

Does Fall Fertilization in Management of Bahiagrass Pastures Improve Cattle Performance?

Gene Lollis

Ranch Manager

MacArthur Agro-ecology Research Center

Lake Placid, Florida

Cattle operations vary from location to location. Management practices used at the MacArthur Agro-ecology Research Center may not work at your operation. It is important to evaluate management practices and apply them to your particular situation. Management practices should be reviewed and modified to meet your operation's economic and production needs.

Fall fertilization of bahiagrass is not a management practice used at the MacArthur Agro-Ecology Research Center. The following points were reviewed when planning our management strategy for bahiagrass pastures:

► **Evaluation of Growing Season**

When do you need to improve forage quantity and quality of bahiagrass in your particular area?

► **Fertilization Timing**

Spring and fall fertilization, versus spring ferti-

zation only: When will you get the most benefit from fertilizing?

► **Stocking Rate**

What capacity can your pastures support during a five-month winter period?

► **Type of Grazing System**

What are the advantages of rotational grazing?

► **Economics**

Fall fertilization, versus alternative management practices (grazing, supplementation).

Based on the above factors, fall fertilization of bahiagrass pastures is not an economically productive management practice for our ranch. Managing forage through grazing and providing necessary supplementation are economically feasible practices that provide improved production and cattle performance on our operation.

NOTES: