



Farm Views

Winter pastures and supplements

Feeding hay or silage to beef cows and young stock during the winter is expensive and lots of work. Maybe you need to consider some of the ways to make winter pasture a cheaper, yet effective, feed source.

For years, producers have used corn stalks as winter feed for stock cows. That's an outstanding program, so don't stop. But sometimes, corn stalks are not available. Then you might be able to use winter grass that remains in some pastures due to extra growth last summer. Grazing these pastures during winter has its advantages.

For starters, you need less hay and silage for winter feed. Every day you graze winter pasture rather than feed silage or hay, you will save at least 25 to 50 cents, and maybe as much as a dollar per cow. Another benefit of winter grazing is removal of old growth so cattle have mostly fresh, green pasture next spring. Plus, cattle eat some weedy plants such as ragweed during the winter that they would not

touch during the summer and winter grazing puts very little stress on dormant pastures.

Do not forget, however, because of the lower quality of the winter grasses, your cattle will need some protein supplements while grazing winter pasture or corn stalks. But not too much since cattle do a pretty good job of picking high quality plant parts to eat while winter grazing. On corn stalks, we usually need to start feeding an extra one-half to one pound of protein per day when corn stops appearing in cattle manure. Warm-season range may need protein from early November onwards, but you can often wait until late December or January to feed protein supplements on cool-season pastures or meadows. Winter grazing is an opportunity to reduce winter feed costs and improve pasture condition. Try it with your cattle.

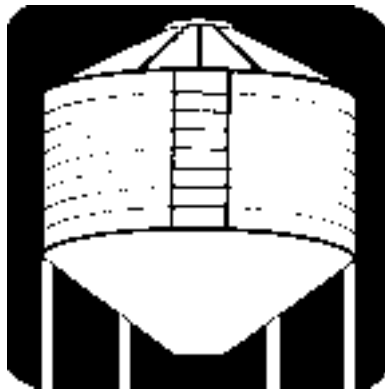
Source: Dr Bruce Anderson, UNL Forage Specialist (WS)

Grain storage information on the web

Low export demand, transportation problems and tight commercial storage space combined with a better than normal yield for many dryland crops has resulted in grain stocks that exceed the available storage space in some areas. Even where on-farm storage is available, grain may need to be held longer than usual until grain can be pushed through the "pipeline" and on to domestic and foreign markets. This grain must be kept in good condition, free of molds, insect damage, etc.

The University of Nebraska has a large number of NebGuides and extension circulars on grain storage, aeration, drying and insect management. In addition, extension specialists responded to the emergency nature of the situation a year ago by developing a number of information sheets on grain storage dealing with converting existing structures to hold grain, piling grain outside as a last resort, engineering aeration systems, calculating bushels in non-standard grain storage situation, etc.

I have created a web page containing all of the available grain storage information from the University of Nebraska, as well as selected publications from other mid-western universities. It can be found on the Lancaster County Extension [Nebraska Production Agriculture](http://www.lanco.unl.edu/nebraska_production_agriculture) web pages under crops. Most of this information can be downloaded by clicking on the reference indicated. The direct address of the grain storage page is: <http://www.ianr.unl.edu/ianr/lanco/ag/crops/storage.htm>. (TD)



A REMINDER FOR INTERNET USERS:

Lancaster County Extension Office has a new, shorter home page address: www.lanco.unl.edu
Some shortcuts:
www.lanco.unl.edu/food
www.lanco.unl.edu/ag
www.lanco.unl.edu/enviro
www.lanco.unl.edu/neblines
www.lanco.unl.edu/hort
www.lanco.unl.edu/family
www.lanco.unl.edu/4h
www.lanco.unl.edu/contact

Pricing silage in the feed bunk

Arriving at fair and equitable prices for silage requires judgement and attention to detail. The amount of grain and moisture contained in silage have major influences on its feed value and can be used to increase the accuracy of silage pricing.

The first judgmental factor is the quality of the crop as it was taken from the field. The price paid for corn silage must take into account the value of the corn grain in a ton of silage, the dry matter content of the silage and extra costs of harvesting and hauling the silage. A buyer and seller may agree on establishing a value for corn grain based on the price at a local elevator during a specific

time period and multiply that price times the amount of grain to determine the price per ton of the silage.

Arriving at the price to charge for silage, as fed, involves at least two additional costs:

1. The cost of filling and removal from the silo; and,
2. storage costs, including allowance for cost of the storage structure and silo losses.

Note that filling and removal costs will vary with the type of storage. Additional costs may also occur with final delivery.

Weather damaged silage such as we find this year are those that have growth stopped at a very immature stage and the

yield of grain is usually less than half of normal. These silages may have 80 percent or less the feed value of high grain corn silage. Forage sorghums, when they do have comparative high grain yield, usually have only 80 to 90 percent the value of corn silage per unit of dry matter. Sudan and sudan-sorghum crosses or sorghum varieties with low grain yields, may have only 65 to 80 percent the feed value of corn silage.

Additional information and guidelines are contained in NebGuide G74-99, "Estimating Corn and Sorghum Silage Value," available at the extension office. (WS)

The Walter Scott, Jr. Scholarships for prospective students of the Peter Kiewit Institute of Information Science, Technology and Engineering

The Walter Scott, Jr. Scholarships are awarded annually to particularly outstanding Nebraska and Western Iowa high school graduates pursuing degrees from either the new College of Information Science and Technology or the College of Engineering and Technology. The colleges, in partnership with Nebraska business and industry, form the Peter Kiewit Institute.

The Scott Scholarships carry an annual stipend ranging from \$3,000 to \$7,500 and are renewable for four years upon review of satisfactory academic progress. Qualifying students also will receive state-of-the-art personal computer systems as a part of this prestigious scholarship award. Scott Scholars are eligible to apply for and receive other scholarships offered through the University of Nebraska and other entities.

To Apply:

* Use the scholarship application form contained in the back of the Undergraduate Application for Admission booklet provided by the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Simply duplicate and complete the format then forward to the address listed below.

* Applicants are encouraged to submit their applications by January 15 in order to be considered during the first round of the selection process for fall candidates. Applications will be accepted after the January date and reviewed in subsequent rounds by the selection panel.

* During the selection process, consideration will be given to ACT/SAT scores, GPA standings, class rank and participation in school and/or community activities.

* The University of Nebraska will notify qualified applicants of their status no later than May 1.

Application for Scott Scholarships should be mailed to:

University of Nebraska Foundation
8712 West Dodge Road, Suite 402
Omaha, NE 68114-3434
Attention: Winnie L. Callahan

For more information, please call: 402-595-2302 (GB)

Cross fencing to improve pasture productivity

Most electric fences around stalk fields have been pulled up and put away for the summer. (In a moment we'll find a use for these fences this summer.)

Electric fence can be the easiest and cheapest way to increase production from your pastures. This could prove to be very valuable if we stay dry. Sub-dividing pastures with electric cross fences helps you control when and where your cattle graze. Cross fencing can help you make cattle graze areas they normally avoid.

It can encourage cattle to graze pastures more uniformly and completely. And, it can help

you improve the health and vigor of your grass by giving it time to rest and regrow after each grazing. As a result, your grass production and pasture carrying capacity will increase.

I'm sure you've seen many ads promoting high-powered, high-tensile, imported electric fencing systems. I encourage using these systems in many situations—I use them myself sometimes. But, cross fences do not need to be permanent, nor do they need to be expensive. This is especially true if you already have electric fencing your animals respect. Using fencing you already have gives

you an inexpensive opportunity to experiment where you might eventually place a more permanent cross fence.

The electric fence that keeps your cows on stalks during the winter, can give you this inexpensive opportunity to try some cross fencing on summer pastures. You have little to lose and so much to gain by cross fencing this way to begin with.

So, use your winter electric fence to experiment with extra cross fencing of your pastures this summer. Better grass, better gains and better profits might be the result. (WS)