



## Field Notes for The Week Of

8-1-2022

### Time To Stockpile

August is here and that means summer is just about over and Autumn is just around the corner. This also means winter is on its way and it is always better to be prepared for early rather than later. Over the years the human race has always looked for different ways to predict the upcoming seasons and winter seems to be one that many are consumed with. With that technology has come a long way in predicting long range forecast models that have been great tools for agriculture producers either preparing for planting, harvesting, or winter management. But even as advanced as technology has become weather is very unpredictable and has often played dirty tricks especially when you have hay down and ready to bale! With this unpredictability in technology some take the old school approach and turn to the farmer's almanac. According to the farmers almanac, fog can be a predictor to how harsh winters can be. The number of fogs in August is supposed to equate to the number of snowfalls in the winter. I hope this is wrong because August is well known for its foggy mornings, I have often heard old time tobacco producers say those foggy August mornings is what puts weight on tobacco. This might have some validity but with that fog comes disease, powdery mildew, downy mildew, blue mold, frog eye leaf spot are all fungal diseases that can infect specialty and row crops during the month of August. This past week was a good week for fungal pathogens to grow and spread, with high humidity and some precipitation. I noticed some producers continuing fungicide applications to soybeans. It was not a very good week for making hay, but some producers managed to make some haylage from summer annuals such as Sudan grass. Wrapper tobacco harvest continued this week and some producers actually finished up and burley harvest will soon begin. Pastures are looking very good for mid-summer but weeds like ironweed and cockleburs continue to have a heavy presence. The month of August is a good winter preparation month, no matter how many fogs we end up having the reality winter will be hard so preparing now is a good idea. One way grazing livestock producers can make sure they have adequate supply of forage this coming winter is to stockpile.

Stockpiling forage is the process of taking livestock off a pasture or hay field and allowing the forage to rest and grow until late fall or early winter and then resume grazing. This is a great way to extend the growing season and help pastures heal from grazing pressure in the spring and summer. Stockpiling can also take advantage of forages that are deemed undesirable during the summer growing season, for example Tall Fescue. Tall fescue gets a lot of bad publicity due to its rough course texture, endophyte toxicity levels that are hazardous to livestock health. If Tall Fescue is allowed to rest and grow palatability and nutrient quality are enhanced after a killing frost. Endophyte toxins are also decreased. Adding 40-50 units of nitrogen in August can also boost yield and protein levels. If you have pasture or forage fields that are tall fescue based you might want to think about taking livestock off now to graze later in the winter and best of all SAVE HAY!

