

Growing & Feeding Alfalfa-Grass Mixtures

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This session will discuss the benefits of growing alfalfa in mixtures with perennial grasses, which include reduced weed and insect pressure, faster dry down of cut forage, resistance against winter injury, and traffic tolerance. Dairy cattle fed diets including alfalfa-grass mixtures can actually have performance exceeding that of dairy cattle fed diets including pure alfalfa forage. Join Dr. Sheaffer to learn more about both the benefits and challenges of alfalfa-grass mixtures.



Craig Sheaffer is currently a professor of Agronomy and Plant Genetics at the University of Minnesota and works with research and education, alfalfa and forage management, sustainable cropping systems, and is the director of the sustainable agriculture graduate program. He has extensive experience developing and managing forage crops, grasses, and native perennials, and works closely with interdisciplinary groups in exploring alternative crops for more sustainable agricultural systems. His research is on perennial native and introduced legumes, grasses, and woody species. He studies organic crops, crop rotations, legume management, cover cropping, and legume-grass forage polycultures. He teaches two undergraduate courses and a graduate level course, conducts alfalfa variety trials and corn silage hybrid trials, and participates in outreach education programs. Craig earned his Ph.D. in Agronomy from the University of Maryland.