



GRASSROOTS

DR ALEXANDER "SANDY" SMART, INTERIM-EDITOR • SDSU • BOX 2170 • BROOKINGS, SD 57007 • alexander.smart@sdstate.edu • (605)-688-4017

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 2

APRIL 2007

Board of Directors

Lavern Koch, Chair

16746 227th Street
New Underwood, SD 57761
(605) 754-6718

James Faulstich, Vice Chair

33795 186th Street
Highmore, SD 57345
(605) 852-2622

Ellen Reddick, Secretary/Treasurer

1611 Reddick Lane
Saint Onge, SD 57779
(605) 642-3272

Mark Kieffer

13605 Neckyoke Road
Rapid City, SD 57701
(605) 341-1267

Lyle Perman

30872 143rd Street
Lowry, SD 57472
(605) 649-7629

Dan Rasmussen

26151 Cedar Butte Rd.
Belvidere, SD 57521
(605) 344-2250

Larry Wagner

26314 350th Avenue
Chamberlain, SD 57325
(605) 894-4448

Happenings

The South Dakota Grassland Coalition (SDGLC) has an ambitious schedule planned for this year. We have received funding through the South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources nonpoint source pollution grant to provide grazing planning assistance for the next 2 ½ years. Judge Jessop and Leroy Ness will provide the technical assistance. Cost share on fencing and pipeline supplies is available. In addition, two new riparian demonstration projects are planned for Moody County in the east and Pennington County in the west. We will collect vegetation and water quality data to verify that alternative water sources improve vegetation and water quality. In addition, we plan on collecting calf weaning weights to test how alternative livestock watering systems can result in better animal performance. We are still collecting data on the Managed Intensive Grazing demonstration sites at Faulstich's and Sip's ranches. Summer pasture tours are also being planned for both eastern and western South Dakota.

New Outreach Coordinator

The Department of Animal and Range Sciences at SDSU is pleased to announce that Janna Kincheloe has accepted the position of Range Outreach Coordinator. Janna is originally from Melstone, Montana. She has a bachelors degree in Ag Business and a minor in Animal Science from Montana State University. She also has an M.S. degree in Animal Science from Montana State University, where she studied supplement intake variation in grazing beef cows. Janna has been working for Montana Extension for 3 years and comes well prepared to assist the SDGLC and SDSU in extension programming.

For more information or other events the **SOUTH DAKOTA GRASSLAND COALITION** is involved with, please feel free to contact Sandy Smart or visit the website: <http://sdgrass.org>.

In this Issue...

**A PEEK AT THE ORGANIC
GRASSFED BEEF COALITION**

ORGANIC GRASSFED BEEF SUMMIT

GRASSLAND BIRD TOUR

**ANIMAL GRAZING BEHAVIOR
WORKSHOP**

ANNUAL TOUR

FERTILIZING PASTURES

RECOVERING FROM WILDFIRE

A Peek at the Organic Grassfed Beef Coalition

The Organic Grassfed Beef Coalition (OGBC) started in 2005 to assist producers in the production and marketing of organic grassfed cattle in the Northern Plains. Their Board of Directors is made up of organic producers. Advisors to OGBC include diverse specialists in marketing, extension, holistic management, conservation, and production. Angela Jackson, Acting Executive Director and President of the Board, and her husband operate a small organic grassfed beef operation near Akron, IA. Angela is currently pursuing a doctorate in education at the University of South Dakota with an emphasis in organizational leadership and information diffusion.

The key to the organic grassfed market is to build a supply that can meet a year round demand. The goal of OGBC is to provide education and hands-on training to producers who want to make the transition to organic. The primary focus is to connect producers to a premium market.

Educational opportunities include seminars, field days, and demonstration projects. Topics focus on organic program standards, regulations, cattle genetics, forage chains, and marketing.

One-on-one consultation is available for free. Grants and membership fees help offset the costs of educational/consulting programming.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the OGBC or would like more information, please visit their website at:

www.organicgrassfedbeef.org/.

Organic Grassfed Beef Summit

The OGBC, SDGLC, and SDSU Extension are sponsoring a seminar on organic grassfed beef on April 19th from 3-6 pm at the Swiftel Center in Brookings. There is no registration fee, and supper featuring organic produced beef and vegetables will be provided.

Speakers will include Ann Wells, DVM, Allen Williams, Ph.D, and Cody Wright, Ph.D.

Come and join us for this interesting and growing opportunity for beef operations.

Grassland Bird Tour

The SDGLC is sponsoring "Birds at Home on the Range: Bird Watching Tour" June 8-9, 2007 in the Black Hills. This two-day event will be centered out of Rapid City and tour the ranches of Mark Kieffer and Ellen Reddick.

Folks will have the opportunity to view and photograph birds with knowledgeable guides. Presentations will be made by each rancher discussing their philosophy of cattle management and wildlife.

Cost to participate is \$15 per person for the two-day tour. Lodging is not included in the registration fee. The tour will include 2 lunches, a barbeque supper, and bus travel transportation from the Best Western Ramkota Hotel (605-343-8550), 2111 N. Lacrosse St in Rapid City. A block of rooms has been reserved at the Ramkota. Reservations need to be made by May 18 to receive the group discount rate.

Space is limited to 85 participants. Contact Judge Jessup at 605-895-2301 to register, or you can visit www.sdgrass.org to download the registration form and see the itinerary.

Animal Grazing Behavior: Understanding and Managing Livestock, Wildlife, Plants, Soils, and People Dr. Fred Provenza

NDSU Hettinger Research and Extension Center is sponsoring a two-day event with Dr. Fred Provenza from Utah State University.

Dr. Fred Provenza, world renowned animal behavior

specialist, will present information on how animals select and manipulate habitats. He will show how we learn to use grazing behavior as a tool to manage sensitive riparian areas, control weeds, and enhance biodiversity.

The event will be held at the Prairie Knights Casino & Resort in Fort Yates, ND. Contact Chris Schaurer at 701-567-4323. Registration must be made by April 24th and is free. Lodging is available at the resort for \$45/night (1-800-425-8277).

**Annual Tour
Bill Slovek Ranch**

The Annual Bus tour, minus the bus, will be held at Bill Slovek’s Ranch northwest of Philip on July 18th. Bill Slovek received the Excellence in Range Management Award from the SD Section for SRM last fall and went on to win the international award this past February in Reno, NV at the 60th Annual SRM meeting.

Fertilizing Pastures

In eastern SD, where moisture is more abundant, fertilizing smooth bromegrass pastures with nitrogen, either commercial or manure, can be an economical way to increase forage production. A two year study in Hamlin County showed that 45 to 90 lbs of nitrogen gave optimal

forage and economic returns (Figure 1).

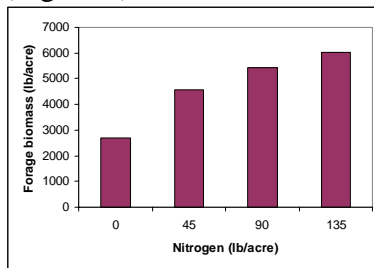


Fig. 1. Forage production (lb/ac) in response to nitrogen (A. Smart and R. Smith).

If nitrogen goes to \$0.50/lb or higher, high fertilization rates are not recommended, because the added forage production from 45 to 90 lbs of nitrogen does not increase production enough to justify the expense.

Recovering from Wildfire

Last year’s wildfires caused loss of potential grazable forage, destroyed fences, and depleted valuable wildlife cover. A question on the minds of many ranchers is: “How will these pastures recover next year?” Answering this question and making adjustments in your grazing plans are essential to good pasture recovery.

In 2006, SDSU monitored forage production one year after a late summer wildfire that spread across the Faulstich managed intensive grazing demonstration site, burning up about a quarter of the pasture. We clipped forage biomass from burned and unburned portions of the pasture in May, June, and

July. We separated the green biomass and litter portions of the sample, and the results are shown in Figure 2.

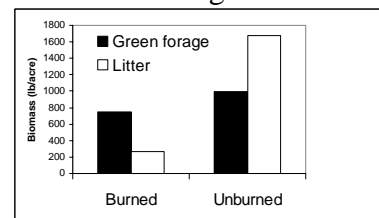


Figure 2. Average green forage production and litter during summer 2006 at the Faulstich demonstration site near Highmore, SD.

As you can see in Figure 2, green forage production was reduced by 25% in the burned area compared to the unburned area. Since 2006 was significantly dry, the forage production in the unburned area was quite low compared to the 6-year average (2000-2005) of 2500 lb/acre. The protective litter was 6 times greater in the unburned site. This was reflective in the soil temperatures at the half-inch and 2-inch depths, which averaged about 4.5°F higher in the burned area. These data suggest that the stocking rate, at the very minimum, should be reduced by 25% to reduce the risk of overgrazing. Also, providing a spring deferment (turnout after July 1) could help plants recover. It is apparent from this example, that a wildfire followed by a dry spring, limited forage production. What needs to be studied is the impact of a wildfire followed by a normal or wet spring.



Sandy Smart
Box 2170, ASC 219, SDSU
Brookings, SD 57007

Calendar of events:

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Person</u>	<u>Phone No.</u>
Organic Grassfed Beef Summit	April 19	Brookings	Angela Jackson	605-638-0748
Animal Grazing Behavior Fred Provenza	May 1-2	Fort Yates, ND	Chris Schauer	701-567-4323
Grassland Bird Tour	June 7-8	Rapid City	Judge Jessup	605-895-2301
Annual Bus Tour Bill Slovek Ranch	July 18	Philip	Tate Lantz	605-347-4952

Please remit any comments, suggestions, or topics deemed necessary for further review to: Sandy Smart, SDSU Box 2170, Brookings SD 57007, alexander.smart@sdstate.edu, (605) 688-4017