

Frost Seeding Clovers Into Pasture Grasses

Producers who may have planned to establish clover and did not get it done this past fall can still rely on Mother Nature to help with clover establishment. Late winter seeding of clover can be quite successful. In fact, late winter seedings have the usual advantage of better moisture (although moisture wasn't a problem this past fall), and fewer insect problems.

Red and white clover varieties tend to work best for frost seeding. Seeding rates are 2-3 pounds (drilled or broadcast) of white clover per acre and 6-8 pounds of red clover per acre when drilled or 12-15 pounds per acre broadcast. For late winter or frost seedings to be successful, the existing sod needs to be closely grazed. Where the soil is exposed, the freezing and thawing of soil moisture will allow the broadcast seed to settle down into the soil.

Varieties of red clover that are recommended for this area of Georgia are Bulldog Red, Cimarron Plus, Kenland and Redland Max. White clover varieties that work well here are Durana and Patriot.

In recent years, producers have gotten away from planting clovers with the main reason being that herbicides used in controlling broadleaf weeds would also kill out the clover. But with escalating high fertilizer prices, many are rethinking clover as a source of nitrogen. Red clover can fix 75-200 pounds of N per acre and white clover can fix 50-125 pounds of N per acre. To get this advantage from clovers, we don't need clover to cover the whole pasture. Stands of 30% of the available forage can provide enough nitrogen to meet the needs of grasses.

For more information on using clovers, go to the Georgia Forages website or give me a call at 706 384-2843.

Important Forage Dates:

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| March 25 | The Inaugural meeting of Georgia/South Carolina Piedmont Forage and Grassland Council, Pendleton, SC |
| April 8-9 | 2010 Hay Production School, Moultrie, GA |
| May 13 | Georgia/South Carolina Piedmont/SE Forage and Grassland Council's Field Day and Pasture Walk, Eatonton, GA |

Call 706 384-2843 or go to GeorgiaForages.com Upcoming Events page for more information.