**WHAT TO DO WITH DAMAGED WINTER PASTURES:**

**By Ralph E. Crawford; District Conservationist, NRCS**

Feeding livestock this winter definitely had its challenges for man and animals alike.  Physical and psychological aptitude and outlook has even challenged the most savvy and prepared managers. Pastures were damaged from equipment compaction and ruts and livestock traffic and devits. Severity of bare areas and un-even ground can range from severe to light and can cover the entire pasture area or restricted use feeding area or paddock pending on animal access. Recovery of some areas may involve totally reseeding to some leveling by a Harrogator or drag to get those area back in shape. Ruts may need use of a grader blade to properly fix. Pending on the situation seed can be no-tilled, conventionally drilled or broadcast. Seeding specie and rates can vary based on fertility or severity of use. Since most areas that winter feeding livestock was done on,  one would suspect higher fertility soils and simply re-seed Ky 31 tall fescue that would be best for these high traffic areas. Seeding days for southern Ohio in the spring are 3/1-5/1.  Below are some Specie selections based on fertility and seeding rates:

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**Section 2 - Table 1: Seeding Rates of Pure Live Seed (PLS) for Forages Grown in Ohio**

(Source OSU Bulletin 472 - Ohio Agronomy Guide 14th Edition)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Seeds/lb** | **Pure Stand Seeding Rate/2A,/2B** | | /**1**  **Proportional Seeding Rates for Mixtures** | | | | |
| **3/4** | **1/2** | **1/3** | **1/4** | **1/8** |
| /1  **Species (x 1000)** | | **(seeds/ft2)** | **(lb/A) lb/A** | | | | | |
| **/1**  **Perennial Legumes** | | | | | | | | |
| Alfalfa | 227 | 80 | 15 | 12 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 2 |
| Alsike clover | 700 | 150 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Birdsfoot trefoil | 375 | 80 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Lespedeza, Sericea **/I3 / 4** | 350 | 160 | 20 | 15 | 10 | 7 | 5 | 2.5 |
| Kura clover | 227 | 30 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1.5 | 1 |
| Red clover | 275 | 70 | 11 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 1.5 |
| White clover | 860 | 100 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0.5 |
| **Perennial Grasses and Forbs** | | | | | | | | |
| Festulolium | 227 | 130 | 25 | 19 | 12 | 8 | 6 | 3 |
| Garrison creeping foxtail | 750 | 103 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 1.5 | 1 |
| Kentucky bluegrass | 2200 | 500 | 10 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Orchardgrass | 590 | 130 | 10 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Perennial ryegrass | 237 | 130 | 24 | 18 | 12 | 8 | 6 | 3 |
| Reed canarygrass **/I3 /5** | 550 | 130 | 10 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Smooth bromegrass | 137 | 50 | 16 | 12 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 2 |
| Tall fescue **I3 /5** | 227 | 80 | 15 | 12 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 2 |
| Timothy | 1230 | 220 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Big bluestem | 150 | 40 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| Caucasian bluestem **/I3** | 860 | 39 | 2 | 1.5 | 1 | .7 | .5 | .25 |
| Little bluestem | 255 | 60 | 10 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 2.5 | 1 |
| Eastern gamagrass | 7.4 | 1.5 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Indiangrass | 175 | 50 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 1.5 |
| Switchgrass | 370 | 80 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Forage Chicory | 375 | 50 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1.5 | 1 |
| **Annuals and Biennials** | | | | | | | | |
| Annual ryegrass **/3** | 228 | 125 | 24 | 18 | 12 | 8 | 6 | 3 |
| Annual Lespedeza | 240 | 154 | 28 | 21 | 14 | 9 | 7 | 4 |
| Kale, Turnips | 190-140 | 8-12 | 2-4 | – | – | – | – | – |
| Pearl millet | 85 | 40 | 20 | – | – | – | – | – |
| Oats, spring | 15 | 30 | 87 | 65 | 44 | 29 | 22 | 11 |
| Rye, wheat, triticale, winter | 18 | 45 | 109 | – | – | – | – | – |
| Sorghum, forage | 28 | 8 | 12 | – | – | – | – | – |
| Sorghum-sudangrass | 28 | 15 | 23 | – | – | – | – | – |
| /1 Up to (2) legumes and/or three (3) grasses suitable for site conditions may be mixed at pro- rated rates.  Be sure to treat legume seed (thereby the soil) with the proper inoculant prior to seeding. | | | | | | | | |
| /2A Dormant Seeding: Dec 1 to Mar 14 (cool season species) and Nov 1 to Mar 14 (warm season species) Increase rates by 25%. | | | | | | | | |
| /2B Under “less than ideal” seeding conditions, increase rates by 25% (50% if dormant seeding) | | | | | | | | |
| /I3 = Invasive without proper management | | | | | | | | |
| /3 Annual ryegrass if allowed to go to seed can be very competitive with wheat with limited control options | | | | | | | | |
| /4 The condensed tannins in sericea lespedeza have shown to control internal parasites in small ruminants such as sheep and goats. Consider planting a variety developed specifically for haying / grazing such as AU Grazer. | | | | | | | | |
| /5 Consider planting low alkaloid varieties or endophyte free varieties. | | | | | | | | |