Time of Year, Botanical Composition, and Forage Quality Effects on Calibration of a Rising Plate Meter in New York Pastures. (C06-fick092037-Poster)

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Abstract:

Commercial dairy farmers in the Northeast who graze lactating cows have identified better accuracy in estimating pasture yield as a key to improving pasture management and milk production. Rising plate meters can provide reasonably accurate and fast estimates of pasture yield provided they are adequately calibrated. We have been working with a commercially available rising plate meter in pastures dominated by orchardgrass (Dactylis glomerata L.), white clover (Trifolium repens L.), Kentucky bluegrass (Poa pratensis L.), perennial ryegrass (Lolium perenne L.), and other perennial species common in the region. Equations to predict available herbage (pasture yield) are affected by botanical composition and time of year, and useful prediction equations can be determined. However, we have found no significant statistical relationship between meter readings and various measurements of forage quality. A problem to be resolved in the calibration procedure is the identification of the most useful statistical procedures to group calibration data.

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