

## **Forage Research Updates**

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### **MINNESOTA - Stockpiling Smooth Bromeagrass to Reduce Winter Feeding Costs**

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Initiating stockpiling of smooth bromeagrass-dominated pastures around July 1 with 50 lb N/ac is a viable option to extend the grazing season and reduce winter feed costs in the North Central region. An experiment was recently completed at Morris, MN, looking at different June, July and August initiation dates and 0, 50, or 100 lb N/ac rates for stockpiling smooth bromeagrass. Observations:

- October yield of stockpiled smooth bromeagrass decreased from a high of 1.2 ton/ac when initiated June 1 to a low of 0.3 ton/ac when initiation was delayed until August 15.
- Stockpiled bromeagrass leaf mass was similar for June 1 through July 1 initiation dates, averaging 0.7 ton/ac.
- Applying 50 lb N/ac at stockpile initiation increased bromeagrass yields by about 40%. Applying 100 lb N/ac usually did not provide an economic yield response.
- Crude protein increased, and ADF and NDF decreased, as stockpile initiation was delayed from June 1 to Aug. 15. Nutritive value was adequate for dry cows or ewes.
- Smooth bromeagrass-dominant fields destined for stockpiling can be grazed or cut through June, capitalizing on smooth bromeagrass' high spring productivity prior to stockpile initiation.