

# Rain Has Caused Clover To Become Too Much Of A Good Thing

SPRINGFIELD, MO.

**F**or a number of years, MU extension specialists have pointed out the importance of clover in pastures. That plea for the use of clover continues since it is a source of free nitrogen that can provide for companion grasses and the improved nutritional value of forages.

However, for some landowners, it has become too much of a good thing this year according to Tim Schnakenberg, agronomy specialist with University of Missouri Extension.

According to Schnakenberg, MU Extension specialists typically recommend that pastures have about 25 to 30 percent clover mixed with forage grasses.

“Because of higher than normal rainfall and unusual timing of rain events in the last few years, clover has gotten much thicker in some fields. In some cases it has crowded out grass stands,” said Schnakenberg.

Fertilizing with nitrogen in the fall and early spring is one way to encourage the fescue to come back, but that also keeps the clover healthy. The other approach is to spray piclo-

ram, triclopyr, 2,4-D, dicamba products to kill it out and start over.

Schnakenberg says producers should be cautious if using picloram (an active ingredient of Grazon P+D, Gunslinger and Hired Hand) in this situation because it will stay in the soil long enough that it may interfere with germination of legumes if frost seeding this winter.

“If the fescue is already smothered out, it may be time for a complete renovation with new grass planted in late August or early September,” said Schnakenberg.

A chemical burndown can be used if a producer needs to start from scratch using glyphosate or Gramoxone. Completely removing clover is sometimes difficult unless dicamba is used but Schnakenberg says there are some important plant-back restrictions that need to be followed if using this product.

“Another approach is to use 2,4-D to set back or kill back the clover, then reestablish grass using a no-till drill. Be sure to closely follow all plant-back restrictions listed on labels before no-tilling this fall,” said Schnakenberg.     Δ



Link Directly To: **EQUIPMENT TECHNOLOGIES**