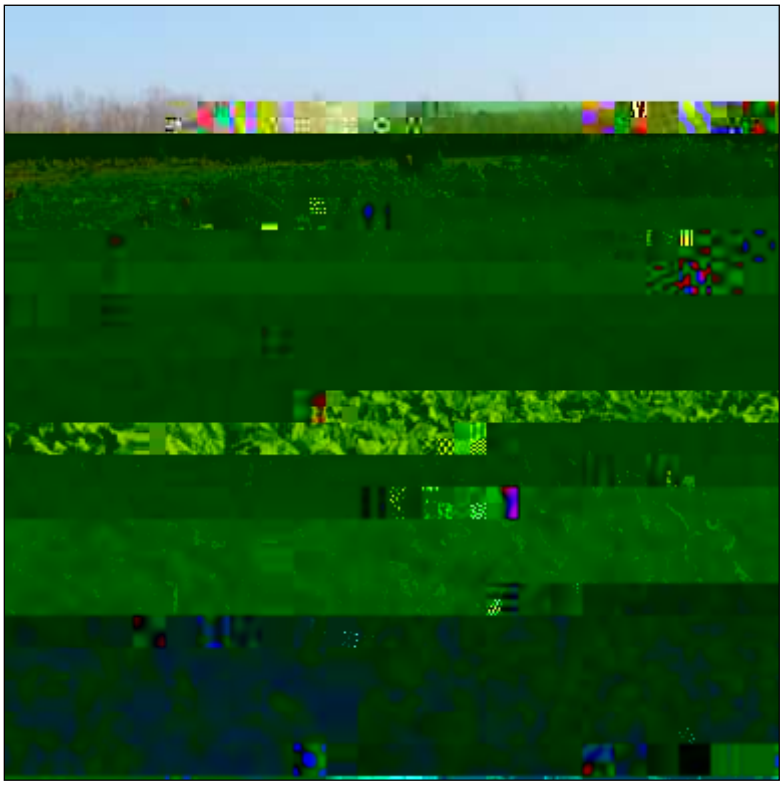
NORTHWEST CROPS & SOILS PROGRAM

2014 Forage Brassica Planting Date Trial



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UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT EXTENSION
CULTIVATING HEALTHY COMMUNITIE

2014 FORAGE BRASSICA PLANTING DATE TRIAL

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Forage brassica can provide a near-concentrate type diet late in the grazing season. This allows for an extra grazing opportunity after annual row crops are harvested, and establishes forage to fill a gap in feed quality and supply. These crops can provide a high-quality feed in a short period of time, fitting well into rotations of other crops, extending the grazing season, and reducing reliance on expensive commercial feed inputs. To graze forage brassica in the fall the crop must be planted in the late summer. Optimum planting dates have not been determined for the Northeast. In 2014, the University o
Northwest Crops & Soils Program conducted a forage brassica planting date trial to evaluate yield and quality of this annual crop.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In 2014, a planting date trial was conducted at Borderview Research Farm in Alburgh, VT, in order to determine optimum planting dates for forage brassica (Figure 1). Appin turnip was the variety evaluated in this experiment and the seed Agriseed in Ronks, PA.

The seedbed at Borderview Research Farm was prepared using standard local practices; incl 00 0 1 162.86 396.43 Tm[se)7(ea)8(l)-4(96.43 Tm[p)111 0 0 1 187.58 551.38 Tm[.)]T

RESULTS

Using an onsite Davis Instruments Vantage Pro2 Weather Station at Borderview Research Farm in Alburgh, VT, weather data are summarized for the 2014 forage brassica growing season (Table 2). August was slightly cooler than the historical average (1981-2010), with September being average temperature, and October slightly warmer. T

Figure 2. Average plant height of forage brassica on 3 planting dates, Alburgh, VT, 2014.Treatments with the same letter did not differ significantly from one another (p=0.10).

Brassica varieties differed significantly in forage quality characteristics, yield and harvest dry matter (Table 3). The average yield for the brassica trial was 1911 lbs of dry matter per acre (Figure 3) with the 18-Aug producing more biomass than all other dates. The CP concentrations average 23.9%. The low fiber levels and high fiber digestibility are characteristic of this crog1d

Figure 3. Yield and crude protein

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