WINTER '25

# NPFA UPDATE

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE NORTHERN PLAINS FORAGE ASSOICATION

## WHO ARE WE?

NPFA is a grassroots association open to forage growers, buyers, industry partners, and anyone with an interest in forages. We are creating a networking and education group focused on annual forages/cover crops, alfalfa, silage, grazing systems, and more!

## IN THIS ISSUE



## WHERE TO FIND US


npforage.com

@npforage

Email: npforage@gmail.com



## YOU'RE INVITED!

There's still time to sign up and join us for the 3rd annual NPFA annual meeting in Brandon! We are excited to bring you meaningful talks, networking opportunities, and a brief business meeting. Please consider coming and inviting your friends and family- the meeting is open to everyone! visit https://npforage.com/annual-meeting-registration.html to register! *Registrations after 12/4/25 cannot be guaranteed a meal but we do our best to feed everyone if possible!

# NPFA UPDATE

## 2005 WINTER AND SPRING CEREALS RAISED FOR FORAGE-SDSU VARIETY TRIAL RESEARCH RESULTS

Research results can be hard to sift through, but the team at the Southeast Research Farm near Beresford, SD along with Extension collaborators, works hard to produce meaningful, real-life research that producers can use. This is an abbreviated report, for the full methodology and report visit https://extension.sdstate.edu/forage-variety-trial-results.

**Introduction:** The 2025 season started with very little reserve soil moisture as the fall of 2024 was dry and effectively no snow cover over the winter. Limited rainfall in the spring allowed for stands to develop, but forage production was restricted by drought.

**Methods:** Both the winter and spring forage variety trials were direct-seeded into soybean stubble using a small plot drill. Plot size was 5 by 25' and plots were laid out in a randomized complete block design with four replications at the SDSU Southeast Research Farm in Beresford, South Dakota. The winter annual forage trial consisted of five lines of winter rye along with seven lines of winter triticale, while the spring forage variety trial consisted of eight oat lines, five triticale lines, and two barley lines. The hybrid rye lines (KWS Aviator and KWS Progas) were planted at a seed rate of 800,000 seeds per acre. All the other winter forages lines were planted at a seed rate of 1.2 million seeds per acre. All the spring forage lines were planted at a seed rate of 1.3 million seeds per acre (30 PLS/ft2).

**Results:** *See data tables on page 4. Drought stress resulted in low yields of the winter cereals at Beresford in 2025. The dry fall delayed stand establishment after planting and lack of snow cover increased stress with overwintering, so the stand was relatively thin in the spring. On a dry matter basis, the winter cereal lines averaged only 1936 lb/ ac of forage yield (Table 1). 'Hazlet', 'Aroostook', and 'KWS Aviator' were the top yielding lines in this set of data. The spring cereals received some rain shortly after planting and established well but still showed only modest productivity with an average yield of 3504 lb/ac in the trial (Table 2). Stockford barely, SD Momentum oat, Trical Surge and Trical Exp 5735 triticales, SD Ranger oat, and Lavina barley were in numerical order the high yielding lines among the spring cereals tested in this trial.

Merry Christmas

## TIME FOR DUES RENEWAL

Wishing you and yours a Merry Christmas from all of us at NPFA! A wrap on 2025 means it's time to renew your membership! Please visit https://npforage.com/become-a-member.html or scan the code below to renew and provide feedback. OR receive a membership discount when you renew with annual meeting sign up! Your support of this organization is what keeps it going.- we want to hear from you! Thank you for your continued support.

# NPFA UPDATE




## MEET THE BOARD!
## BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: COLIN GEPPERT

*Colin Geppert grew up on a cow calf operation near Kimball SD. After high school, Colin went to school at South Dakota State University and met his wife Courtney. They now live in Kimball with their two kids. Colin is an Account Manager for Hubbard Feeds in Central South Dakota. He enjoys assisting livestock producers, providing them with product and technical knowledge to achieve their production goals. The reason Colin wanted to get involved in NPFA was his passion for perennial grass/alfalfa mixes and annual forages. The networking opportunity that Northern Plains Forage Association provides is great and provides you with information that you can bring back to operation. Colins favorite forage is Cereal Rye because it's so versatile you can accomplish a lot of different goals with it. In his pastime, he enjoys 4-wheeler rides in the pasture looking at cow calf pairs with his family.*

## INTERESTED IN GETTING INVOLVED?

NPFA is currently looking for members who want to get more involved by serving on the board of directors! The group meets monthly over zoom for 1-2 hours depending on the season. We are always looking for producers interested in getting involved! Please contact a current board member or Sara Bauder with questions/inquiries. There will be a board election during the annual business meeting next week- nominations off the floor are welcome!

# FORAGE RESARCH RESULTS CONT'D

## 2025 SDSU FORAGE VARIETY TRIAL RESULTS- WINTER FORAGES

Table 1. Fall (12/9/24) and spring (5/1/25) visual stand ratings, height at harvest, Feekes stage at harvest, dry matter yield, and calculated hay and silage yields from a variety trial with 12 varieties of winter cereals (rye and triticale) conducted at the SDSU Southeast Research Farm in 2025. Plots were planted on Oct. 2, 2024 and were harvested on May 29, 2025. Dry conditions in the fall of 2024 (see Fig. 1) delayed establishment of the winter cereals and left little residual moisture for early spring growth resulting in low dry matter forage yields. Across all the lines in the 2025 trial the average dry matter yield was 1889 lb/ac, whereas the average dry matter yield for all lines across four previous trials (2020, 2021, 2022 and 2024 seasons) was 6050 lb/ac. Rainfall picked up again in June of 2025, but this was after the harvest of winter rye and triticale for forage. Varieties yielding in the top 1/3 of the trial are bold and shaded light blue.

| Variety | Crop | Fall Stand Rating (%) | Spring Stand Rating (%) | Height at Harvest (in.) | Feekes Stage | Dry Matter Yeild (lb/ ac) | Hay Yield (tons/ac) | Silage Yield (tons/ac) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hazlet | Rye | 79 | 91 | 31.0 | 10.4 | **3117** | **1.83** | **4.45** |
| Aroostook | Rye | 76 | 86 | 28.3 | 10.3 | **3002** | **1.77** | **4.29** |
| KWS Aviator | Rye | 73 | 89 | 28.0 | 10.3 | **2830** | **1.66** | **4.04** |
| ND Gardener | Rye | 79 | 93 | **41.3** | 10.5 | 2682 | 1.58 | 3.83 |
| Showtime | Triticale | 73 | 85 | 23.5 | 10.0 | 2053 | 1.21 | 2.93 |
| KWS Progas | Rye | 73 | 81 | 23.5 | 10.2 | 1910 | 1.12 | 2.73 |
| EXP 554 | Triticale | 64 | 78 | 23.0 | 8.8 | 1586 | 0.93 | 2.27 |
| Gainer | Triticale | 69 | 79 | 23.5 | 10.4 | 1582 | 0.93 | 2.26 |
| Flex | Triticale | 78 | 74 | 22.1 | 8.4 | 1318 | 0.78 | 1.88 |
| EXP 1721 | Triticale | 70 | 70 | 22.0 | 8.8 | 1292 | 0.76 | 1.85 |
| EXP 209 | Triticale | 76 | 61 | 22.0 | 8.8 | 1054 | 0.62 | 1.51 |
| Ace | Triticale | 75 | 49 | 19.8 | 8.5 | 811 | 0.48 | 1.16 |
| **Mean** | | 73.5 | 77.9 | 25.7 | 9.6 | 1936 | 1.14 | 2.77 |
| **CV** | | 4.8 | 11.3 | 5.7 | - | 11.2 | 11.2 | 11.2 |
| **LSD (0.05)** | | 5.0 | 12.7 | 2.1 | - | 311 | 0.18 | 0.44 |
| **LSD (0.10)** | | 4.2 | 10.6 | 1.8 | - | 259 | 0.15 | 0.37 |

## 2025 SDSU FORAGE VARIETY TRIAL RESULTS- SPRING FORAGES

Table 2. Visual stand ratings at 40 DAP, height at harvest, Feekes stage at harvest, dry matter yield, and calculated hay and silage yields from a variety trial with 15 varieties of spring cereals conducted at the SDSU Southeast Research Farm in 2025. Plots were planted on March 27 with a seed rate of 30 PLS per square foot, and were harvested on June 11, 2025. The trial was embedded in a field of hard red spring wheat. The previous fall and winter were very dry (see Fig. 1), and there was little reserve moisture for growth. Spring rainfall allowed for establishment of the trial, but because of dry conditions crop growth was less than expected. Varieties yielding in the top 1/3 of the trial are bold and shaded light blue.

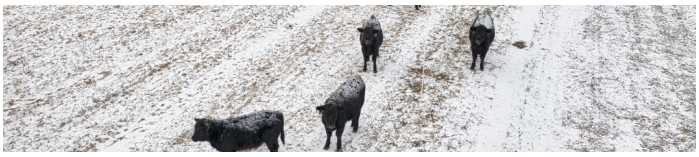
| Variety | Crop | Visual Stand Rating (%) | Height at Harvest (in.) | Feekes Stage | Dry Matter Yeild (lb/ac) | Hay Yield (tons/ac) | Silage Yield (tons/ac) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Stockford | Barley | 93 | 25.5 | 9.8 | **4060** | **2.39** | **5.80** |
| SD Momentum | Oat | 81 | 24.5 | 9.8 | **3763** | **2.21** | **5.38** |
| Trical Surge | Triticale | 91 | 24.8 | 9.5 | **3728** | **2.19** | **5.33** |
| Trical Exp 5735 | Triticale | 89 | 25.8 | 9.0 | **3686** | **2.17** | **5.27** |
| SD Ranger | Oat | 79 | 23.8 | 10.2 | **3685** | **2.17** | **5.26** |
| Lavina | Barley | 93 | 24.5 | 10.1 | **3622** | **2.13** | **5.17** |
| SD Titan | Oat | 78 | 25.8 | 10.1 | 3568 | 2.10 | 5.10 |
| Trical Cadillac | Oat | 85 | 21.8 | 10.4 | 3561 | 2.09 | 5.09 |
| Dual Threat | Oat | 86 | 23.0 | 9.8 | 3557 | 2.09 | 5.08 |
| CDC Westgate | Oat | 83 | 23.3 | 8.0 | 3501 | 2.06 | 5.00 |
| Trical Kicker | Triticale | 93 | 24.0 | 8.5 | 3397 | 2.00 | 4.85 |
| Trical Gunner | Triticale | 88 | 20.8 | 8.0 | 3317 | 1.95 | 4.74 |
| Goliath | Oat | 83 | 24.5 | 10.0 | 3295 | 1.94 | 4.71 |
| CDC Haymaker | Oat | 83 | 20.8 | 8.0 | 3115 | 1.83 | 4.45 |
| Trical Flex | Triticale | 86 | 19.8 | 8.3 | 2700 | 1.59 | 3.86 |
| **Mean** | | 86 | 23.5 | 9.3 | 3504 | 2.06 | 5.01 |
| **CV** | | 6.1 | 4.7 | | 8.9 | 8.9 | 8.9 |
| **LSD (0.05)** | | 7.5 | 1.6 | | 445 | 0.26 | 0.64 |
| **LSD (0.10)** | | 6.2 | 1.3 | | 371 | 0.22 | 0.53 |

## UNDERSTAND YOUR PASTURE FOR STOCKPILE GRAZING

*By Justin Fruechte, Renovo Seed*

Winter grazing long into the season is a goal for all cattle producers. But a few things need to line up correctly for this to meet the nutritional needs of your cow herd. Obviously, the first obstacle is the weather. There will be years when we get too much moisture before the ground freezes, and years when crusted snow prevents cattle from grazing through it. But for the most part, in most years, we can graze for at least some portion of the winter–we just need to be set up for it.

Stockpiling your existing perennial pasture allows you to save on labor, reduce feed costs, and enhance soil quality. The species composition of your pasture will determine how best to manage that stockpiling. Tall fescue is a cool-season grass commonly found in the central part of the nation and is routinely grazed through the winter by ranchers. This grass persists very well throughout the year, allowing it to be grazed or hayed multiple times before the fall regrowth is reserved for winter. Other cool-season grasses such as brome, orchardgrass, and the wheatgrasses can also be used this way. However, it is important that the fall regrowth on these species is strong before stockpiling begins. These grasses do not have the same persistence, and their spring growth tends to decline more quickly in palatability and quality.



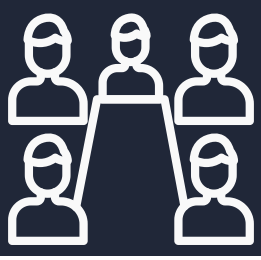
Native grasses have some of the best potential for winter grazing scenarios. These hardy species hold their palatability far into the winter and can be very high yielding. Warm-season natives such as big bluestem, Indiangrass, sideoats grama, and buffalograss were staples on the prairie for bison to graze throughout the winter. These grasses are deep-rooted, drought-tolerant species that, when managed properly, can last indefinitely. Because they come on later in the growing season, they do not show strong persistence under heavy grazing pressure. So, if your goal is to stockpile these for winter, manage them specifically for that purpose and avoid grazing them until that time.

Perhaps the most valuable perennials for a winter grazing system are legumes. These broadleaves are key to increasing protein content throughout the pasture. Alfalfa, red clover, sainfoin, and cicer milkvetch are the most commonly grazed species. Sainfoin and milkvetch are much better suited to well-drained soils with lower rainfall and complement native grasses very well. In contrast, alfalfa and red clover prefer heavier soils and environments with more moisture. Incorporating these legumes into your existing grass stand is very achievable and is commonly done by overseeding or frost-seeding late in the fall.

By aligning species traits with regional conditions and managing pastures intentionally throughout the growing season, cattle producers can not only extend the grazing window but also improve soil health, reduce feed costs, and build greater resilience into their operations. Winter grazing is always a bit of a gamble–but with the right forage base and preparation, it's one that increasingly pays off.

## CURRENT NPFA BOARD MEMBERS

- President: David Elliot, Drumgoon Dairy, Lake Norden, SD
- Vice President: Jeff Jackson, Croplan Alfalfa and Forage Specialist/ Forage Producer
- Treasurer: Mark Rogen, Boadwine Farms, Baltic, SD
- Mike Bettle, BritAm Nutritional Concepts Inc, Dairy Nutritionist
- Justin Fruechte, Renovo Seed, Director of Sales/ Forage Producer
- Paul Hahn, Simplot Sales Representative
- Eric Tieszen, producer, Canistota, SD
- Al Lenhart, KWS Cereals Regional Sales Rep/ Forage Producer
- David Skaggs, Agrovive Biologicals, Dairy Product Manager
- Aaron Swanson, Forage Producer, Lake Norden, SD
- Colin Geppert, Forage Producer/ Sales Account Manager, Hubbard Feeds



# NPFA UPDATE

## MEET OUR ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Being a new, grassroots organization, we have relied heavily on sponsorships, goodwill, volunteers, and associate members. We would like to specifically recognize our associate members who have gone above and beyond to support the Northern Plains Forage Association in its infancy! If you would like to see your business or operation listed here- contact us!

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South Dakota Soil Health Coalition

## UPCOMING REGIONAL FORAGE-RELATED EVENTS

- **Managing Soil: Maximizing Profit; Dec. 9 @ Freeman, SD**
- **NPFA Annual Meeting; Dec. 11 @ Brandon, SD**
- **ISU Feedlot Forum; Jan. 20 @ Sioux Center**
- **MFA Wisconsin Dells Symposium; Feb. 16-18 @ Wisconsin Dells, WI**

***This is the best list available at time of publication- if you would like a forage-related event listed here, please contact Sara Bauder at**