

CONTACT:

Lori Greiner

(540) 231-5863

lgreiner@vt.edu

Summer forage conference will educate farmers about integrated control of pasture weeds

BLACKSBURG, Va., June 24, 2008 – Virginia Cooperative Extension and the Virginia Forage and Grassland Council will provide livestock producers with key strategies to control weeds in pastures and hay fields during a summer conference to be held July 30 and 31.

The conference will be offered on Wednesday, July 30, at the Days Inn, Raphine, Va.; and Thursday, July 31, at the Southern Piedmont Agricultural Research and Extension Center, Blackstone, Va. Registration will begin at 12:00 p.m. and events will end after dinner at 6:00 p.m.

“Weed control programs for pastures and hayfields that are based solely on herbicides will not be successful in most cases,” said Chris Teutsch, associate professor of crop and soil environmental sciences at Virginia Tech’s Southern Piedmont Agricultural Research and Extension Center.

“This summer’s forage conference approaches weed control in pastures and hay fields from an integrated approach. Farmers will learn how to identify common pasture weeds, about their life cycles and how to best time herbicide applications and clipping, the impact that soil fertility and grazing management can have on weed infestations, and using mixed-species grazing to control problem weeds and increase whole farm production.”

Presenters at the conference will provide information on how to implement an integrated approach to weed management using a combination of methods to increase effectiveness of herbicide applications, and ultimately increase the efficiency of the farm.

Scott Hagood, a professor of plant pathology, physiology, and weed science at Virginia Tech, will give a presentation on the identification, life cycle, and control of common pasture weeds.

Ed Rayburn, an Extension forage specialist with the West Virginia Cooperative Extension Service, will provide information on the relationship between soil fertility and weed management.

Ozzie Abaye, an associate professor of crop and soil environmental sciences at Virginia Tech, will present on the advantages of using mixed-species grazing (cows, sheep, and goats) to control weeds.

The conference will also include a pasture walk with a weed identification quiz, herbicide applicator demonstrations, and a question and answer session. A barbecue dinner will conclude the conference.

The registration fee is \$10 per person. There is no charge for attendees under 18 years old. For more information or to register for the conference, contact Margaret Kenny at (434) 292-5331.

Virginia Cooperative Extension brings the resources of Virginia's land-grant universities, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University, to the people of the commonwealth. Through a system of on-campus specialists and locally based agents, it delivers education in the areas of agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, community viability, and 4-H youth development. With a network of faculty at two universities, 107 county and city offices, 13 agricultural research and extension centers, and six 4-H educational centers, Virginia Cooperative Extension provides solutions to the problems facing Virginians today.

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