The Switchgrass Story

Presented by
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LOOK AT OUR RESOURCES AND IDENTIFY GAPS
SIGNIFICANT GAP:
LACK OF FORAGE DURING SUMMER SLUMP & DROUGHT, CAUSING US TO FEED HAY RESERVES OR GRAIN

SOLUTION:
CONVERT ~ 15% OF PASTURE TO WARM SEASON GRASS (SPECIFICALLY, SWITCHGRASS)
WARM SEASON SWITCHGRASS

THE TRUAX® DRILL

May, 1994
WARM SEASON SWITCHGRASS

May, 1994

DRILL PLANTING IN SPRAYED FIELD
SPECTRUM FARM

WARM SEASON SWITCHGRASS

June, 1994

LONG WAIT TO GERMINATE!

July 4, 1994 - The First Sprouts!
WARM SEASON SWITCHGRASS

SUMMER, 1994 – SPRING, 1995
WARM SEASON SWITCHGRASS

YEAR TWO

Good Growth Despite Lots of Competition
WARM SEASON SWITCHGRASS

YEAR THREE

Cattle Graze to Suggested Height of Stubble
WARM SEASON SWITCHGRASS

YEARS THREE - FOUR

Drill Rows Still Visible

Very Even Stubble Height
WARM SEASON SWITCHGRASS

YEARS FOUR - FIVE

Stubble from Last Summer

Sprout Emerging

New Growth
WARM SEASON SWITCHGRASS TIMELINE

- Autumn Year #1: Apply lime to s/g field
- Jan-Feb Year #2: Allow lime to work in soil
- Mar-Apr Year #2: Graze c/s in s/g field to reduce competition
- May Year #2: Kill back c/s in s/g & plant s/g
- Jun Year #2: Watch for s/g germination
- Jul-Aug Year #2: Allow s/g to grow; graze 30 days; mow weeds high; Allow s/g field to rest
- Sep-Oct Year #2: Graze c/s in s/g field to reduce competition
- Nov Year #2 - Mar Year #3: Watch s/g for sprouts

- Mar Year #3: Remove cattle from s/g; allow s/g to grow; Graze s/g; mow weeds high as needed
- Apr-May Year #3: Remove cattle from s/g; allow s/g to grow; mow weeds high
- May Year #3: Graze c/s in s/g field
- Jul-Aug Year #3: Graze; mow weeds high as needed
- Sep Year #3: Remove cattle from s/g; allow s/g to rest; mow weeds high as needed

- Nov Year #3 - Mar Year #4: Repeat cycle from Year #3
RESULTS:
CATTLE HAVE EXCELLENT FORAGE IN THE WORST OF SUMMER HEAT & DROUGHT, AS WE ROTATIONALLY GRAZE THROUGH THE SWITCHGRASS

USE ROTATIONAL GRAZING TO CONTROL C/S COMPETITION IN S/G BY EARLY PRE-S/G EMERGENCE GRAZING & BY POST-FROST C/S GRAZING WITHIN THE S/G FIELD