

U-Pick Case Study #3

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Adrian Oosterhoff, Quick BC

At a glance

Located near Round Lake along Highway 16 is producer Adrian Oosterhoff. Adrian was re-seeding a forage stand after growing cereal silage on the parcel to have an opportunity to prepare the land for the perennial forage stand.

U-Pick Criteria

1. Purpose of forage:
Hay
2. Desired plant type:
TAME SPECIES
3. Desired stand longevity:
AT LEAST 10 YEARS
4. Avg. time for regrowth:
30-45 DAYS REST
5. Acidity level
pH ~6

FIELD DESCRIPTION



A field of 30 acres varying in soil type and drainage patterns was re-seeded to perennial forage. Adrian used a three year cycle of growing cereals for silage to have an opportunity to reduce weed pressure on the field. In the fourth year of growing cereals, the parcel was under-seeded with the perennial forage stand. A 7ac corner of the parcel was spring flooded (outlined in yellow below) and seeded in fall instead. The variable drainage pattern on the parcel makes it challenging to use a uniform approach.

The desired end use for this field is hay with an opportunity for fall grazing. A main goal is to establish a long-lasting stand and reduce the need for future break and re-seed. Instead, Adrian is looking for alternative ways to maintain the forage stand focusing on grazing and nutrient management.

FORAGE U-PICK SUGGESTIONS



Legumes

alfalfa
cicer milkvetch

Grasses

Kentucky bluegrass
creeping red fescue

Pro Tip

For best results when working with the Forage U-Pick Tool, choose 1-3 selection criteria that are the highest priorities for the field. This will provide a wider selection of suggested legumes and grasses.

Identify your Limiting Factor

In this case study, 5 criteria were selected. The most limiting one being the short rest period. Adrian indicated a desire to utilize the pasture 2-3 times. Based on the Forage U-Pick tool, this would result in a short 30-45 day rest period. Depending on the rotational grazing practices on this particular field, this may or may not be enough rest for the plants. Selecting a longer rest period of 40-60 or even 60-80 days will significantly increase the suggested legume and grass species which could be considered.

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PRODUCER BLEND



Adrian blended a custom mixture with seed sourced through the Smithers feed store.

Legumes

20% Rambler alfalfa
20% Algonquin alfalfa

Grasses

35% orchard grass
10% smooth brome
5% timothy
5% creeping red fescue
5% rye



Going from Narrow to Wide

When using the Forage U-Pick tool, it is suggested to pick 1-3 field criteria which are of highest priority. When working with the tool, Adrian found it beneficial to start with all available field criteria first. This provided Adrian a narrow selection first and an insight of which forages would fit all of the site criteria. Next, Adrian reduced the number of field criteria selected to be presented with a wider selection of suitable forages. He felt that this approach worked well for him to decide which forages would be suitable based on which field criteria.

Whether you start with a narrow selection, choosing as many relevant field criteria as available, or a wide selection, choosing only the 1-3 field criteria of highest importance, the results from tool should still be compared against site specific experience and /or reviewed with a professional agrologist.



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