



New England Forage & Weed ID and Management Training Project

Case Study Template/Ideas

For use by Weed & Forage Identification and Management PDP Participants

Objective: The purpose of using case studies in this professional development project is to help participants become more familiar in addressing management issues related to forage weeds, forages and forage quality. Each case study will be used as a tool to compile information for a specific farm, creating a “snap-shot” description of the situation and offering suggestions for improvements. These case studies will be compiled and used as a teaching tool for all participants. Do not use the name(s) of individuals, farm, markets, town or state in describing your case. Using case studies can be an educational exercise for both the farmer and the agriculture service provider.

Steps:

- Identify a farm operation in your vicinity with a forage issue or forage weed issue.
- Set up a time to meet with them (in person) to gather information.
- Explain the purpose of your visit.
- Note to the farmer that no identifying names will be used for his/her field case study.
- Take a walk (preferably with the farmer) in the fields/pastures. Assess the situation using the field assessment form produced for this professional development project.
- Consider taking photos of fields, problem weeds, pastures, equipment or facilities. Do not include people faces or other identifying signs in photos.
- Use the following template to write a descriptive case study.

Case Study Outline

List and describe the fields and/or pastures on the farm for which there is a problem or issue. Include the acreage and a briefly describe the current use(s) for each parcel. Consider using information from the field assessment form developed for this project in working with the farmer. If appropriate, consider mentioning other enterprises on the farm and how they relate to the fields or pastures.

List the number of workers on the farm and how many are used in field and pasture maintenance and pastures. Consider including a few photos.

Ask the farmer to identify the following (if appropriate)

- Strengths of the particular fields/pastures
- Limiting factors of the particular fields/pastures
- Problems of the particular fields/pastures
- What would the farmer like to learn more about concerning their fields, forages, hay or silage yields, problem weeds, forage storage, etc?

Ask the farmer if you can see the following (if appropriate)

- The most recent soil tests of the particular fields/pastures
- Forage analysis from the previous year
 - By type of forage
 - By cutting

Identify the short and long term goals of the farm in regards to these fields and/or pastures.

List your recommendations to address the problem or issue particular to these fields and/or pastures.

Provide a summary statement of the farmer regarding his/her fields or pastures.