

FORAGE RESEARCH UPDATES: Focus on Small Grain Forage

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NORTH DAKOTA

Cereal/Pea Mixtures: When to Harvest?

Pat Carr - NDSU

Cereal/pea mixtures, and particularly oat/pea, provide higher quality forage than cereal crops alone, generally 3-5 percentage points greater CP, and lower ADF and NDF concentrations. As with cereal crops alone, the stage at which cereal/pea mixtures are cut for hay or silage has a tremendous impact on yield/quality, demonstrated in a recent ND study where barley, oats, barley/pea, and oat/pea yield and CP were compared at four growth stages ranging from heading to hard dough. For cereals alone and cereal/pea mixtures, forage yield was greatest at the soft dough stage, but forage CP was greatest at heading. Yield and quality of cereals and cereal/pea mixtures were optimized between milk and soft dough stages.