



Forage Management Calendar (East and South-Central Texas)

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January:

- Limit graze winter pastures and standing hay as needed. **NOTE:** do not over graze as this is the month when very little growth will occur due to cold temperatures.
- Continue planning for planting of summer pastures and chemical weed and brush control program for summer months.
- Continue feeding supplemental hay and concentrates. They will be needed.

February:

- Pull soil samples for soil test drive and take advantage of any ½ price specials on meadows and pasture land. Some counties offer this opportunity, but not all.
- When warm-up occurs, top-dress winter pastures with additional 50-60 lbs Nitrogen per acre.
- You can begin to increase grazing density on winter pastures as warm-up begins.
- Continue feeding hay to slow down green grass passing through the cattle so it can be better digested and tighten their bowels.
- Make final arrangements for planting improved Bermuda-grass pastures during the spring.
- Plan Spring/Summer forage grazing program.

March:

- Plan fertilizer needs as per soil test recommendations. **NOTE: do not apply fertilizer to warm season forages until AFTER you have had 5 consecutive nights with low temperatures in the 60's,** or you will only be fertilizing the early spring weeds.
- Begin planting improved Bermuda-grass pastures (except for Tifton-85 Bermuda).
- Plan rotational grazing program.
- Continue feeding hay as described above.

April:

- Concentrate cattle on smaller winter pastures and harvest excess forage production for hay as needed and as weather permits. Winter forages make excellent, high quality hay when harvested as they begin to “boot” or seed.
- Store hay high and dry to reduce losses.
- Rotate cattle into fields just harvested for hay to clean up left over forages.
- Continue feeding hay as described above. Consumption should be reduced, but still needed to keep bowels tightened.
- Finish planting improved Bermuda-grass pastures and apply herbicides for pre-emergent weed control.
- Begin weed control program with herbicides and integrated pest management practices for established warm-season forages.
- Follow year-round grazing program to reduce need for large amounts of hay.
- Begin planting Tifton-85 Bermuda-grass with it has 6 green joints. This usually occurs in late April to early-May.
- Begin fertilization of warm season forages when night-time low temps reach 60 degrees for 5 consecutive nights.

May:

- Follow chemical weed control program to reduce competition for soil nutrients and later chemical and fuel expenses. Chemical control is cheaper than mowing.
- Follow soil fertility program as per soil test recommendations for grazing and/or hay production.
- Harvest improved Bermuda-grasses at 28 days for highest quality, and to reduce supplementation expenses next winter.
- Continue rotational grazing to prevent over-grazing any particular pasture.

June-July-August:

- Follow soil fertility program as per soil test recommendations.
- If not on year-round grazing program, continue to harvest hay as needed.
Remember: Quality is more important than quantity.
- Better yet, purchase high quality hay from a reputable source, and graze your land. This way you are buying someone else’s nutrients and adding 90 % of them to your soil as they pass through the animal in the form of feces and urea.
- Store hay high and dry to reduce losses. **Barn stored hay will last indefinitely with very little loss of quality.**

September:

- Harvest late-fall crop of hay (if not on year-round grazing schedule).
- Apply fall fertilizer (as per soil test recommendations) to stockpile standing hay crop for winter grazing
- Begin planting cool season pastures in mid to late September (oats, rye, winter wheat, ryegrass and/or legumes). ($\frac{1}{2}$ acre per cow with prepared seedbed, or $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ of the pasture area for sod seeding should be sufficient).
- Submit samples of hay crop(s) harvested or purchased during the year for chemical analysis to determine feed value for winter feeding and supplementation planning.
- Good time to pray for rain!

October:

- Continue late fall hay harvest (if needed).
- Finish planting winter cover crops.
- If winter cover crops are up and growing – top-dress with 50 pounds Nitrogen fertilizer per acre (except where legumes were planted).
- Discontinue grazing of Johnson grass **for at least 48 hours after first frost** to reduce hazard of prussic acid poisoning.

November:

- Winter cover crops **not** fertilized in October – top-dress with 50 lbs Nitrogen per acre (do not re-apply to winter pastures already fertilized).
- When winter cover crops are at least 4 inches tall – begin limited grazing for protein supplementation as quality and economic conditions dictate.
- After first frost – begin grazing stockpiled hay crop.
- If winter pasture is not available, supplement cattle with hay and concentrates as needed (especially after killing frost or when standing forage quantity and quality are low).

December:

- Any winter pastures not fertilized in October or November – top-dress with 50 lbs Nitrogen per acre (do not re-apply to winter pastures already fertilized).
- Limit-graze winter pastures and standing hay as needed (one hour per day is adequate to meet the animals protein requirements).
- Begin planning for planting improved Bermuda-grass pastures and chemical weed and brush control program for summer pastures.
- Continue feeding supplemental hay and concentrate as needed.