



The Fenceline

Doing any fall planting this year? Start planning now to avoid hearing these 5 things on planting day.

1. **"Sorry, we just sold the last bag of that seed you wanted...won't be getting more in till next week."** Begin thinking about what forage species and varieties you will be planting and secure your seed with plenty of time to spare. Remember, anything out of the ordinary will probably be a special order and may take more time to arrive.
2. **"I sure hope you didn't put broadleaf herbicide with the burndown."** Nearly all of our broadleaf herbicides have plantback restrictions. Don't use any broadleaf herbicides with your burndown applications when fall planting grasses or legumes, otherwise you risk injury or death of your new planting. Depending on what herbicides you use and what you are seeding, you may even need to stop using broadleaf sprays 6 months in advance.

3. **"About that drill I said you could borrow today...you can still have it, but its in rougher shape than what I remembered."** Whether you are borrowing a drill, Brillion seeder, or whatever, make sure it is in good working order a couple weeks before you intend to plant. You don't want to be rushing around trying to find parts or fix equipment on the day of planting. Ensure that seed tubes are not stopped up, that discs and coulters are not too worn to do their job, and that seed is placed properly. Remember, the biggest cause of seeding failures with forages is seed placed too deep.
4. **"Look at all these little weeds out here...hopefully my seed comes up fast and shades them out."** Hope as much as you might, the odds are the weeds will win in this scenario. When no-till seeding, you need to ensure you field is clean at the time of planting, which requires planning months in advance. If you are killing a sod or other perennials in the field to be planted into, your first burndown application will likely need to be sometime in mid- to late-July. A follow-up burndown around mid- to late-August will kill any plants that are still hanging on, plus catching new weeds that have germinated. If you are planting into crop stubble, a single, mid- to late-August burndown should be adequate. In addition to having a clean seedbed to plant into, the goal is to have a seedbed where killed plants have fully decomposed and don't interfere with proper seeding depth.
5. **"We should've been out here seeding this 3 weeks ago."** Seeding at the proper time is critical for good seedling establishment. West of the Blue Ridge, alfalfa and perennial cool-season grasses should be seeded by mid- to late-September to guarantee enough time for plant's roots systems, crowns, and leaf area to properly develop and survive the winter. Although we have been experiencing more mild winters in recent years that allow some extra plant growth, our first frost dates have not

changed. Seedlings really need those fall days and nights where temperatures hover in the 60's and 70's to allow them to thrive. So figure out when you want to plant, and work backward from that point in order to plan everything that needs to happen in preparation...though it seems like we are just starting summer, that time is now.



Advance to the Basics

As part of the Virginia Forage and Grassland Council, I've helped to plan their annual Advanced Grazing Schools for several years. I found myself wondering recently what makes an grazing manager "advanced". After giving it some thought, I think the answer is pretty boring and unextraordinary. It doesn't involve an academic mastery of plant physiology, or a chemist's mastery of soil fertility, or even more than a passing understanding of ruminant nutrition. Certainly education is important, and without me being able to convince you of that, I'd be out of a job! But I think an advanced grazing manager is simply

someone who consistently applies the basics. Understanding why and how pastures respond in certain ways to grazing is important, but its probably more important just to be observant and take action when your grass is not growing like it should or if your livestock are not performing like they should. The basic, fundamental concepts of grazing management are all you need to make this happen, and if you apply them over and over again to every situation on your farm, you will find yourself in that "advanced grazing manager" category. What are those basic fundamental principles?

PRINCIPLES OF GRAZING MANAGEMENT

1. Match stocking rate to your land's carrying capacity to reduce hay feeding
2. Manage nutrients to ensure healthy and productive pastures
3. Evaluate pasture condition and manage for desirable and productive forage species
4. Manage grazing height to ensure enough leaf area for optimum regrowth
5. Adjust forage rest period as pasture growth changes
6. Use high stock density and short grazing periods to improve pasture utilization

Horsenettle Control

Horsenettle is a thorny perennial that sprouts from spreading roots or rhizomes (underground stems). I know we are starting to see horsenettle out there now, but holding off until early-flowering will give the best control. West of the Blue Ridge that probably means July or even August.



There are multiple options for good control on horsenettle. Here are just a couple examples...one residual option and one non-residual (permitted for hay that will be sold) option.

Example applications:

<u>Per acre</u>	<u>Per gallon of water (spot treatment)</u>
2.1 pints GrazonNext HL 8 oz non-ionic surfactant	13 mL (1/2 oz) GrazonNext HL 9.5 mL (1/3 oz) non-ionic surfactant
<u>Per acre</u>	<u>Per gallon of water (spot treatment)</u>
1 pint Remedy Ultra 3 pints 2, 4-D ester 8 oz non-ionic surfactant	6.25 mL (1/4 oz) Remedy Ultra 19 mL (2/3 oz) 2,4-D ester 9.5 mL (1/3 oz) non-ionic surfactant

Questions? Feel free to contact me.

Matt Booher, *Extension agent--Rockingham County*

540-564-3080 (office)

540-325-7503 (cell)

mrbooher@vt.edu