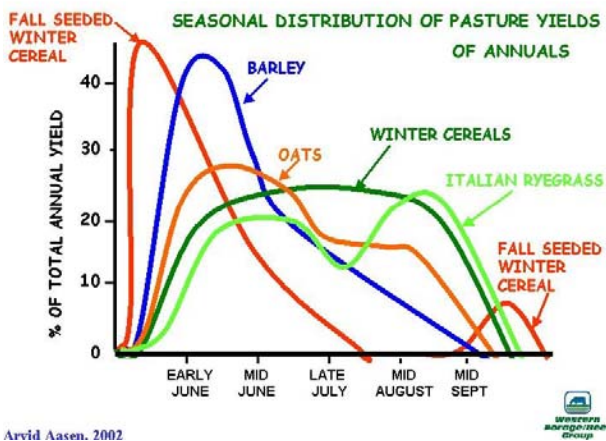


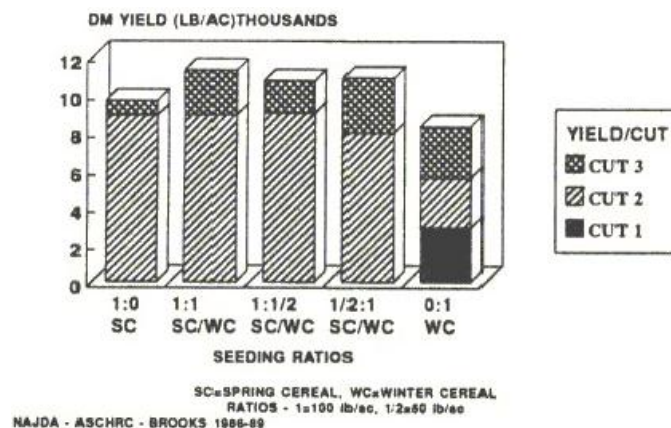
In 2010, Annual Pastures are a Great Grazing Option

By seeding annual pastures, grazers can give those perennial pastures that struggled through last year's drought a rest. If those old perennial pastures are given a rest early in the spring, they can produce surprising amounts of growth later on in the summer. If used early in the spring they will be a huge disappointment for all of this grazing year.

Seeding annuals must be done as early as possible. They require about 6 weeks to grow before they are ready to graze. You want to hold off grazing annual cereals until the seed rows have filled in to ensure the plants are well established. Barley or oats will give the fastest growth and the earliest grazing readiness. Winter cereals are slower to be ready for grazing, but have the benefit of growing more uniformly all summer and fall. They may even be used next spring in some areas, depending on grazing management and over-wintering conditions. The graph below illustrates the seasonal distribution of spring and winter cereals.

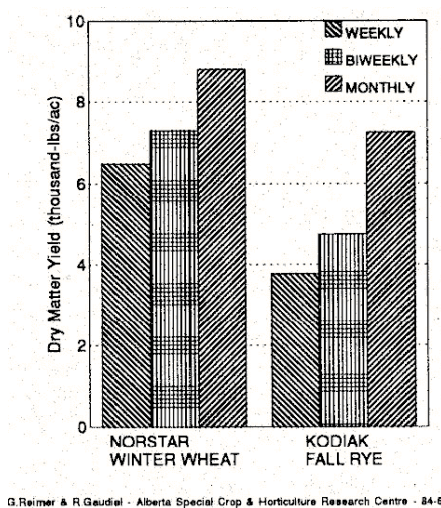


Seeding a mixture of spring and winter cereals may be the best of both worlds. Seeding rates of either can be adjusted to make the best blend for your needs. The graph below shows how by seeding a mixture of spring and winter cereals for grazing can increase dry matter yield in that pasture.



If you will be seeding a spring-winter cereal mixture for grazing, we recommend upping the seeding rates of each so that about 150% of a normal stand is seeded. For example, in a 1:1 spring: winter cereal mix, you would seed $\frac{3}{4}$ normal seeding rate of the spring cereal and $\frac{3}{4}$ normal seeding rate of the winter cereal.

Fertility should be used based on soil test results, moisture potential and projected yields. Fertilizing after each grazing will further increase yield. Grazing rotationally allows rest and recovery time for those plants, which will lead to higher yields in those annual pastures. Research conducted by Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development found that grazing winter wheat or fall rye pastures for one week followed by three weeks of rest (the monthly treatment) rather than grazing each week or every two weeks was the most productive way to graze these spring-seeded winter cereals.



Finally, it is important to use a high calcium mineral with magnesium when grazing annuals. Calcium deficiency was a common problem in most cow herds last winter. Cereal feedstuffs tend to be higher in phosphorus, creating a situation where calcium and magnesium supplementation becomes crucial. These two minerals are important for rebreeding and preventing grass or winter tetany in your cow herd during this grazing season.

Written by
 Stephanie Kosinski and Grant Lastiwka.
 Forage Specialists
 Ag-Info Centre
 5712-48 Avenue
 Camrose, AB T4V 0K1
 Tel: 310-FARM (3276) Fax:(780)679-5175