New Option: Cover Crop Grazing

Leitch Farms
Cover Crop Mix

- Ever Leaf Oats
- Turnips
- Radishes
- Forage Peas
- Triticale
- Crimson Clover
- Canola
Cover Crop Grazing

2014 Drew Leitch Field

- 46 acres planted early May 12th
- 46 cow/calf pairs turned out late June
- Estimated pounds of forage needed per day = 2000 pounds. 50 pounds as fed per pair per day.
Leitch Farm Cover Crop Grazing

- Estimated production per acre = 4 tons
- At 50% utilization = 2 tons of forage available per acre - conservative
- Recommended paddock size = 2 acres
- Duration = 4 days per paddock
Leitch Farm Cover Crops

- 23 paddocks
- Grazing time 92 days
- Approx. 1/3 of field swathed and windrow grazed.
- Approx. 1/3 of field swathed and bale grazed.
Paddock Fence
Fence Installation
Shade and Water
Bale Grazing & Windrow Grazing

- Part of the field was swathed and baled.
  Test = 16.3% CP
  56.8% TDN
- Cattle gained over 2 pounds per day.
- Fresh Quality test = 19.2%
  CP  58.5% TDN
Farm Cover Crops

• Estimated net return from grazing cover crops = $300 per acre

• Baled forage fed later tested high in nitrates. Not at a toxic level but high.
2 Weeks of Grazing
Cover Crop Grazing

- A great deal of potential for this management practice.
- Will have to determine if advantages outweigh disadvantages - i.e., Yield of next wheat crop.