest their crop.

While Americans have excellent animal management skills and outstanding breeding stock, we have poor forage management knowledge (or we don't apply the knowledge). Profitable livestock production is largely dependent on the producer's ability to efficiently convert forage (hay, pasture, and/or silage) into meat, wool, or milk, and those big beautiful well developed horses; even those horses that are kept as 'pasture ornaments'.

Inadequate digestible energy in the diet is the primary limiting factor in most livestock operations. The solution to this problem in most pastures and on most farms is to develop a forage program that increases the digestible energy content of consumed forages.

## Weeds – crowd 'em out

It's worth repeating; develop a healthy and dense pasture, it is the most cost-effective solution to controlling weeds.

For now it's too early and too cool to kill weeds. Let's target mid-May to apply "Pasture Pro" herbicide.

A good rule to remember; grow grass first, kill weeds second.

# GRASS PAD

.com

OLATHE  
STILWELL  
ST JOSEPH  
BARRY ROAD  
LEE'S SUMMIT  
NATIONWIDE

913-764-4100  
913-681-8948  
816-279-7434  
816-891-9100  
816-525-8885  
800-922-4100

