

Pasture Renovation

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During the dormant season we often get anxious for warm weather and green pastures so we start thinking about renovation. Renovation is a practice or series of management practices which “restores the vigor” or “makes new again.” In pasture management, renovation refers to improvement of a permanent pasture by changed management.

Renovation of bermudagrass pastures may be as simple as soil testing and applying proper fertilization or it may be as complex and intensive as destroying the existing sod, preparing a seedbed and sprigging again.

Some renovation practices:

1. Soil Testing and Fertilization

Soil Sampling Tools

First renovation practice should be extensive soil testing and fertilization in accordance with the soil test recommendations. With current cattle value and fertilizer prices now is the time to renovate with fertilization. [**Soil Testing Form**](#)

2. Weed Control

Weeds compete with bermudagrass for water, nutrients and sunlight. Scouting and identifying weeds early is critical in order to match the best method of control and to potentially have effective control. **2014 Suggestion for Weed Control in Pastures and Forages ESC-024**

3. Prescribed Burning

Burning during the dormant period will remove excess dead forage; destroy some insects, winter weeds, and weedy grasses. However, burning can be a fire hazard, remove stubble that protects the grass from late freezes and allows potential for more soil erosion. Timing is critical and must be done after weeds have emerged but before bermudagrass green-up. Waiting until later decreases yields. The potential fire hazard (buildings, hay, forest, etc) can be major liabilities. Make sure to contact local authorities (police and fire department) before burning.

4. Subsoiling, Chiseling, Discing, Plowing

Subsoiling and chiseling will eliminate compaction layers (more common in heavier clay soils). More intensive discing or plowing will incorporate organic matter in the soil, incorporate fertilizer and lime, destroy grassy weeds, scatter cut sprigs, and increase soil water penetration. There is limited to no comparative research data to show a bermudagrass production advantage to discing. Any of the

above renovation practices should be done during grass dormancy (winter), with care taken to conserve soil moisture, especially in a drought. Keep in mind that anytime we disturb the soil we are potentially promoting the germination of weed seeds so be prepared for weed control.

5. Replanting

Replanting of bermudagrass stand should only be considered when inadequate live rhizomes are left (<25% stand). **Establishing Tifton 85 Bermudagrass**

Source:

<http://agrilife.org/agnewsandviews/2017/01/23/pasture-renovation/>