California Alfalfa & Grains Symposium

The California Alfalfa and Forage Symposium is partnering with the California Wheat Commission this year to put together a conference that not only addresses current issues on alfalfa and forages, but also many topics specific to wheat production. The symposium is being held at the DoubleTree Hotel in Sacramento on December 11th and 12th. This comprehensive conference will focus on the many topics related to forage and grain crops, including global issues, economics and crop production techniques. Presentations from experts include discussions on water management, fertilizers and nutrients, crop quality and pest management. There is an extensive associated trade show with dozens of vendors. The Alfalfa Symposium is intended for farmers, pest control advisers, certified crop advisors, industry members, agency representatives and anyone who wishes to become informed about important issues related to alfalfa and grains.

There will be a pre-conference tour on December 10th of the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta region with an emphasis on agriculture wildlife, natural resource and water issues, especially as related to forage and grain crops. The symposium tours always sell out so sign up early if you want to attend.

To register or for more information go to: http://alfalfa.ucdavis.edu. Early registration and hotel deadline for group rate ends Nov 19.

The University of California Alfalfa & Forage News Blog
Presented by UC Cooperative Extension and yes, YOU are invited to subscribe!!

This is an ‘informal electronic communications network' (BLOG) which provides information about things of interest to alfalfa & forage growers. There will be a new communication every week related to something of interest to alfalfa and forage producers and allied industry, including forage production, economics, marketing, industry trends, and pest management. You can read about new things, comment, and contribute!

Alfalfa & Forage News: http://ucanr.edu/blogs/Alfalfa

Here are the blogs that are currently posted.
- CA Alfalfa & Grains Symposium to be held December 10-12 in Sacramento
- Fall is the Time to Fertilize!
- Three cornered alfalfa hopper update
- Leafhoppers and Overwintering: a southern California perspective
- Proper Herbicide Application Timing Critical in Seedling alfalfa
- Hay exports to China create controversy due to ‘virtual water exports’
Proper Herbicide Application Timing Critical in Seedling Alfalfa

by Steve Orloff Farm Advisor, Siskiyou County

Many growers have good intentions when it comes to controlling weeds in seedling alfalfa but often fields end up being treated beyond the optimum window. Proper application timing is critical for successful weed control in seedling alfalfa. Not only do weeds reduce the nutritional quality of the alfalfa and reduce alfalfa vigor, but weeds in seedling alfalfa can affect stand density potentially resulting in reduced alfalfa yield over the life of the stand. When herbicides are applied late, weed control can be improved somewhat by increasing the herbicide rate, but that is costly and often increases the potential for alfalfa injury.

In order to get the “most bang for your buck”, treat seedling alfalfa fields during the optimum window. The old adage small weeds are easier to kill is true, especially for difficult-to-control weeds. In addition, by controlling weeds when they are small, there is less time for them to compete with the alfalfa and impact alfalfa vigor and stand density. Research I conducted years ago showed numerous seedling alfalfa herbicides were nearly twice as effective when applied at the 3 trifoliate leaf stage of the alfalfa than when the application was delayed a few weeks and applied at the 6 to 9 trifoliate leaf stage. Therefore, for conventional alfalfa it is usually best to make applications at the 2-to-3 trifoliate leaf stage for herbicides such as Raptor® (imazamox) or Pursuit® (imazethapyr). Late-emerging weeds can be a concern with some herbicides but this is usually not a problem with Rapto®r or Pursuit® because they have soil residual activity as well as contact activity.

A more difficult question can be when to apply contact herbicides that have no soil residual activity. Factors to consider include the alfalfa canopy, weed size and whether the herbicide is used alone or as part of a tank-mix combination. Selective grass herbicides are usually applied as a tank-mix with Raptor® or Pursuit® to control both grasses and broadleaf weeds in a single application so the Raptor® or Pursuit® timing ordinarily dictates when the treatment is made. When a grass herbicide is applied alone, pay close attention to the size of the grasses and the amount of bare soil. Treat when most of the soil is covered by the alfalfa canopy but before the grasses get too large (less than 6 – 8 inches tall is usually best). Another important point with grass herbicides is to apply them while the grasses are actively growing and not moisture stressed.

With the advent of Roundup Ready® alfalfa, many growers are questioning when is the optimum time to apply Roundup® since the alfalfa is tolerant at all growth stages and glyphosate is capable of killing relatively large weeds. My personal observation and research results have shown that the best time is a little later than for Raptor or Pursuit. Since glyphosate does not have soil residual activity, applications made at the 4-6 trifoliate leaf stage of the alfalfa have been effective. With this timing there is usually enough alfalfa cover that late-emerging weeds are insignificant and the weeds have not competed excessively with the alfalfa. However, apply earlier when more Roundup®-tolerant weeds are present (such as cheeseweed, filaree, black mustard, knotweed, clover, etc.) or when weed competition is severe.
Monday, December 10

8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Delta Agricultural Tour: This is a full-day tour of the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta region of Northern California, with an emphasis on agriculture, wildlife, natural resources and water issues, especially as related to forage and grain crops. Separate registration cost includes box lunch and refreshments. Space is limited, so sign up early.

7-11 a.m. and 4-6 p.m. Exhibitor Set-up

6:00-7:00 p.m. Welcome Reception at the DoubleTree with light refreshments and a no-host bar

6:00-8:00 p.m. Early Registration at the DoubleTree Hotel

For full details of program and registration online, go to http://ucanr.edu/sites/Alfalfa/

Tuesday, December 11

6:30 a.m. Registration
7:00 Exhibits Open
8:00 Introductions–Dan Putnam, UC Davis, Conference Chair
8:05 Welcome–Karen Ross, Secretary, California Department of Food and Agriculture

Industry Economic Trends—Markets, Global Issues, Dairies

Moderator: Steve Orloff, UCCE Siskiyou County, Yreka, CA

8:10 Current Hay & Forage Market Trends—Seth Hoyt, The Hoyt Report, Ione, CA
8:35 Global Wheat Market Trends—Steve Wirsching, Director, US Wheat Associates West Coast Office, Portland, OR
9:00 Economic Trends for Dairies in California—Bill Van Damm, Alliance of Western Milk Producers, Sacramento, CA
9:25 Discussion
9:35 Break

Megatrends Affecting Alfalfa and Grain

Moderator: Janice Cooper, California Wheat Commission, Woodland, CA

10:35 Megatrends: What about California Water Prospects?—Sarge Green, CSU, Fresno, CA
11:00 Megatrends: Emerging Water Quality Requirements for Irrigated Lands—Joe Karkoski, Irrigated Lands Program, Central Valley Water Quality Control Board
Megatrends: What are Strategies for the Future of Water-use Efficient Alfalfa Production Systems?— Dan Putnam, UC Davis

Discussion

Banquet Lunch

**Breakout Session I. Producing Alfalfa from A to Z:** What are the most important things to remember about producing a high yielding, high quality alfalfa crop?

*Moderators: Rachael Long, UCCE Yolo County, Woodland, CA and Steve Orloff, UCCE Siskiyou County, Yreka, CA*

1:30  Key Issues for Stand Establishment—Dan Putnam, Department of Plant Sciences, UC Davis
1:50  Variety Selection—Carol Frate, UCCE Tulare County, Tulare, CA
2:10  Key Strategies for Weed Management—Mick Canevari, UCCE Emeritus, Stockton, CA
2:30  What are the Most Important Things to Remember about Insect Management?—Larry Godfrey, Department of Entomology and Nematology, UC Davis
2:50  Discussion
3:00  Break
3:30  What are the Most Important Soil Fertility Issues for Alfalfa?—Tim Hays, Wilbur Ellis Co., Lancaster, CA
3:50  Key Irrigation Management Practices for Alfalfa—Blake Sanden, UCCE Kern County, Bakersfield, CA
4:10  Harvest Management Principles—Steve Orloff, UCCE Siskiyou County, Yreka, CA
4:30  What are the Most Important Alfalfa Quality Attributes?—Ed DePeters, Department of Animal Science, UC Davis
4:50  Discussion
5:00  Adjourn

**Breakout Session II. Producing Wheat from A to Z:** What are the absolutely most important things to remember about producing a high yielding, high quality wheat crop?

*Moderators: Janice Cooper, California Wheat Commission and Doug Munier, UCCE Glenn County, Orland, CA*

1:30  Wheat Variety Selection—Lee Jackson, CE Specialist Emeritus, UC Davis, CA
1:50  Stand Establishment—Kent Brittan, UCCE Yolo/Solano Counties, Woodland, CA
2:10  Weed Management in Wheat—Steve Wright, UCCE Tulare/Kings Counties, Tulare, CA
2:30  Nitrogen Management—Steve Orloff, UCCE Siskiyou County, Yreka, CA
2:50  Discussion
3:00  Break
3:30  Irrigation Management—Mike Ottman, School of Plant Sciences, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ
3:50  Fungicides for Stripe Rust—Doug Munier, UCCE Glenn County, Orland, CA
4:10  Understanding Grain Quality—Gene Aksland, Agronomic Services, Visalia, CA
4:30  Marketing Grains—Geoff Schulz, Penny Newman Grain, Elk Grove, CA
4:50  Discussion
5:00  Adjourn

5:00-6:30 p.m. Exhibitor's Reception at the DoubleTree with light refreshments and no-host bar

**Dinner** (on your own)
Wednesday, December 12
6:15 a.m. CAFA Breakfast—See CAFA table for tickets

Crop Biology and Innovations in Genetics: Wheat and Alfalfa
   Moderator: Dan Putnam, UC Davis

8:00 Introductions
8:05 Understanding Wheat Growth Development to Maximize Yield Potential—Mike Flowers, Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR
8:30 Current Advances in Genetic Improvement in Wheat—Jorge Dubcovsky, Department of Plant Sciences, UC Davis
8:55 Understanding Growth and Development of Alfalfa to Enhance Management for Forage Yield and Quality—Larry R. Teuber, Department of Plant Sciences, UC Davis
9:20 Envisioning the Future of Genetic Improvement in Alfalfa—Dan Gardener, Dairyland Seeds, Sloughhouse, CA
9:40 Envisioning the Future of Genetic Improvement in Alfalfa—Mark McCaslin, Forage Genetics International, Minneapolis, MI
10:00 Discussion
10:10 Break

Current Trends in Markets and Technology
   Moderator: TBA

10:35 Hay Export Situation and Prospects—World Demand for Forages—John Szczepanski, US Forage Export Council, Portland, OR
11:00 Innovations in Forage and Grain Harvesting Technology—Matthew Digman, USDA-ARS Dairy Forage Center, Madison, WI
11:25 Observations on Conservation Tillage with Forages and Grains and Promoting Change in Agriculture—Dino Giacomazzi, Dairy Farmer, Hanford, CA
11:50 Discussion
12:10 Adjourn

Marsha Campbell Mathews
UCCE Stanislaus County Farm Advisor

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