

UF/IFAS

Range Cattle Research & Education Center NEWS

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Why Test Your Forage?

by Joe Vendramini, John Arthington, Maria Silveira, and Ann Blount

Forage testing provides useful information about the nutritive value of the forage. This information can be used to adjust the amount and composition of the supplements that are fed with the forage to livestock in order to meet the needs of the animals. Providing the right supplementation not only can decrease cost of supplementation, but also reduce the amount of nutrients imported to the property.

HOW TO COLLECT A SAMPLE

Properly collecting and identifying a sample is very important. A sampling device or tool is needed for collecting hay samples. Several commercial types are available. They usually consist of a tube with a cutting edge on one end and a shank on the other that is fastened in the chuck of an electric drill or hand brace. The sampler is driven into the end of a rectangular bale or the rounded side of the round bale. Collect a single core sample from each of 12 bales for a particular lot of hay. Combine the 12 cores into one sample. This will ensure that the sample is representative. The outer layer of weathered round bales should be pulled away before sampling.

Each hay cutting, type of hay, etc. should be sampled and analyzed separately. Each hay cutting or lot should be identified and stored separately.

Silage samples can be collected from the face of a bunker silo as it is being fed and from the unloader of an upright silo.

Bagged silage can be sampled by cutting small slits along the side of the bag and penetrating the hay sampler to collect the material. Producers must reseal the slit with waterproof tape after collection. Collect silage from 5 or 6 places along the bag, mix well, and extract a small sample to send to the laboratory. Immediately place the sample in a plastic bag and seal it. If not mailed right away, place the sample in a refrigerator or freezer.

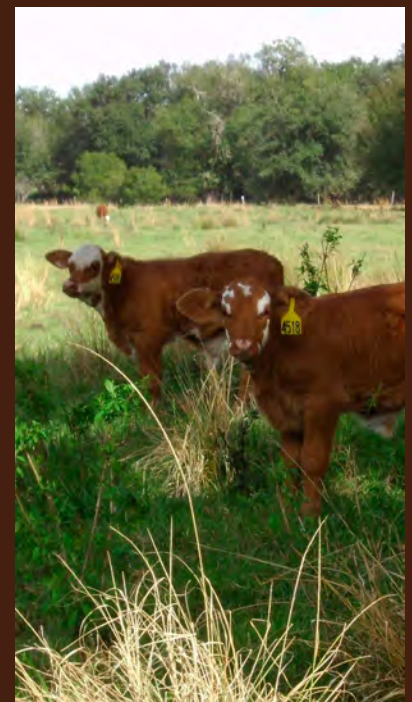
Pastures samples can be collected and analyzed by plucking the forage with your fingers at the height the animals are grazing it. When adequate pasture forage is available, cattle may select better nutritive value forage than what is being sampled by hand plucking. i.e. on limpgrass pastures with good forage availability, cattle can select leaves that have greater nutritive value than samples collected with leaves and stems. In this case, forage testing results may suggest that cattle would respond to protein supplementation, but the animals are consuming adequate amounts of protein from the forage and may not need supplementation.

Scissors or some other cutting device also could be used. If possible, these samples should be dried before sending to the laboratory. If drying is not possible, mail the sample immediately after it is harvested.

Your results are only as good as your sample!

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'Why Test Your Forage?' continued

WHERE TO SEND YOUR SAMPLES AND WHAT RESULTS ARE PROVIDED

The Forage Extension Laboratory is located at the Range Cattle Research and Education Center at Ona, FL and provides forage testing for livestock producers in the state of Florida. The results provided by the Forage Extension Laboratory are crude protein (CP) and total digestible nutrients (TDN). The cost for each sample is \$ 7.00 and forms can be accessed at <http://rcrec-ona.ifas.ufl.edu/agronomy/forage-extension-laboratory.shtml>. Mail your samples, form, and payment to "University of Florida" to: Forage Extension Laboratory, 3401 Experiment Station, Ona, FL 33865. Samples are received daily and results are reported about 2 weeks from the date the sample is received. If you have any questions about the Forage Extension Laboratory, contact Dr. Joe Vendramini, jv@ufl.edu, (863) 735-1314 ext. 205.

For more information about forage sampling, check out the Range Cattle REC Virtual Classroom - <http://rcrec-ona.ifas.ufl.edu/vclassroom.shtml>

This article was previously published in The Florida Cattleman and Livestock Journal, July 2009.



Example of a hay sample with the completed form.



Sample size should be at least enough to fill a sandwich size ziploc bag.



Hay Sample

Meet the Staff



This month we continue to highlight our faculty and staff looking to Dr. Brent Seller's Weed Science Program and his Agriculture Assistant, Joseph Noel. Joseph, a 2007 Hardee Senior High School graduate, is a Wauchula native and has been employed at the Range Cattle REC for 7 years. In his current position, Joseph assists Dr. Sellers in all of the various aspects of his research and extension activities. His duties include assisting with field studies, communications with ranchers about studies and research, spraying plots often using a tractor or ATV, maintaining equipment,

mowing premises, and GPS (In the Weed Science Program, GPS is used for marking corners of studies and to mark individual plants in various studies - individual plants treated under Florida Power Lines and right of ways, that are scattered over 3000 ft.) What Joseph likes the most about his job is being outdoors.

When not at work, Joseph enjoys riding ATVs, spending time with family, and just being outdoors.

Graduate Student News



Congratulations to CALS Graduate Student Julius Adewopo who was recognized at the 19th Annual International Student Award Ceremony. Julius, a Soil and Water Science student, was one of two recipients of the prestigious Alec Courtelis Award for 2013. Julius is a PhD candidate mentored by Dr. Maria Lucia Silveira and Dr. Stefan Gerber.



Congratulations to Andre De-Stefani Aguiar who graduated on Dec. 13! Andre was a PhD Student of Dr. Joao Vendramini and the UF Agronomy Department. We wish Andre much success in his future career.



Family and staff gathered in the breakroom to bid Andre farewell and enjoy pie and coffee before his departure to Gainesville for graduation.

Upcoming Events

2014

*Florida Cattlemen's Institute & Allied Trade Show
- January 16, Arcadia*

*Florida Bull Test Sale
- January 18, Marianna*

*67th Society for Range Management Annual International Meeting
- February 9 - 14, Orlando*

*FCA Legislative Quarterly
- March 11 - 13, Tallahassee
Agenda*

http://www.floridacattlemen.org/d/legislative_quarterly_2014_schedule_12-3-13.pdf

*UF Beef Cattle Short Course
- May 7- 9, Gainesville*



Exchange Visitors



Juliana Galvao Tiradentes Decina, an Exchange Visitor from Brazil, served as an intern from August to November under the supervision of Weed Scientist, Dr. Brent Sellers. Juliana expects to graduate from her home university is Sao Paulo State (UNESP) in December 2013 with her bachelor's degree. There her advisor is Dr. Nubia Maria Correia in the Phytosanitary – Weed Science Department. During her time here, Juliana assisted Dr. Sellers with his various experiments controlling weeds using herbicides and fertilization. When asked about her time at the Center, Juliana said, "I was immensely happy to have had the opportunity to work here and have participated in many experiments. I just want to thank everyone who I had met here for being so generous and kind to me."



Carlos Eduardo Junqueira Ferreira de Lima, an Exchange Visitor from Brazil, served as an intern from July to December 2013 under the supervisor of Soil and Water Scientist, Dr. Maria Silveira. In Brazil, Carlos attends Sao Paulo State University studying pasture under the advisement of Dr. Ricardo Reis. He expects to graduate in January 2014. While here, Carlos collaborated with Dr. Maria Lucia on her experiments related to management and soil conservation grazing.

Recent Publications

Moriel, P., and Arthington, J. D. 2013. Metabolizable protein supply modulated the acute-phase response following vaccination of beef steers. *Journal of Animal Science*. 91:5838-5847.

Silveira, M.L., and O'Connor, G.A. 2013. Temperature effects on phosphorus release from a biosolids-amended soil. *Applied and Environmental Soil Science*, article ID 81715, 8 pages. doi:10.1155/2013/981715.

Silveira, M.L., Vendramini, J.M.B., Sellers, B.A., Monteiro, F.A., Artur, A.G., and Dupas, E. 2013. Bahiagrass response and N leaching from various N fertilizer sources. *Grass and Forage Science*. DOI: 10.1111/gfs.12078

Other News & Announcements

Recently published in Agronomy Notes -

Fencerow weed management

by Extension Weed Specialists Dr. Jason Ferrell and Dr. Brent Sellers

Growing grass for grazing, hay, or both

by Dr. Yoana Newman

See these articles in the October/November issue.

- http://agronomy.ifas.ufl.edu/pdfs/agnotes/2013/Oct_Nov_2013.pdf

Range Management Annual International Meeting -

The theme for the 67th Society for Range Management Annual International Meeting, Technical Training and Trade Show is "From Dusty Trails to Waning Wetlands" to bring drought and water management, a problem we are all so familiar with, to the forefront of the meeting. Throughout the meeting we will have a large diversity of technical sessions, workshops and symposia covering a range of topics from wildlife to fire ecology. This meeting will be held in Orlando, February 9 – 14, 2014.

View Website: <http://rangelands.org/orlando2014/index.html>

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ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

This newsletter is a publication of the UF/IFAS Range Cattle Research and Education Center (RCREC) located in South Central Florida in the heart of Florida's cattle country. Our goal is to keep you up to date on RCREC happenings, publications, research, faculty & student news, upcoming events and bring you beneficial information you can use in your beef cattle or forage operation.

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