



Pasture Management Fall Check-List

The fall time chore list is long, no doubt, but please don't forget to check these off your "to-do" list if you want to keep your pasture (and your livestock) happy and healthy.

- ◇ Avoid overgrazing. Overgrazing can negatively affect plants' ability to prepare for over-wintering by depleting the plants carbohydrate reserve and restricting new root growth. Also, weeds germinate on bare soil.
- ◇ Test your soil. Fall is an excellent time to test your soil for P, K, pH, SMP (buffer pH), and residual nitrate (NO₃) in the top foot of soil. This is the best way to identify what supplementation your pasture will benefit from.
- ◇ Fertilize. Applying needed lime and fertilizer is very cost effective compared to spraying and reseeding a pasture to improve a forage stand on poor soil. If the results of a soil test show fertilizer is needed, chemical and 'natural' fertilizers (i.e. manure) are equally good options and both are available in our area, choose the fertilizer that most cost effective for your situation.
- ◇ Consider mowing. If your pasture was understocked during the summer, weeds may have grown to maturity and are now preparing to set seed. Mowing tall vegetation will prevent weed seed from spreading by wind and will give forage vegetation the competitive advantage.
- ◇ Weed control. Time herbicide treatments for when ample moisture has returned to the soil and plants are actively growing, fall can be a great time to apply a systematic herbicide to perennial and young biennial weeds. Plan on monitoring weed activity in fields and pastures throughout the winter so that you'll be ready to treat weeds in the spring if necessary.
- ◇ Reseed or establish new pastures. Fall offers excellent growing conditions for the establishment of new forage crops, but wait until moisture has returned to the soil before you seed.
- ◇ Bookmark or print out some winter reading material to further your knowledge and help improve your pasture management plan. [The Western Washington and Oregon Pasture Calendar PNW 699](#) is a comprehensive guide on managing forage and pasture west of the Cascades. [Pasture and Grazing Management in the Northwest PNW 614](#) is another great publication that offers more information on rotational grazing as a pasture management tool.

If you have questions or concerns about weed control in pasture management, or any other land management questions, contact Lewis County Noxious Weed Control #(360) 740-1215 or visit us on the web <https://lewiscountywa.gov/departments/weed-control/>

