



## **Establishing Winter Annuals**

J. Ben Knox, NCDA&CS regional agronomist

August 30, 2007

Establishing winter annuals for fall/winter grazing is an option for consideration. Hopefully, we will get some rain, and this will enable the planting of winter grazing ryes. These crops need to be planted as soon as possible to get some growth for grazing. Many times once they are up and growing you will be able to graze them in about 30 days.

The suggested seeding rate for ryegrass is 20 to 25 lb/acre. Grazing ryes should be seeded at 90 to 100 lb/acre. All other small grains should be seeded at their usual rate.

Evaluate pH and fertility levels through soil sampling as soon as possible. Apply lime, phosphorus and potassium according to soil reports. In establishing winter annuals, apply nitrogen at a rate of 50 lb/acre. After the field has been grazed once, you may want to apply another 40 pounds of nitrogen per acre, if it is not too late in the season.

Rotational grazing is advised to maximize the forage's feed value and keep the cows eating the same growth stage of forage. Rotational grazing allows the grass to build sugars so the plant will recuperate quicker and the stand will last longer.