

CORNER POST

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Fertilizing Pastures - Holiday Schedule

Good soil fertility is extremely important for productive pastures. Even the best, most improved forage species and varieties need adequate amounts of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium, as well as secondary nutrients, to perform their best. We always recommend testing soils first to determine how much fertilizer one may need.



If soil test results show that fertilizer is needed, a good program to follow is to divide your recommended fertilizer amount (based also on your annual production goals) over our three summer holidays: Memorial Day, 4th of July and Labor Day. Here's a brief snapshot of what those three applications offer:

- **Memorial Day** – happening after spring flush slows initial growth and boosts stand productivity into summer
- **4th of July** – jump starts pastures for fall and winter stockpiling
- **Labor Day** – extends the grazing season; allows energy reserves to be restored for winter and the following spring

If three applications do not make sense, because of time and/or budget, then transitioning to two treatments still works – Memorial Day & Labor Day.

Nutrient Removal per ton of Mixed Legume/Grass Harvested	
	Lbs removed/ton forage
• Nitrogen (N)	35 - 50
• Phosphate (P ₂ O ₅)	10 - 14
• Potash (K ₂ O)	42 - 54
• Magnesium (Mg)	4 - 6
• Sulfur (S)	5 - 6

Nutrient applications should be made based on production goals.

Take Note – Timing of Fertilizer Application is Important:

- Since many cool-season grasses grow vigorously in spring on their own, applying additional N can hurt overall competitiveness and thus impede growth of other components, notably legumes
- Avoid applying N during extreme dry conditions, as leaf burn can occur
- It doesn't make sense to time fertilizer applications when large weather events are forecasted – fertilizer is lost to streams and waterways instead of getting to the target

About The Corner Post

The Corner Post is a periodic email series with timely forage tips from the agronomic experts at Forage First and La Crosse Seed. If you have a question you'd like us to answer, contact us: info@laxseed.com or 800.356.7333