

DUKART RANCH COVER CROP GRAZING 2013-2014

Derrick Dukart is a Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Project Farmer-Cooperator in SARE Project LNC 11-335. 2013 Cover Crops were grazed with bulls and gestating cows.

Our 2013 SARE project consisted of a Full season Cover crop planted on a 42 acre field. With the very wet spring we had our initial crop was going to be grain corn. However with the excess moisture and poor seeding conditions we decided to switch it to a full season cover crop. We seeded the cover crop on June 16th 2013 at a rate of 30lb per acre at about ½ to ¾ inch seeding depth. We did apply 2 applications of roundup along with 46 units of nitrogen in thoughts this was going to be grain corn. The mix was made up of Cowpea (3#), Soybean (3#), Common Vetch (3#), Crimson Clover (1#), Berseem Clover (1#), BMR Grazing Corn (3#), Sorghum Sudan (4#), Pearl Millet (2#), Proso Millet (2#), Nitro Radish (1#), Winfred Turnip (1#), Sunflower (1#) and Buckwheat (1#). We took 16 acres of the 42 acre field and subdivided into roughly 5 acre paddocks using poly wire and a solar fencer. We put a portable water tank in and hauled water as needed. On September 14, 2013 we turned 34 yearling bulls into the first paddock for 5 days and then moved them to the 2 second paddock and got 6 days out of it and turned into the final paddock for another 5 days. We grazed the 16 acre field for a total of 16 days. We did a clipping on it and came up with 3.5 ton of Dry matter per acre available. The bulls gained a 1/2 to ¾ of a body condition score while grazing. Next year this acreage will be grain corn and on part of the field we plan on not using any fertilizer.

Start Grazing



Bulls grazing cover crop



Grazing along electric wire



Residue after grazing was completed



Cows grazing cover crops.



Cover Crop Mix Seeded June 15, 2013

Mix of Soybean, Cowpea, Vetch, Crimson Clover, Berseem clover, BMR Grazing corn, Sorghum Sudan, Pearl Millet, Proso Millet, Buckwheat, Sunflower, nitro radish, Winfred turnip. Seed cost around \$30.00/ acre.



Grazed 225hd of 3rd Trimester Cows on mature cover crop March 25 thru March 30. The field size is 24 acres. Could of grazed but with an impending snow storm approaching we moved cows off of field to avoid rutting of field. Did have 3 cows calve while grazing.



Seeded corn into cover crop stubble on May 22, 2014. Seeded at a population of 24,000. Parts of the field we applied 200 units of Nitrogen and in a 40 foot swath we applied no Nitrogen just a starter fertilizer. The whole field was sprayed twice with roundup. Did have a lot of volunteer cover crop come through.



Corn field picture was taken on August 3, 2014, just after a nice .45 of rain. The corn stands around 6 feet tall and there is still plenty of residue covering the ground.

We did seed the same cover crop mix this year with a few minor adjustments.