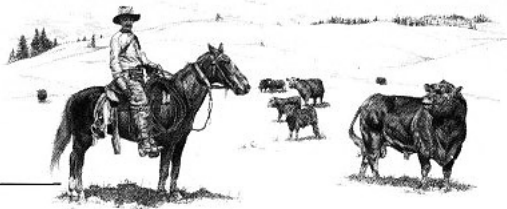


The Grazier



Cattle Can Spread Endophyte Infected Fescue

by John Jennings
Missouri Extension Agronomist

For several years I've heard people talk about the spread of fescue into other fields and their concerns of keeping endophyte-free fescue fields free of the endophyte. Recent research in Alabama sheds some light on this problem and may help you keep your other fields free of endophyte infected fescue.

Research has shown that endophyte fungus in tall fescue is spread only by seed. This means that if no infected seed is ever introduced into an endophyte-free field that field should remain endophyte free.

Scientists at the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station recently reported that the level of endophyte has increased slowly in some of their experimental pastures. They found an increase of 2 percent per year over a monitored period of three to four years. They also found some endophyte appearing in fields that were originally fungus free. Research has documented that fescue plants infected with the endophyte are tougher and survive better than non-infected plants, yet this doesn't account for the appearance of endophyte in an originally endophyte-free field.

This prompted the Alabama scientists to ask the question, "can cattle grazing infected fescue pass viable fungus infected seed in the manure?" They designed a study in which they fed 7 pounds of fungus infected seed (90 percent infection) to a steer and collected the manure over a 168-hour period. Twelve percent of the live seeds fed to the steer were viable seeds in the manure. These seeds germinated and grew vigorously. Passage of live seed peaked at 22 hours and the last live seed was collected at 48 hours. The infection rate of the viable seed passed was 78 percent as compared to 90 percent in the original seed fed to the steer.

This study suggests that cattle shouldn't be allowed to eat infected seed in either pasture or hay since they can pass infected seed into non-infected fields. If cattle do eat infected seed the Alabama researchers recommend feeding a diet free from infected seed for at least 48 hours before moving them to an endophyte-free field. These findings suggest that even though spreading the endo-

phyte by cattle is slow it can lead to significant infection levels in endophyte-free fields over a period of time.

Endophyte infected seed can also be spread by haying equipment when fields are allowed to become too mature before harvest. If you do have endophyte-free fields, whether they are fescue, alfalfa, orchardgrass, or warm season grass, take extra precautions to keep them endophyte free. Clean that hay equipment before moving into the field. Keep cattle from grazing in clean fields for at least 48 hours after they have eaten infected seed, and above all, don't feed infected fescue hay containing viable seed in an endophyte-free field.

It's hard to prevent the spread of endophyte infected fescue into clean fescue fields, but it is impossible to eliminate it after it gets there without destroying the entire field. Keep that in mind this year as you harvest your fescue hay and seed.

New Products

Franklin Hay Bale Feeder

A new, heavyweight, large hay bale feeder, designed to offer more headroom for large livestock, has recently been in-



troduced by Franklin Equipment Inc., Monticello, Iowa.

The Franklin Brahma is easy to assemble. It features a galvanized skirt, a powder-coated non-toxic finish, heavy-duty half-inch bolts and lock nuts, and 18 x 28 3/4 diagonal feeder openings. The 222-pound unit has a large inside diameter of 8 feet and measures 52 inches high. The Brahma carries a one-year warranty on workmanship.

"Paper Pouncer" Helps Farmers

A compact, easy-to-tote clipboard on a box may be the answer to many farmers'

costly problems with lost or strayed receipts and records.

"We're coming up on the time of the year when many operators wish they'd kept a better grip on vital papers for year-end records and tax returns," says Ann Jorgensen, president of Farm Home Offices in Vinton, Iowa.

Jorgensen says farmers are finding valuable new uses for the "Paper Pouncer" recordkeeper offered through the farm. "Salesmen calling on farmers have sworn by these little metal boxes with clipboard for years," says Jorgensen. "But now, the farmers are taking them over to fill their own special needs..."

Jorgensen says farmers now carry the rugged aluminum record holders in their pickups, tractor and combine cabs, and even on portable grinder-mixers.

"Farmers are more interested than ever in keeping track of their production costs, field planting records, and livestock feed efficiency," notes Jorgensen. "That means hanging on to countless pieces of paper in all shapes and sizes every day. With these little wind-and-rain-proof boxes, they can do that. It becomes habit-forming."

The aluminum clipboard boxes come in various sizes. Prices range from \$19.95 to \$24.95. Available from Farm Home Offices, PO Box 840, Vinton, Iowa 52349; (319) 369-9108 24 hours a day.

Voltage Surge Suppressor

Kalglo Electronics Co. Inc. is pleased to announce the introduction of a new model voltage surge and AC power-line noise filter designed to protect the electronics on today's farms. Designated the AG series, it is the same technology used to protect computers.

The AG series, when hard-wired into the branch circuit, will filter out dangerous voltage spikes and noise caused by "dirty" AC power, heavy equipment, motors and lightning. Each unit comes with status lights to indicate the condition of the AC power.

For more information, please write or call: Kalglo Electronics Co. Inc., Colony Drive Industrial Park, 6584 Ruch Road - E. Allen Twp., Bethlehem, PA 18017-9359; (215) 837-0700