

Grazing Cover Crops Benefits of Brassicas

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Our Business...

- Grazing-Based Farm
 - Utilize Management Intensive Grazing (MIG) & High Stock Density (HSD)
- Cattle
 - Cow/Calf
 - Yearlings
 - Custom Grazing



Brassicas

- Turnip
- Rape
- Hybrids
- Swedes
 - Kale
 - Radish

Turnip



Forage Rape



Hybrid Brassicas



Fodder Radish



Brassica Yield & Quality

- Dryland 1 – 3 Ton DM/Acre
- Irrigated 2.5 – 5 Ton DM/Acre
- Protein: Leaves 18 – 30%
- Bulbs 12 – 20%
- TDN 75 – 85%
- Moisture 85% (Green)



All Turnips Are Not Equal



What To Plant?

What Do You Want to Achieve?

- Forage
- Nitrogen Fixation/Capture
- Prevent Erosion
- Soil Health

Strength in Diversity



Legumes, Grasses, & ?

- Lentils
- Cowpeas
- Clovers
- Vetches
- Medics
- Field Peas
- Others?
- Ryegrass
- Oats
- Triticale/Wheat/Rye
- Hay Millet
- Sorghum Sudan
- Corn
- Others?

Annual Crop Grazing Use

T. Campbell, DNR, Extension

	Month of Use											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Italian Ryegrass & Oats					X	X	X	X	X	X		
Oats					X	X	X	X				
Oats & Turnips					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Turnips (fall) or other Brassicas										X	X	X
Turnips (spring) or other Brassicas							X	X	X			
Summer Annuals/Millet, Sudangrass, Sudex							X	X	X	X		
Corn		X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X
Milo								X	X	X	X	X
Rye/Triticales, Winter Wheat				X	X	X				X	X	X
Italian or Annual Ryegrass					X	X	X	X	X	X		
Soybeans								X	X	X		
Sweet Clover, Red Clover/year one								X	X	X	X	X

Photo: Steve Stoddard - West Virginia

Brassicas & Summer Annuals



Grain Sorghum & Turnips



Grazing Management

- Do Not Introduce Hungry Animals
- Introduce Slowly, Either Through Put & Take or Restricted Access Over 7 – 10 Days
- Provide Dry Matter
- Maximum of 70 – 80% of Diet as Brassicas
- Strip Graze Whenever Possible

Photo: Glenn Seaman - Brad Young

Strip Grazing Feed Bunk Management



Chocquette Photo

02/01/2003

Photo: Glenn Seaman - Brad Young



Photo by Jim Chocquette

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Animal Health Considerations

- Potential Health Problems - can be minimized or eliminated with proper grazing management
- Choking
- Bloat
- Nitrates – Usually associated with stressful growing conditions, excessive Nitrates or sudden growth from moisture
- Red Water – Usually associated with bolted & flowering plants and/or soils high in sulfur
- Rape Scald – sheep & hogs

Photo: Glenn Seaman - Brad Young



