Features...

Forage
   Winter grazing management  p. 2
   Hay, forage, and weather
   updates for Florida  p. 3-4

Soybean
   Soybean rust and yield
   reduction  p. 5

Weed Control
   Weed control in overseeded pastures  p. 6
   Pesticide updates  p. 7

Miscellaneous
   Soil testing in the Fall  p. 2
   Crop variety trial information p. 5
   Links  p. 6
   Wheat planting date  p. 8
   Calendar dates  p. 8

The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) is an Equal Employment Opportunity-
Affirmative Action Employer authorized to provide research, educational information and other
services only to individuals and institutions that function without regard to race, color, sex, age,
handicap or national origin. For information on obtaining other extension publications, contact
your county Cooperative Extension Office. Florida Cooperative Extension Service/Institute of
Food and Agricultural Sciences/University of Florida/Larry Arrington, Dean.
Winter Grazing Management

When weather outlooks are not looking favorable for this term, as is the case for this season and beginning of next year prediction of La Niña conditions for Florida with above average temperatures and below average rainfall, management of your winter forage resource becomes not only critical but vital for survival of your grasses and herd size.

What winter grazing refers to is a management of the grass that provides enough residual forage that permits quicker growth and better and even distribution of forage production throughout the season. If your winter grasses are 8 to 10 inches tall turn your cattle just to ‘top graze’ the top 3 to 4 inches.

Grazing the top will leave enough leaf for re-growth at a time when day-length is reduced; in other words “grass grows grass.”

Graze your pastures and remove your animals when reaching a 3-in stubble; overgrazing affects the root system and will put you out of grass very quickly. If worst comes to worst with an early frost or prolonged drought, by ‘top grazing’ through alternating cattle between paddocks, and feeding hay, you ration whatever grass or forage you have available.

Managing your winter grazing will not overcome weather and drought situations but will minimize the effects of adverse weather and other out-of-control factors.

Dr. Yoana Newman
Extension Forage Specialist
ycnew@ufl.edu

Soil Testing in the Fall

Soil tests should be done to determine the proper rates and kinds of nutrients that are needed for most economic yields for all crops. Without knowing the status of soil fertility, growers may either over apply or under apply certain nutrients. As expensive as fertilizer is now, growers cannot afford to over apply fertilizer that may be leached or run off in high rainfall events. Most of our row crop soils have been fertilized for a number of years and may have adequate amounts of phosphorus and may not need more. Soil tests are cheap as compared to applying nutrients that are not needed for crop production. Growers can often save as much as $30/A by pulling soil tests and applying proper amounts of fertilizer without a reduction in yield or quality. Soil tests should be done at about the same time each year and records kept to determine nutrient needs. This is also a good time to split samples and send them for nematode analysis if problem areas occur in the field.

Dr. David Wright, Extension Agronomist
North Florida REC, Quincy
wright@ufl.edu
Hay, Forage, and Weather Updates for Florida

November 26, 2007

Following is an update on hay and forage production as well as weather conditions for Florida. This update provides a perspective of where we are in pasture and hay production and what regions may be possible suppliers of hay if dry conditions persist. There is also an update on medium term climate to keep in mind for strategic and critical decisions such as de-stocking.

North Florida

Hay production is 40-50% short compared to last year’s figures. After mid October rains, most counties have not received a significant amount of additional rain. Producers got one or two cuttings in areas that should have produced three or four. Hay is in short supply, and we need to factor in that the area had a dry spring, too. There have been two killing frosts in the region taking care of what little grass production existed from perennial warm-season grasses. Ryegrass and clovers are struggling for survival under the dry conditions. Winter forages are almost non-existing and ryegrass planted on the October rains is barely surviving.

Hay production is significantly below normal production; producers are counting on heavy dew to keep leaves from shattering when bailing edible peanut crop residue. Given the shortage of hay, farmers are relying on this peanut hay to cope with this drought situation. The area is nearly 20 inches behind in rainfall, having currently accumulated 40 to 45 inches instead of what should have been 55-60 inches of precipitation. Many reports from farmers and ranchers express not having seen a year this bad, with many farmers reporting wells running dry in the last 30-60 days.

Central Florida

Thanks to Jul-Aug rains, most central Florida producers took two or three hay cuttings, but the first cutting was insignificant due to lack of moisture earlier in the summer. Hay production in this area is about the same as it was last year; but is lower than normal.

South Florida

Although southern Florida is not a traditional hay-production area, this year’s hay supply is three times that of normal-rainfall years. Dry conditions have worked favorably toward curing and making hay. However, moisture will be needed soon. Limpograss, a warm-season perennial adapted to very wet conditions, and used by a significant group of ranchers for grazing and stockpiling, has not grown well and tonnage has decrease significantly.

Hay, Forage, and Weather Updates for Florida continued on page 4
South Florida (Cont...) 

South Florida has literally no ground moisture. Winter forages are out of the question this year because of the lack of moisture. There is no water for pasture or animal use. Presence of pasture pests like chinchbugs, spittlebugs and army worms are bringing significant pressure. Additional rust problems are present in some bermudagrass stands. Pastures are in pitiful conditions. Although the situation is not as bad as Georgia or the Carolinas, this year has been the worst many producers have seen in Florida.

**Winter Weather Outlook**

![Map showing rainfall shifts in November and January due to La Niña conditions.](image)

Rainfall shifts in November and January due to La Niña conditions. On average La Niña brings 30 to 50% less rainfall to Florida in January than during neutral years. Neutral years happen when neither El Niño nor La Niña conditions are present. Neutral years account for about half of the years.

El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) plays a significant role in the kind of weather patterns we have in Florida during the winter. Moderate La Niña conditions are currently present in the tropical Pacific Ocean and forecast models indicate that La Niña conditions will persist and perhaps strengthen through early 2008.

What does that mean? La Niña, typically, brings drier and warmer weather to Florida during the winter and this may further affect soil moisture conditions already at critical levels in many areas of the state.

The last drought monitor update released on November 20, 2007 indicates severe drought conditions in parts of Glades, Highlands, Okeechobee and Palm Beach counties and moderate drought conditions across most of the southwest. For more details check the winter outlook at [http://www.ageclimate.org](http://www.ageclimate.org).

Dr. Yoana Newman  
Extension Forage Specialist  
ycnew@ufl.edu

Dr. Clyde Fraisse  
Extension Climate Specialist  
cfraisse@ufl.edu
Soybean Rust and Yield Reduction

With 3 years of testing fungicides for soybean rust control, we have found that infections as late as R5 (beans full in pods) can have an impact on lowering yields. We have had as much as 50% yield loss from early infections. Fungicide applications made several weeks after infection can still result in increased yields. However, the most yield impact will come from applications made at the beginning of infection or just at the onset. We know that there is no varietal resistance in currently used varieties but some resistance has been found in germplasm from other countries that will take several years to get into adapted varieties.

Soybean rust did not have a major impact on soybean yields this year due to the hot, dry weather and the slow rate of spread until late in the season.

We expect soybean rust to be worse if weather conditions are right earlier in the year since it is present on kudzu.

Kudzu infection is much higher now than the first year that it was found. It is expected that soybean acreage will be up in 2008 due to the high price and the ease of growing soybeans in double crops situations either after small grain or corn. However, for those growers who do grow soybeans, scouting for both insect and disease symptoms should be done in July, August and into September. Most soybeans require an application of insecticide in late August or early September for velvetbean caterpillar and corn earworm and could have a fungicide applied at the same time if needed. Infections have been occurring in August of each year and fungicides may be especially important on later maturing soybean groups.

Dr. David Wright, Extension Agronomist
North Florida REC, Quincy
wright@ufl.edu

Dr. James J. Marois, Extension Pathologist
North Florida REC, Quincy
jmarois@ufl.edu

Crop Variety Trial Information

Information on corn, cotton, soybean, and other crops may be found on the web at www.swvt.uga.edu. This is a decision that cannot be changed or altered after planting like so many other management decisions. Deciding on best varieties is a very important decision. There is often a 30-50% difference between some of the best varieties and the lower yielding varieties. Quality may vary as well making a difference in the price received for the commodity or animal performance.

Many varieties of crops have resistance to disease, insects, and nematodes. Other varieties are transgenic with resistance to herbicides that may be applied over the top of the crop. This is one decision that is worth spending a few hours on for each of the crops being grown. For further information contact your local county extension office.

Dr. David Wright, Extension Agronomist
North Florida REC, Quincy
wright@ufl.edu
Weed Control in Over-Seeded Pastures

Many cattle producers plant temporary grazing areas with ryegrass, wheat, oats, or other small grain varieties since summer pastures are now dormant. A successful winter pasture can be a highly productive and somewhat inexpensive way to improve animal performance during the winter months. However, many winter pastures do not consider weed management as part of the production strategy and often have rampant infestations of wild radish (aka wild mustard), geranium, and other winter weeds.

Control of winter weeds is relatively inexpensive and easy if it is done in a timely manner. Wild radish seeds begin to germinate when soil temperatures reach 65°F. At the time of this writing, soil temperatures from Brooksville north ranged from 65°F to 61°F. This means that wild radish is actively germinating right now.

It is important to begin scouting the winter pasture areas to determine your level of winter weed infestation and plan your herbicide application timing.

For small wild radish, 1 pint of 2,4-D will provide near 100% control if it is applied prior to flowering when rosettes are small. Delaying the application until the plants are fully flowering and large will result in less than 50% control. Other herbicides such as Banvel and Weedmaster may be used, but these will also be ineffective on large weeds.

Timing the herbicide application relative to the winter pasture should also be considered. Applications made soon after emergence will cause significant leaf rolling and yellowing. Applications made too late can cause lodging and additional injury symptoms. Therefore, herbicides should be applied after the plants have fully emerged and begun to tiller, but prior to head formation.

Additionally, application rates of 2,4-D, Banvel, or Weedmaster should not exceed 1 pt/acre. But if the weeds appropriately small, 1 pt/acre will be more than enough herbicide to provide effective control.

Plan to start scouting your winter pastures now and planning the herbicide application. Properly timed, the herbicide will provide excellent weed control and dramatically improve forage yield.

Dr. Jason Ferrell
Extension Weed Specialist
jferrell@ufl.edu
Pesticide Information Office Updates

This office never faces a dilemma caused by a lack of program activities and updates – always a study manual to be written, an exam to be revised, a CEU presentation to be made; the list seems routine, even mundane to many, but presents this office with ongoing opportunities. The year, 2007, was especially busy to meet the challenges that were presented. Some of the updates that we accomplished during the year, we hope, will prove to be useful to faculty, staff, students, and the citizens that call upon us. The highlights include:

Our website http://pested.ifas.ufl.edu/ continues to expand with added features. One link within this site is especially for internal use by IFAS faculty, staff, and students.

A drop-down menu, listed under “IFAS Employee Training,” provides access to:

⇒ EPA-approved Worker Protection Standard Training along with a printable attendance verification form;
⇒ Narrated Articulate presentation walking a person through a FDACS agricultural compliance inspection; and
⇒ Discussion of IFAS pesticide policies, and pesticide applicator exam preparation programs, including General Standards Core, Ag Row Crop, Demonstration and Research, and Soil Fumigation.

Our on-line system offering pesticide applicator CEU opportunities now has 26 FDACS-approved programs. Each on-line tutorial is approved for 1 CEU at a cost of $20. Virtually every applicator category has at least one CEU available, so no applicator should have to come up short at the end of their certification cycle and be forced to “take the test” to meet recertification. There are several routes to access the system: our website, a direct link at http://pested.ifas.ufl.edu/onlinepesticideceus/, or the IFAS Extension Bookstore at http://www.ifasbooks.ufl.edu/merchant2/.

Our EDIS Document collection continues to grow with making more informational guides available. One new feature is our pesticide applicator licensing series, which explains the licensing process for each individual category. The collection contains 18 individual documents. There are several other series within our collection, including crop/pest management profiles, pesticide toxicity profiles, pesticide labeling, and more. To access, visit http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/DEPARTMENT_PESTICIDE_INFORMATION_OFFICE.

Our monthly “Chemically Speaking” newsletter has continued without skipping a beat, despite budget cuts. It is located at http://pested.ifas.ufl.edu/newsletter.html. Please take a moment and let us know what you think of the newsletter by completing a brief on-line survey at http://pested.ifas.ufl.edu/newsletters/newsletter_form.html.

We know that 2008 will offer more challenges for us, but those are the reasons for making our lives more exciting and productive. We, at the Pesticide Information Office, wish all to enjoy the holiday season, and to come back for a fresh start in 2008.

Dr. Fred Fishel
Pesticide Coordinator
weeddrr@ifas.ufl.edu
Wheat Planting Date

Due to the recent spike in wheat prices there has been much interest in planting wheat. However, the freeze this past Easter resulted in little seed wheat being available for recommended varieties. Many growers have been calling in with names of older wheat varieties that were never recommended for Florida.

Only grow varieties recommend for Florida, south Georgia and Alabama.

Be aware that if old varieties are planted, the yield will be lower and disease resistance not as good as those currently recommended and fungicides will have to be used.

Wheat can be planted from mid November to mid December with good results. Wheat should not be planted later since yields are usually reduced or it will not head out due to too few chill hours and diseases are much worse on late maturing varieties and especially on the older varieties where they are no longer resistant to disease. Even at high prices, it may not be profitable to grow old, unadapted varieties.

Dr. David Wright, Professor
North Florida REC, Quincy
wright@ufl.edu

Calendar Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 6</td>
<td>8am - 4 pm Poinsettia Sale at UF Greenhouses behind Fifield Hall By UF's Environmental Horticultural Student Club <a href="http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/publicday2007.pdf">http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/publicday2007.pdf</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 6-7</td>
<td>Florida Ag Expo At UF/IFAS Gulf Coast Research Center in Balm. Registration is free. Details at <a href="http://flagexpo.ifas.ufl.edu">http://flagexpo.ifas.ufl.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 26-31</td>
<td>American Forage and Grassland Council (AFGC) Louisville, Kentucky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 29-30</td>
<td>19th Annual Florida Ruminant Nutritional Symposium at the Best Western Gateway Grand in Gainesville, FL <a href="http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/ruminant">http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/ruminant</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 3-5</td>
<td>Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists (SAAS) Dallas, Texas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 13-17</td>
<td>Caribbean Food Crops Society Meeting Miami, FL ~ Hosted by UF/IFAS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2008 Florida LAKEWATCH Calendar Order Form

The 2008 Florida LAKEWATCH Calendar is now available. The featured photographs were all taken by LAKEWATCH volunteers. All donations will go toward the LAKEWATCH Building Fund. To receive a calendar fill out this form and send the order form along with your donation (suggested donation is $15 to $20 per calendar) to:

Florida LAKEWATCH Calendar
7922 NW 71st Street
Gainesville, FL 32653

Make CHECK out to: University of Florida Foundation, Inc. -- SHARE
in the MEMO line write: Florida LAKEWATCH Building

Name _____________________________
Address ___________________________
City/State/Zip ________________________
Email Address ________________________ Phone # _______________________
Donation Amount ____________________ Number of Calendar(s) _____________________

OFFICE USE ONLY

Number of Calendar(s) sent ________ Date Sent ________ Initials ________

This form is also available online at: http://lakewatch.ifas.ufl.edu/BuildingCampaign/weborderform.pdf

"Agronomy Notes" is prepared by: J.M. Bennett, Chairman and Yoana Newman, Extension Forage Specialist (ycnew@ufl.edu); J.A. Ferrell, Extension Agronomist (jaferrell@ifas.ufl.edu); F.M. Fishel, Pesticide Coordinator (weedd@ifas.ufl.edu); Clyde Fraisse, Extension Climate Specialist (cfraisse@ufl.edu); James J. Marois, Extension Agronomist (jmarois@ufl.edu); and D.L. Wright, Extension Agronomist (dlw@ifas.ufl.edu). Designed by Cynthia Hight. The use of trade names does not constitute a guarantee or warrant of products named and does not signify approval to the exclusion of similar products.