Extension Works to Get Farmers On the Road Again
By: Lynn Stillwell Extension Agent Agriculture-Livestock Swine and Waste Management

North Carolina ranks number two in Hog and Turkey production with around 10 million hogs and 35 million turkeys produced each year. The State also ranks number 5 in broiler production with around 760 million birds. While these animals provide a significant amount of low cost, safe food for us to eat, they also generate a significant amount of waste that must be dealt with by the farmers who raise them. Waste must be regularly removed or cleaned out according to the farmer’s contract and nutrient management plan. This waste must be land applied as fertilizer in accordance with certain laws and management practices.

Transporting tons and thousands of gallons of waste has proved to be not only costly for the farm in terms of dollars spent trying to stay within the regulations set forth by the NC Department of Environmental and Natural Resources (DENR), but also in fines given out by the highway patrol. In years past farmers hauling animal waste from farm to field were continually stopped by Law Enforcement Officers and given heavy fines sometimes amounting to over $1500.00 for their vehicles being overweight.

North Carolina Cooperative Extension worked closely with Elected officials and NC Farm Bureau members throughout the State to get the law changed so that farmers would not accrue these hefty fines. As of December 1, 2010 House Bill 1729 was changed to give exemptions to farmers hauling...
animal waste from the farm to the field. As long as farmers abide by other regulations for hauling animal waste they should no longer have to worry about being fined for overweight vehicles. So farmers don’t fear filling up those trucks and getting on the road again because those fines should not be levied against you anymore.

**Lean to Green: Pasture and Sprayfield Renovation**

By: Lynn Stillwell Livestock Agent Sampson

*Adapted From:* C.D. Teutsch, Extension Specialist, Forage/Livestock, Southern Piedmont Agricultural Research and Extension Center; and J.H. Fike, Assistant Professor, Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences, Virginia Tech

If you have noticed in recent years that your previously productive hayfields and pastures had been overtaken with weeds or you are just not getting the productiveness you want, it may be time to consider renovating your pasture or sprayfield. Pasture renovation is a series of management practices that will improve the health, productivity, and composition of your pasture or hayfield on a long-term basis. Before beginning renovation you must first determine why your previous stand did not persist. Obtain a soil sample from the field or pasture, keep in mind that one sample should represent no more than 25 Acres. Major problem areas (ex. Patches of no grass, severely stunted grass) should be sampled separately to determine a more specific problem.

Renovation does not always mean you must reseed your fields. Sometimes allowing a field to go fallow (resting period), liming, controlling weeds, and improving management can improve weak hay fields or pastures. However, large bare areas (spaces of >6”) should be reseeded.

Poor fertility, low pH, and overgrazing are just a few of the reasons why your pasture may be overridden with weeds. Weeds are opportunistic intruders and it is essential that you take care of weed problems before reseeding or at the beginning of renovation. Weeds will compete with your Bermuda or any other grasses you are trying to grow.

Herbicides will work for most broadleaf species, however for more troublesome grass weeds such as Goosegrass or nutsedge, pre-emergents may be necessary for control. Some weeds (such as Broomsedge) can simply be controlled by adding lime to your fields and pastures. Raising the pH of the soil is critical to improving your stand. The pH of your soil is determined by completing a soil test. Hold off on pumping until your reseeded (or sprigged) grass has begun growing as pumping too early will encourage any other grasses or weeds to grow potentially shading out your newly seeded grasses.

Your pasture or hayfield won’t be renovated over night. It is a process that requires attention to detail and patience. Proper management after renovation should help maintain your fields for future use.

**Hay Directories**

There are two web site directories for people selling or buying hay. It is free to list your hay for sale. 1. North Carolina Department of
Agriculture’s Hay Alert is at http://www.agr.state.nc.us/hayalert/. Producers can call the Hay Alert at 1-866-506-6222. You can sign up to list your hay on line. 2. The Southeastern NC Hay Directory is available at http://onslow.ces.ncsu.edu/files/library/67/HayDirectory.pdf. Call your Extension Agent to learn how to include your farm on the list.

**Forage Management Tips**  
*From Production and Utilization of Pastures and Forages in North Carolina.*

**March**
- Fertilize cool-season grasses to increase production.
- Dig weed free bermudagrass sprigs and plant them before growth begins. Consider using a herbicide.
- Control winter annual weeds in dormant bermudagrass with herbicides, burning or grazing pressure.
- Watch for grass tetany as rapid grass growth and cool, wet weather prevails—supplement with high mag mineral.
- Scatter manure from areas where animals congregate.

**April**
- Fertilize cool-season grasses if not already done. • Watch for symptoms of grass tetany.
- Fertilize warm-season grasses when dormancy breaks. • Establish hybrid bermudagrass unless irrigation is available. • Plant crabgrass and switchgrass. Plant seeded varieties of bermudagrass at the end of the month.
- Graze cool season grasses down to 2-4”.
- Harvest for hay if growth is too rapid to maintain grazing pressure. • Completely graze or harvest winter annuals before grazing other pastures.

**Upcoming Events**

**March**
- **March 22 - Murphy-Brown Expo** The expo will be from 8 am-5 pm at the Duplin Events Center located at 195 Fairground Drive in Kenansville. Expo admission is free and includes lunch. The expo will have swine and poultry vendors and continuing education hours for operator in charge and pesticide license.
- **March 23 - Clinton Feeder Calf Sale** The sale will be at 7 pm at the Sampson County Livestock Facility. Cattle will be graded and penned on March 23rd between 7:30 am and 4 pm. For more information, call Paul Gonzalez at Sampson Extension at (910) 592-7161

**April**
- **April 12th**: Waste Sample Collection Day
- **April 19th-20th**: Initial Animal Waste Operator Type A Class, Bladen County
- **April 27th**: Technology and Waste Management Making them Work for You. Pending 2hr Waste OIC credit

If you have any questions about any of the information in this article or any upcoming events with Extension please contact the Sampson County Cooperative Extension Office at 910-592-7161. This newsletter and more information is also available on our website: [http://sampson.ces.ncsu.edu/content/swine_waste_management_forages](http://sampson.ces.ncsu.edu/content/swine_waste_management_forages)
And my blog: [http://sampsonswine.blogspot.com/](http://sampsonswine.blogspot.com/)

Thank you,

Lynn Stillwell Extension Agent - Agriculture - Swine and Waste Management

The use of brand names in this publication does not imply endorsement of the products or services named or criticism of similar ones not mentioned