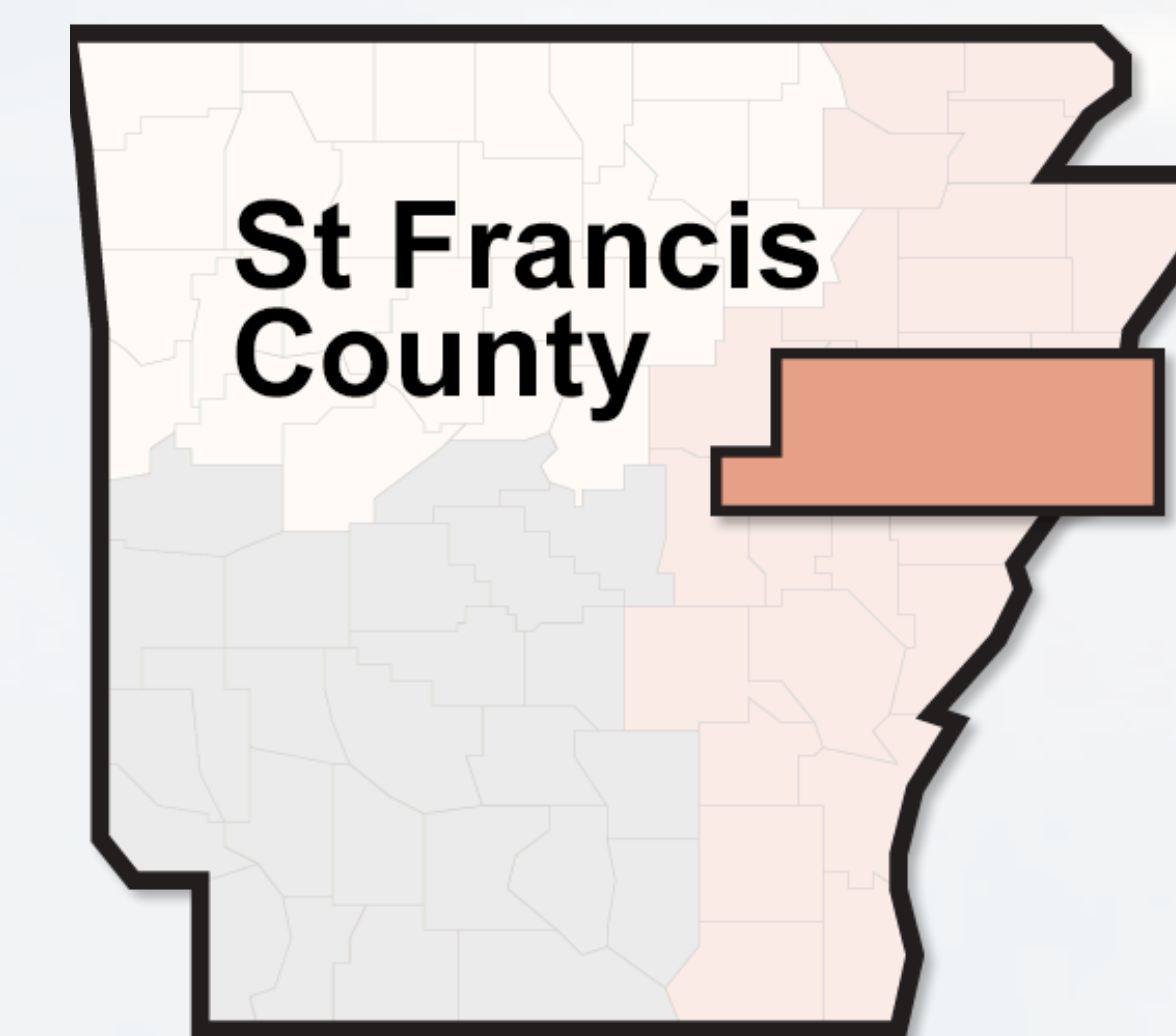


# On Farm Expectations of Annual Ryegrass in Arkansas

S. Stone, K. Simon, J.O.C. Kubesch, & H. D. Warren



## Introduction:

Repeated fall droughts have made producers question the efficacy of planting annual ryegrass in Arkansas. Recommendations developed in the late 2010s were studied under wetter fall patterns than has been seen in the early 2020s. The disconnect between these recommendations and producer perceptions has challenged the adoption of regular overseeding of annual ryegrass. However, the cost of hay and feed for winter feeding is the largest expense of maintaining herds. 2024 USDA-NASS Arkansas estimates reported hay prices averaging \$145/ton. Planting annual ryegrass is a pasture management practice that might reduce winter feed cost for beef producers.

## Objective:

An on-farm demonstration was conducted to evaluate the utilization of annual ryegrass to reduce winter feed costs.

## Methods and Materials:

- 22 acres of warm season grass pasture was grazed down below 4" in mid-October 2024.
- Annual ryegrass (Marshall) was no-till drilled at 25 lb./acre on October 26.
- Cattle were taken off the pasture on November 1.
- 90 lb./acre N acre was applied on February 14, 2025.
- The grazing period was March 14 to June 1.
- Ryegrass was rotationally grazed using temporary electric fence.

## Results:

- Twenty-four animal units (AU = 1,000 lb. cow) grazed the ryegrass for 75 days
- Dry matter yield was estimated to be at least 4,000 lb./acre.
  - Based on the number of animal unit grazing days
  - Assuming 50 % Forage utilization
- Forage quality was 25.1% CP (crude protein) and 74.8% TDN (total digestible nutrients).
- No hay or supplement was fed while grazing the ryegrass

## Conclusion:

- Total savings between rotationally grazing annual ryegrass vs. feeding hay and supplement was \$1,340 or \$55.80 per animal unit.



**UofA** DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE  
RESEARCH & EXTENSION  
University of Arkansas System