

# Forage Systems for Cow-Calf Operations in North Alabama

► Make the right forage choices for your cow-calf operation with the help of the diagrams provided.

A sound grazing program includes combinations of adapted forage crops which will provide good grazing over the longest possible period of time. Many forage crops are adapted to Alabama conditions. Because each crop has its own distinctive pattern of forage growth, choosing the right combination of crops for a given situation isn't always easy.

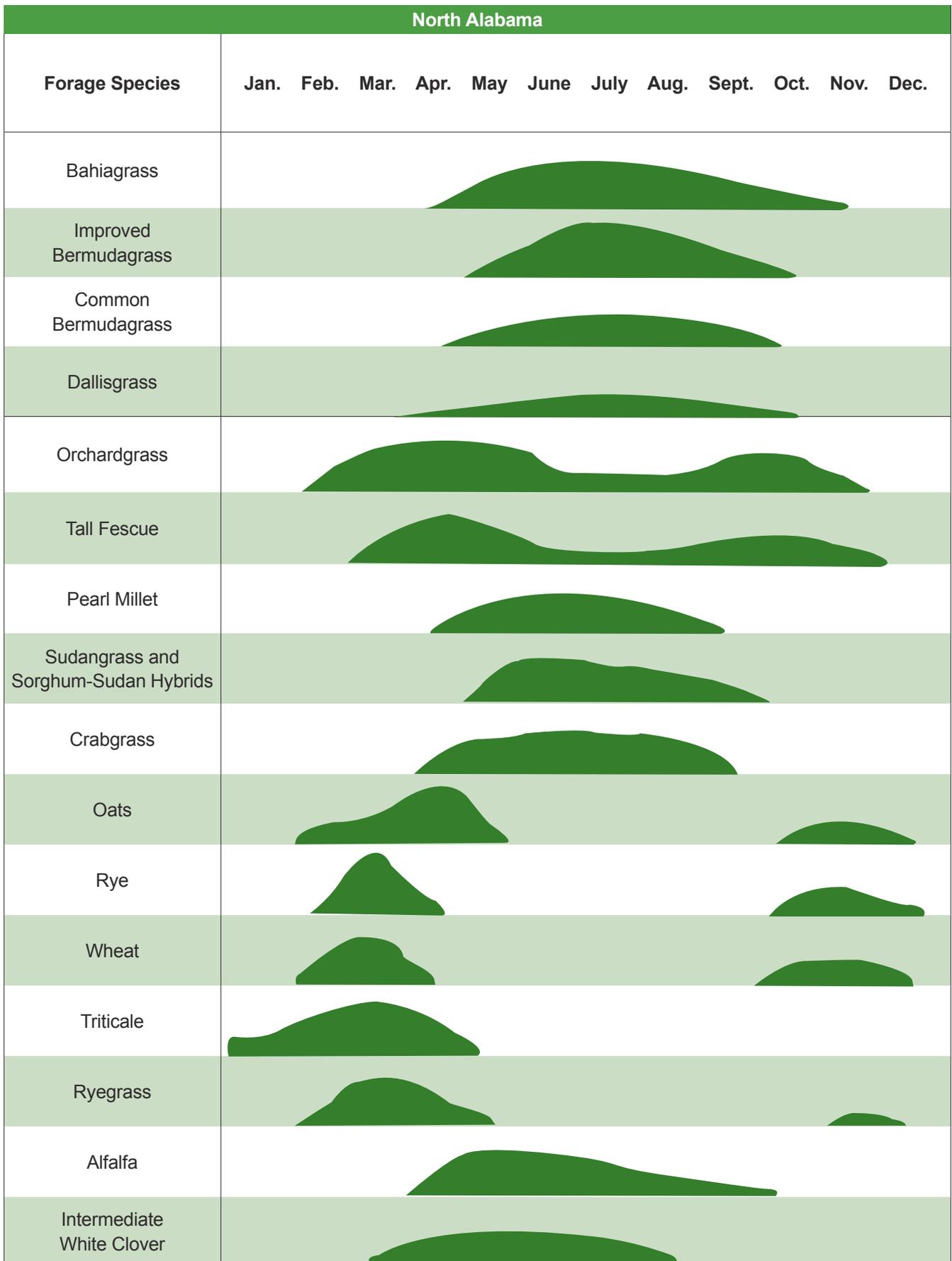
The diagrams for various crops are grouped into northern, central, and southern regions of Alabama, and also grouped as either perennials or annuals and grass or legume crops. Each diagram shows when a particular crop normally makes growth available for grazing. By looking up and down the page, you can see at a glance which crops make the best early, middle, or late season growth, and you can pick out the ones which would best complement each other in your forage program.

The height of the growth symbols is not to exact scale, but will give you an idea of the relative amounts of forage produced by the different crops. Several of the crops listed grow well in combination. Often, growing mixtures of forage crops is the best and most economical way to meet the nutritive requirements of cattle for the maximum length of time.

The diagrams give only the normal or average situation. In a given year, actual forage availability will depend on moisture availability, planting time, grazing pressure, and other factors. In some cases, accumulated forage can be grazed during times when temperature or other factors slow down plant growth.

Each crop listed is adapted to be grown within the area specified, but a crop may be adapted only under certain conditions or on certain soils. Matching a forage species to the conditions to which it is adapted is important.









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