Grazing Height of Limpograss Pastures Affects Invasion by Vaseygrass and Bermudagrass. (C06-newman091350-Oral)

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Abstract:

Vaseygrass (Paspalum urvillei) and common bermudagrass (Cynodon dactylon) are potential weeds in limpograss (Hemarthria altissima) pastures, and grazing management may affect interspecies competition. Changes in frequency, density, and cover were measured in 0.5-ha limpograss pastures grazed during 2 yr to stubbles of 20, 40, and 60 cm. Vaseygrass plant density decreased for all treatments, but the decline was greatest in 20-cm and least in 60-cm swards (-4.4 and -0.4 plants/m2). A similar trend was observed for vaseygrass cover. Bermudagrass frequency (+0.17) and cover (seven percentage units) increased when pastures were grazed to a 20-cm stubble, but for heights of 40 and 60 cm bermudagrass encroached less. Results show that continuous stocking of limpograss pastures is effective in reducing density and cover of vaseygrass across a wide range of grazing heights, but the response is most pronounced when canopies are closely grazed. Close grazing (20 cm), however, favors spread of common bermudagrass in limpograss pastures. Thus, grazing continuously stocked limpograss to a canopy height of approximately 40 cm appears to provide the best overall control of these two weed species.

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