

Weekly Article

Start Thinking About Frost Seeding

2-9-2021

Hello, my Name is Richard Purdin with OSU Extension, Ag and Natural Resource Educator and Community Development Educator for Adams County. I hope to better inform local producers and the public of the latest news in the world of Agriculture. The second week of February is here and at this point I am placing more value in Punxsutawney Phil's forecast than the meteorologist. It is hard to believe that spring is 39 days away and for most farmers that is way too long! So far February has delivered about 4.5 inches of snow to my farm and it sound like more to come as this week continues. Even with the cold temperatures and snow-covered ground, I cannot help but think and plan for spring. So, this week I want to discuss a great way to add diversity and even potentially boost yields of thinning hay and pasture fields.

Frost seeding is one of the most effective and economical ways to add legumes to your pasture or hay field. For southern Ohio frost seeding can take place from mid-February to mid-March (best before Saint Patrick's Day). This method of seeding takes advantage of cold frozen soils in the morning and warmer thawing days. As the soil freezes it will heave or push the soil up and as the thaws it will melt down and place the small round legume seed at the perfect depth (about ¼ inch). Here are some thoughts and tips to consider before purchasing seed.

- **What is your Goal?** – Red clover is considered a higher quality hay species of legume with a shorter life span than other clovers. Dutch White, Ladino, and Alsike clover work better for pastures due to their persistence and low structured growth.
- **Clovers are more suitable for frost seeding.** – Due to their round slick seed coat clover tend to roll and incorporate themselves in the soil far better than grasses. There has been research studied on frost seeding grasses like fescue and perennial ryegrass, but results have been very inconsistent.
- **Watch the seeding rate** – Seeding rates should be dependent on current stands and species that will be grazing or consuming the plant. Clovers such as White Dutch have a tendency of spreading and crowding out other forages, this can result in too much of a good thing. Bloating can become an issue when clover populations consist of 30% or more of the pasture stand.
- **Coated vs Naked seed.** Clay coating are applied to very small seeds like clover to aid in the spreading of the seed. Remember clay coating can add 33% or more to the inert matter of a bag of clover = 50lb bag x .33 = purchasing 16.5 lbs of

clay and 33.5lbs of clover. So, if your goal is to apply 6lbs/ac of red clover you will have to apply almost 8lbs of coated seed to the acre.

- **Avoid applications on snow.** Just as I preach with fertilizer and manure, the same goes for seeding. Yes, it is nice to spread on snow you can see your tracks and seed on top of the snow. Remember the goal is to get the seed in the ground and when the snow melts it tends to carry the seed away to low line areas or the nearby stream.

Some other details to go over:

- 2021 Tobacco GAP Training will be offered in person February 23rd 10:00 am-12:00pm located at Raines Farm and Greenhouse 2667 Nichols Ridge Road Seaman Ohio 45679. Please call the office to pre-register (937) 544 -2339 (Seats will be limited to 20).
- Planning for Profit for Beef Cow/Calf operations March 2nd at 7:00 pm located at Seaman Community Methodist Church Fellowship Hall 63 Broadway St Seaman, Ohio 45679. There is a \$5 dollar fee and space is limited to 20 people so please call the office at (937) 544 2339 to reserve a spot.
- 2021 Fertilizer/Pesticide Private Applicators in person course is planned for March 9th at the Cherry Fork Community Center (gym) 5:00pm – 9:00pm. If you need recertified, you should get an invitation in the mail. (due to covid19 date is tentative and susceptible to change)
- OSU Extension Department of Agricultural, Environmental, and Development Economics will be presenting the 2021 Climate and Grain Market Outlook February 19th 10:00am-11:30am. Go to https://osu.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Wli8sVbSR5i3yqTqtBrj6A to register for the virtual event.
- For producer who still have not yet elected a 2021 crop safety net program, there will be a in-person meeting at the Ohio valley Career and technical center February 24th, 2021 at 6:30 pm. The meeting will discuss ARC/PLC options. To register go to <https://go.osu.edu/2021farmbill> or call the office at (937) 544 2339.
- February 12th General CRP signup deadline, and CRP Grasslands signup will begin March 15th,2021 and conclude April 23rd,2021 contact the farm service agency for assistance in signing up for these programs.
- OSU Extension Beef Team will have their next Cow -Calf School via Zoom Will be Held February 15th at 6:00 pm, topics include seaman handling and pregnancy checking .Go to https://osu.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_N_CtcKYwQB2I60Afug10aA to register.