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Small
Grains
NEWS
May 2022

Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.

Denny Blowers of Motley, MN operates a diversified crop and livestock farm with his family. He raises 175 beef cattle and his son manages a flock of 200 ewes. To provide a diversity of forage options for their livestock they grow oats, barley, winter rye, peas, corn and summer cover crop forage mixes.



Harvest methods: Denny's priority is to graze as much as possible: "If we don't need to harvest a crop as feed, we will plan to graze it," says Denny. He tries to cell- or paddock-graze the cattle and sheep, moving the animals every 3 days to once a week. When they do harvest a crop of small grains, they make baleage or haylage. "We are trying cereal grains to make better haylage for the beef and maybe the sheep, if it works," notes Denny. Their goal is to increase protein with the peas and barley and use oats to stretch the feed.

Cover crops following small grains: After small grains harvest Denny and his son cultivate to two inches, then drill a diverse cover crop mix of 20 or more species, including sorghum, turnip and sunflowers, to name a few. This mix ensures plenty of forage over the next couple of months.

PROGRAM UPDATES

June 3: Join us from your tractor to talk about alfalfa establishment alongside small grains

Friday, June 3 | Noon - 1 p.m. CDT

Zoom or call-in

Harvesting diverse forages can bring added value to any farmer with livestock. While alfalfa is a tried-and-tested forage for many - bringing small grains into the mix can enhance alfalfa establishment and provide more crop diversity.



On June 3, we will hear from conservation-minded field crop and livestock farmer **Jason Russell** of Monticello, Iowa. Jason currently raises cattle, sheep, pigs, corn and diverse forage mixes. He'll share his experiences seeding alfalfa with a variety of small grains, how alfalfa fits into his rotations, his harvesting methods and more.

After registering, you will immediately receive a confirmation email with the join link and call-in number.

Be sure to get our monthly reminders for the next call! [Sign up here](#).

Conventional oat market in Nebraska, Iowa and Wisconsin



Market alert! Hansen Mueller is currently contracting conventional oats delivered to their facilities in Sioux City, Iowa; Lincoln, Nebraska; and Superior, Wisconsin.

Worried about making test weight requirements? This year the company is piloting an "as-is test weight bid" where they will accept oats of **any** test weight at a 10 cent/bu discount to their standard 38 lb/bu bid.

[Check out their current bids here](#) and contact Jeremy Davenport with any questions (402-951-2195, jeremy@hansenmueller.com).

Check out the full line-up of PFI field days!

If you've been eagerly awaiting the field day line-up, wait no more! Pick your favorites on the [PFI website](#) while you watch the mailbox for the arrival of the print guide, coming soon!



There are plenty of small grains-centric field days covering topics like oat production, organic small grains production, and grazing. **Don't forget to RSVP for your top picks!**

Kick things off at [PFI's field day season social](#) on June 6 at the PFI office in Ames.

IN THE FIELD

Maximizing forage production



Thinking of trying forage options outside of alfalfa and corn?

[This 2020 blog post](#) walks through characteristic traits of different forage options with farmer **Daniel Olsen**. Read up on a variety of warm season annuals and glean a few ideas on adding cool season annuals in rotation.

Feeding rye to cattle



Watch this [2017 farminar](#) following the experiences of **Jim Larson** and **Pat Jones** as they harvest rye for rielage to feed their beef and dairy cattle.

They discussed their methods for harvesting, storing, and feeding the rielage.

Benefits of small grains for livestock

Check out [this 2019 magazine article](#) that delves into the nutrient value of oats, barley, wheat, rye and



triticale. Learn how to include these small grains in feed for cattle, pigs, and poultry.

This article also addresses the balancing of rotations, economics, grain testing and selection for small grain as a feed source.

Additional resources:

- Article on [Estimating first crop alfalfa harvest using PEAQ](#)
- Blog series on [Feeding Small Grains to Pigs](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

All times listed are Central Daylight Time

June 2,9,16 & 23: Workshop - Advanced Grain Marketing for Women

*Hosted by: Union County Extension
and Outreach
6-9 p.m. | Creston, Iowa*

June 6: Field Day - Stacking profits with soil health

*Hosted by: Continuum Ag
8 a.m.-8 p.m. | Washington, Iowa*

June 11: Field Day - The Rookie Season of Roller-Crimping

*Hosted by: Practical Farmers of Iowa,
Fred Abels & Vicki Abels
11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. | Holland, IA*

June 18: Panel - Kernza Fest

*Hosted by: Lake Pepin Legacy Alliance
10 a.m.-6 p.m. | Lake City, MN*

[More upcoming events](#)

STRAW POLL

What is the primary way you feed small grains to livestock?

Grazing

Select

Grain

Select

Haylage

Select

Baleage

Select

N/A, I don't have livestock

Select

Previous poll results:

How much Nitrogen have you been able to cut from corn in extended rotations?

- **10-20 lbs of N per acre (28.6%)**
- **20-50 lbs of N per acre (28.6%)**
- **Over 100 lbs of N per acre (28.6%)**
- 50-100 lbs of N per acre (14.3%)
- Not sure yet, I haven't made a cut before (0%)
- N/A, I don't have corn in extended rotations (0%)

Send us your straw poll ideas! We want to know what YOU want to know. Reply to this email with your ideas for the next poll.

STAY CONNECTED



Looking for more? Contact us today!

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