

Forage Focus



Tim Schnakenberg

Agronomy Field Specialist

University of Missouri Extension; Stone County Extension Center

P.O. Box 345, 108 E. Fourth St., 2nd Floor Courthouse, Galena, MO 65656

417-357-6812 (Office); 417-357-8442 (fax)

schnakenbergc@missouri.edu (email) <http://extension.missouri.edu/stone> (website)

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Upcoming Programs for Your Calendar

January 23—Winter Dairy Day, 10:00 a.m., St. Peter's Evangelical United Church of Christ, Billings (see attached flyer)

January 24—Barry County Soils and Crops Conference, 6:00 p.m., First Christian Church, Cassville (see attached flyer to register and for topics)

January 30—Ammoniated Hay Demonstration Workshop, 1:00 p.m. Southwest Research Center, Mt. Vernon (call 417-466-3102 for information)

February 7—Stone County Livestock and Forage Conference, 6:00 p.m., First Baptist Church, Crane (Flyer soon available; Topics—Current Research Recommendations for Tall Fescue; Calculating the Cost of Beef Production; Call 417-357-6812 to register)

February 12—Beef Cattlemen's Conference, 3:30 p.m., Monett National Guard Armory, Monett (see attached flyer)

February 19—Taney County Livestock and Forage Conference, 6:00 p.m., Forsyth High School, Forsyth. (Flyer soon available; Topics—Fetal Programming; Pasture Rental Rates, Taking Your Forage to the Next Level; call 417-546-4431 to register)

February 21—Regional Hay School, daytime, Lamar (Call 417-682-3579 for information and to register)

February 26—Spring Forage Conference, 9:00 a.m.— 3:00 p.m., Ramada Oasis Convention Center, Springfield (New Location—See attached flyer)

March 5, 12—More Grass on Fewer Acres, 6:30 p.m. each night, Louisburg (call 417-745-6767 for details)

March 7—Greene County Ag Production Conference, Livestock Marketing Center, Springfield (details coming soon)

March 8—Preventing and Responding to Disease Outbreak Workshop—10:00 a.m., Livestock Marketing Center, Springfield (see attached flyer)

March 18—Novel Tall Fescue Workshop, 8:30 a.m., Southwest Research Center, Mt. Vernon (see flyer attached)

March 21—Christian County Livestock and Forage Conference, Clever High School (details coming soon)

May 18—Missouri Pesticide Collection Event, 8:00 a.m.-Noon, Southwest Research Center, Mt. Vernon

Limiting Broomsedge—Lime or Phosphorus?

Broomsedge (often called "sagegrass") has been a steadily growing problem in Southwest Missouri pastures for many years. I receive calls on how to deal with the problem nearly every month. Broomsedge is a

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native, perennial warm-season grass that is found throughout Missouri. Even though it is a native species, it has a reputation for low quality and having an invasive nature. There is a common belief that broomsedge in a field means it needs lime. That belief was put to the test several years ago in an MU research project.

A study was conducted by Dr. Dale Blevins, et al, during 2005-2008 at the Southwest Center in Mt. Vernon to determine the effect of lime or phosphorus (P) on a broomsedge population in a tall fescue stand of grass (soil test level = pH—4.6; 6 lb/a Bray 1 P). The treatments included: 1.) liming; 2.) P fertilization, and; 3.) liming plus P fertilization. Lime was applied at 0X, 0.5X, 1X and 2X the soil test recommendation (0-7.3 tons of lime/acre). Plots were treated with 0 or 50 lbs P/acre. Plant counts of fescue and broomsedge were estimated over the time-span. The following observations were found after three years:

- Without P fertilization, broomsedge doubled.
- P fertilization effectively maintained broomsedge at the initial level.
- P treatments doubled the tall fescue count, but without P, tall fescue counts remained at the initial level.
- Broomsedge increased nearly threefold without lime.
- Tall fescue more than doubled with the two highest lime treatments.
- The no lime treatment resulted in no increase in tall fescue.
- Lime and P combined limited broomsedge increase to the greatest degree and produced the greatest increase in tall fescue. It is believed that the fescue outcompeted with the existing broomsedge.



Photo from an older Southwest Center study in Mt. Vernon where phosphate fertilizer was not applied (left) and where it was applied according to the soil test recommendation (right) for three years. Soil tests levels on the right moved from 6 to 30 lb/a P in three years. The entire field received the same rate of nitrogen and potash. The broomsedge population clearly was reduced by phosphate applications. This observation by Ryan Lock in 2002 prompted the research done by Dr. Blevins.

It's clear from this study that both lime and P can be very useful in limiting broomsedge in fields. Both independently have an effect, but together, they can help in a fescue stand to compete with broomsedge. I caution you to exercise patience in the process. It can take some time. Unfortunately, I am not aware of a "silver-bullet" spray that will immediately eliminate the problem in a fescue stand. If the problem persists, a full renovation of the stand may be in order. A copy of the peer reviewed research report from Crop, Forage and Turfgrass Management is available if more information is needed.

Private Applicator Training Sessions Announced

If you need a Private Applicator license or a renewal, you are welcome to attend any of these sessions. The cost is \$25 per person. The training will last 2.5-3 hours. You must be an agricultural producer and 18 years or older to receive a license. (A flyer with more information is attached)

February 8—1:00 p.m., Stone County Library, Galena (call 417-357-6812 for information)

February 11—6:00 p.m., Southwest Center, Mt. Vernon (call 417-466-3102 for information)

February 15—1:00 p.m., Greene County Botanical Center, Springfield (call 417-881-8909 ext. 42953 to register or go online to <http://extension.missouri.edu/greene>)

February 27—8:30 a.m., First Baptist Church, Clever (call 417-581-3558 for information)

February 28—1:00 p.m., Barry County Courthouse, Cassville (call 417-847-3161 to register)

February 28—5:30 p.m., Cassville High School Vo-Ag Dept, Cassville (call 417-847-3161 to register—meal provided)

March 11—1:00 p.m., Taneyville Municipal Building, Taneyville (call 417-546-4431 for information)