

SISKIYOU STOCKMAN

What's New in the "Top of the State". A report for Siskiyou Livestock Producers put out by the Farm Advisors Office, Cooperative Extension of the University of California, located at 1655 South Main Street, Yreka, California 96097

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In This Issue

- Triticale grazing management
- Research Results of Simulated Spring Grazing of Triticale
- Country of Origin Labeling – COOL
- Red Books Available

Triticale Grazing Management

Triticale growers through their grazing management can influence total forage production. New information on grazing management of triticale from research at the Intermountain Research and Extension Center in Tulelake confirms and expands on grower observations. Depending on grazing management alternatives used, forage for grazing can be increased at the expense of subsequent hay production or grazable forage can be limited to maximize hay yields. Choices are up to the needs of the producer.

Research data Steve Orloff and I collected from Tulelake indicates early and brief grazing has no or minimal reduction in subsequent hay production (see section later for specific research results). Under Tulelake conditions the research results suggest grazing starting when triticale is about 6 to 12 inches tall and concluded quickly such as with strip grazing, will have no impact on subsequent hay production. Under those grazing conditions, hay yields were the same as none grazed plots. Last year's weather conditions found triticale at 6 to 12 inches tall around April 7 to 14 in Tulelake.

The start of grazing can be delayed or cattle can remain on the triticale, but as that occurs later and/or longer, research data suggests subsequent hay yields will suffer increasing declines. If grazable forage is critical then such a grazing plan might be the best use to increase early grazable forage, despite the sacrifice in hay yield.

The data and observations suggest a strip grazing system is favored. Using electric fence, cattle could be allowed to graze ahead into a controlled amount of new forage and restricted from returning to re-graze areas that were previously grazed. This allows the grazed plants to start re-growth toward a full yield of hay at the earliest time.

Fertilizing before the start of grazing and after grazing is beneficial when adequate soil moisture can be maintained either through spring rains and/or irrigation. Typically a nitrogen source such as ammonium sulfate is sufficient and large amounts are efficient and economical.

Grazing management on non-irrigated triticale (fall seeded) is more problematic due to potentially limiting soil moisture. If spring grazing is conducted on non-irrigated triticale, there is the potential that post-grazing rainfall may be slight and inadequate soil moisture would restrict hay yields even when lightly grazed. Similarly, fertilization is risky with the potential for moisture being more limiting than nutrients.

Research Results of Simulated Spring Grazing of Triticale

A uniform field of Trical 102 triticale was established in late summer at the UC Research and Extension Center at Tulelake, CA to evaluate alternative spring grazing management. In the spring, simulated grazing (by mowing) started at 6 inches, 12 inches, jointing or boot stage (Figure 1). (All plots were mowed in the fall to simulate fall grazing.) The total number of harvests (simulated grazing) depended on the initial grazing date (up to 5 harvests when the initial harvest was at 6 inches, up to 4 harvests when the first harvest was at 12 inches, up to 3 harvest when the first harvest was at jointing, and up to 2 harvests when the first harvest was at boot stage). Each subsequent harvest occurred 2 weeks after the previous one. After the last simulated grazing, plots were allowed to re-grow and harvested at the flowering stage for hay. The yield of “grazed” forage and subsequent hay yield were compared between the simulated grazing schemes and harvesting for hay only (no grazing).

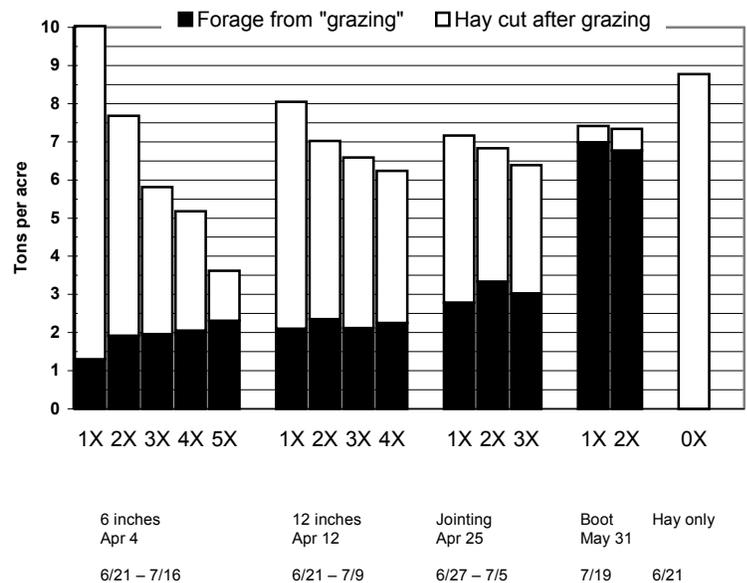


Figure 1. Grazing one time at 6 inches produced maximum total yields. Multiple grazing resulted in declining total production.

Results suggest the best grazing system depends on the desires of the producer (fig. 1). Maximum combined yields from grazable forage and hay production occurred with only one grazing when the triticale was 6 inches tall followed by a hay harvest (about 10 tons/A combined total forage yield). Hay alone with no

grazing was actually slightly less at 8.8 tons/A. If simulated grazing was delayed until the triticale was about 12 inches tall (and still grazed just once), the amount of forage for grazing increased from 1.30 to 2.10 tons/A, but total combined yield decreased by 2.4 tons/A because the hay harvest was significantly less. Waiting until jointing further increased the amount of forage for grazing (2.79 tons/A), but decreased hay production and total yield to a greater degree. These results, while based solely on one year of data, suggest the livestock producer can tailor the start of grazing based on the relative importance of grazable forage versus hay.

Different grazing frequencies, shorter and longer intervals between grazing (more “rest”), were also evaluated. Grazing occurred every 2 weeks in the trial just discussed (Fig. 1). In the second trial the effects of simulated grazing weekly (6 times total), every 2 weeks (4 times total), 3 weeks (3 times total), or after 6 weeks (1 time total) were compared. This was also conducted at Tulelake in an adjacent field during the same time as the first trial. The first clipping for all plots that were “grazed” occurred on April 22 just prior to jointing (Figure 2). The results when the rest interval was varied were very similar to the first trial. These two trials confirmed the finding that one early grazing provides some spring grazing with little or no reduction in subsequent hay yield. Additional grazing whether initiated later or with different rest intervals increased forage for grazing, but resulted in large reductions in hay yield.

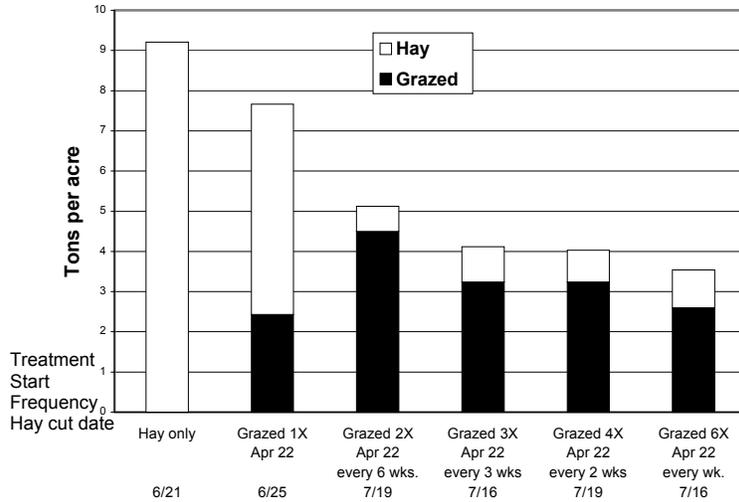


Figure 2. Grazing triticale more than once in the spring regardless of rest interval increased forage for grazing at the

Country of Origin Labeling

Anxiety and confusion surrounds new legislation on Country of Origin Labeling or COOL. Many aspects of the legislation are in various stages of finalization, including the potential for its repeal. Some producers have been notified of the potential need to comply with the still unfinished legislation. It is impossible to currently completely comply with all aspects of COOL since some aspects have not been worked out. However, producers may want to implement at least portions of COOL, especially those aspects that maybe be beneficial with or without COOL and those that they have been considering but not quite ready to start. Some items to consider as part of the documentation for COOL:

- Ear tags
- Calving books (like Red Books)
- Herd inventories
- Purchase receipts of herd animals
- Sale bills from sold animals

Possible mandatory COOL documentation could fall on spring-born 2003 calves. According to the legislation, calves not meeting COOL requirements could not be labeled as of U.S. origin.

Red Books Available

We have a few Red Books available at \$3 each.

This is your copy of the Siskiyou Stockman, which you requested, or which we thought would be of interest to you.

Sincerely,



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