

good idea for someone to try. Also, using a horticultural oil as a burn down of existing sod would be another option. Consultants probably too worried about weed control.

Will you continue to use the practice:

Although we felt the project was cost effective, the cattle liked the corn and gained weight, we will not be planting grazing maize this year. We are planting switchgrass in the two acre field as our continuing experimentation on crops that are a solution for the summer slump. Since switchgrass is a permanent crop, there is only a one time cost for establishing it. However, we will be sacrificing yields from that two acres this year, since it is slow to establish.

What do we tell other producers:

We are firm believers in grazing and do not plan to turn back. We think its one of the best decisions we made about the farm. Grazing corn is a great idea too and we like it. Perhaps we are so in tune with grazing that we want to work with permanent crops--why we are trying swithgrass. We really like having the time to spend with the calves in the spring rather than planting. It definitely fits with our lifestyle.

Outreach

The results of our project were presented in Feb, 97 at the PASA conference. Many farmers attending the conference expressed interest in the idea and several tried it that year. One farmer from Bradford County tried it and video taped his cows grazing corn. He planted the corn in wider rows. Bradford did not have a drought in 1997 but weather conditions were dry. He cultivated his crop once and then didn't worry about the weeds. As in our project the cattle ate the weeds too. Grazing maize seems to be a good crop for dairy farmers. This farmer tried it as a direct result of my presentation the previous year.

I also discussed the results of our project with faculty at Penn State and several Extension agents. One of those agents is promoting grazing maize and Penn State has begun promoting it this year. I could see a noticeable change in acceptance of the idea over the last two and one half years.