

September Forage Management

Planting

- September is ideal for establishing cool-season forages in Southern Missouri. Recommended species include:
- - Tall Fescue (Drilled: 10–15 lbs/acre)
 - Plant before Sept. 15
 - Orchardgrass (10–15 lbs/acre) – Late August to early September
 - Red Clover (8–12 lbs/acre) – Aug. 15 to Sept. 15
 - Ladino Clover (1–3 lbs/acre) – Early September
 - Hairy Vetch (25–30 lbs/acre) – October to Nov. 15

Mixtures like Tall Fescue + Red Clover or Orchardgrass + Ladino Clover offer balanced nutrition and extended grazing windows

Fertilizer

Soil fertility is critical for successful forage establishment and productivity.

Key tips:

- Soil Testing: Test every 2–3 years to guide lime and fertilizer applications.
- Nitrogen (N): Apply 40–60 lbs/acre in early September to boost fall growth and stockpiling.
- Phosphorus (P) & Potassium (K): Apply based on soil test results. These nutrients support root development and winter hardiness.
- Lime: Maintain soil pH between 6.0 and 6.5 for optimal nutrient uptake.



This is the second driest August
Any seeding or fertilizer applications should be paused until rainfall forecasts improve

Grazing Management

Stockpiling tall fescue is a cost-effective strategy for winter forage:

- Begin in early September by applying nitrogen and removing livestock.
- Target 60–100 days of growth before grazing begins in November.
- Strip grazing improves utilization and reduces waste.

Stockpiled forage can reduce hay feeding and improve animal performance during winter months..

Weather Impacts

- Historical August average for Missouri is typically around 3.5 to 4.0 inches of rainfall statewide.
- In August 2025, many areas in Southern Missouri received well below normal precipitation, with some locations reporting less than 0.5 inches for the entire month
- By early September, 94% of Missouri was classified as either Abnormally Dry (D0) or in Moderate Drought (D1)
- This was a sharp increase from 0% drought coverage at the end of July.

Impacts included:

- Declining soil moisture
- Poor pasture conditions
- Supplemental feeding and water hauling for livestock
- The **driest August on record** in Missouri was **1909**, with just **0.47 inches** statewide

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