

2022 USAFRI Research Project Objectives

Alfalfa in the South Production Videos: Developing Digital Educational Resources to Improve Alfalfa Production Systems in the Southern US **University of Georgia - Tucker**

Project Award: \$14,000

Justification:

- The way people want to receive information is constantly changing. A fact that was highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic; there is a critical need for easily accessible, affordable, informative, vetted, short, focused, digital educational information. This is especially evident in agricultural systems. Recent surveys of Extension professionals within the UGA Beef and UGA Forage Extension Teams focused on the way we disseminate information resulted in three key themes: 1) While manuscripts are necessary to develop unbiased research-based recommendations for producers – these resources are often far too in-depth and technical to be practically used by the public; 2) While Extension bulletins are written in a manner that is more user-friendly, fully developed bulletins that cover all aspects of a broad topic (i.e., Alfalfa management in Georgia) are useful during planning stage but often too long to be useful for producers/agents who are troubleshooting in the field; and 3) The request heard loud and clear amongst all ages of Extension professionals are the development of user-friendly, easy access, quick references to answer specific questions in field.

In an attempt to meet this demand PI Baxter developed a series of web-based videos to answer common questions in forage management. Videos were developed to be precise in information, brief in length, and focused on answering specific questions/addressing specific common practices. Videos were released via social media outlets and are housed on the Georgia Forages Youtube channel. Examples of production based videos (i.e. calibrating a boom sprayer, sprayer maintenance, and calibrating a No-Till Drill) can be found at https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLRQNVGGLtZdcLtnU_9KL-BZnWy_sOB7D. Success of these videos have led to a push from producers and technical service providers for development of further information presented in this format. As alfalfa production is seeing a resurgence in Georgia, as well as across the South, development of digital educational materials specifically focused on establishment, management, and use of alfalfa would be timely. Elevating these materials to a broader scale in conjunction with the National Alfalfa Forage Alliance could result in increased knowledge and awareness of alfalfa production, increased access to vetted research based digital information, improved management and increased alfalfa production in the South.

Objectives:

- The objectives of this project are to develop 1) a series of digital videos focused on the production and use of Alfalfa in the South; and 2) compile videos into a web-based format for easy access for producers to ultimately enhance adoption and improve alfalfa production success in the Southern US.