

NORTH DAKOTA - Strategies for Supplementing Cows Grazing Corn Residue

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Corn residue remaining after harvest is an abundant feed resource in areas of North Dakota. Residue can be grazed during fall and winter to extend the grazing season. Cows grazing corn residue will require some form of supplementation especially in late-fall and early-winter. Methods of supplementation should aim to decrease winter feed costs, which are the single highest annual cost in cow-calf operations. Work is under way at Central Grasslands REC to evaluate supplementation methods minimizing winter feed costs. We conducted a preliminary study last fall to evaluate frequency of feeding corn DDGS as a supplement to cows grazing corn residue. Pregnant cows were fed DDGS daily, every third day and every sixth day. Results indicated corn DDGS can be supplemented every third day to reduce winter labor costs with no detrimental animal performance effects. A long-term study will begin Fall 2016 to evaluate other strategies (e.g., cover crops, hay) for supplementing cows grazing corn residue in fall/winter.