

# RANGE & PASTURE STEWARD

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Protecting, Conserving, Preserving The Land

It begins with grass!

Rose, berry and time

Save money and grow more forage

Even late, a better option grows more grass



*Jillian Schmiedt*

**Jillian Schmiedt**  
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## Ruminations

We're committed to you,  
pasture and rangeland

Within these pages, we haven't talked about the 2017 merger of The Dow Chemical Company and DuPont.

So, let me catch you up.

While you'll continue to see the legacy company names this year, the combined entity is DowDuPont™ which is operating as three divisions – Agriculture, Materials Science and Specialty Products. In months to come, those divisions will spin off to become three, highly focused independent companies.

The Agriculture Division has announced a new name: Corteva Agriscience™ (kohr-'teh-vah), a combination of words loosely translated as “heart” and “nature.” Under that name, we expect to be a stand-alone ag company by June 1, 2019.

Corteva Agriscience brings together the talent and assets of Dow AgroSciences, DuPont Crop Protection and DuPont Pioneer to position it uniquely across agriculture.

That includes our business to bring you simple solutions to improve pasture and rangeland. You will continue to have access to the strongest portfolio of products available to manage weeds and brush.

And we have some cool new stuff coming.

It's just the next chapter in our ongoing commitment to you and your business.

*On the cover: Burtrum Cattle LLC,  
Stillwater, Oklahoma*



*Brothers Dunkin Allred, left, and Austin Allred are making progress on broadleaf weeds, blackberry and their grandfather's nemesis, Cherokee rose, in family pastures.*

## They're making progress on an inherited task

As the family story goes, when Austin and Dunkin Allred's grandfather learned of Dunkin's birth, he was in a pasture hand-treating Cherokee rose.

Fast forward 28 years and now the brothers, along with Jamie Horton, manage the pastures and cropland of Dunkin Farms near Marion Junction, Alabama. And, they're still fighting Cherokee rose.

They also battle blackberry and various broadleaf weeds in pastures. But, the technology has improved, and they're making progress. They're seeing it in more forage.

“Since we started spraying, we have more hay left. Even [in 2016], a drought year, we had a lot of hay left over. And we haven't changed anything else we do or reduced cow numbers any,” Austin says.

“We've actually increased cow numbers,” Dunkin says. “Without weed control, we might be able to run as many cows as we do, but they wouldn't be in good shape.”

Keeping up with weed and brush control reduces competition for forage and makes brushy pastures easier to manage.

“This allows us to go into the winter with more grass and healthier cattle,” Austin says.

The brothers now believe they can expand on the acres they have.

Label precautions apply to forage treated with GrazonNext HL and to manure from animals that have consumed treated forage within the last three days. Consult the label for full details.

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## BROADLEAF CONTROL

The family started spraying pastures about 10 years ago after years of mowing (shredding, bush hogging). They first used 2,4-D, then Grazon® P+D herbicide and more recently GrazonNext® HL herbicide. The brothers add PastureGard® HL herbicide to the tank when they target brush. They look to Central Farmers Agronomy in Selma, Alabama, for herbicide and prescriptions.

Initially, the family had their fescue-dallisgrass pastures custom-sprayed. For the last five years, though, the brothers have used their own sprayer.

“We can spray 200 acres in the time it took to bush hog 20, and that’s if nothing breaks down on the Bush Hog,” Austin says. “Spraying is much more economical, and it is actually solving the problem.”

For broadleaf weeds alone, the brothers use GrazonNext HL at 1.5 pints per acre. With the herbicide’s soil residual activity and the resulting grass response, pastures typically stay clean into the fall.

In 2017, they sprayed hayfields for the first time to control weeds — especially pigweed — and improve the quantity and quality of hay harvested.

“We had a good first cutting of hay,” Dunkin says. “We used to consider that first cutting to be just cleanup.”

The brothers usually spray pastures in June, targeting perennial

broadleaf weeds such as blue vervain, horsenettle and ironweed, and woody plants like blackberry, dewberry and Cherokee rose.

## SPRAYING FOR WOODY PLANTS

Where they have a significant population of blackberry, dewberry or Cherokee rose, the brothers have added PastureGard HL at the rate of 10 ounces per acre.

“The main reason for PastureGard (HL) was the berry vines,” Dunkin says. “And it really took a couple years of spraying to clean them up.”

Especially for dense blackberry or blackberry that’s been shredded, Dow AgroSciences experts typically recommend an initial spraying and a second-year follow-up application for full control.

On Cherokee rose, GrazonNext HL alone will suppress the brush, but adding PastureGard HL to the tank mix controls it, Austin says.

“You can tell when you put PastureGard (HL) with it. It really does help,” he says. “We get up to 85 percent of them.”

The brothers say their family has always been conservative in their stocking, typically allowing 5 to 6 acres per cow. Cows may be bigger now than in their grandfather’s day, but the young men are thinking they’re understocked, given their increases in forage. Expansion seems possible on what they have.

“We feel like we can run more cows on the same acres, now that we’ve incorporated a good spraying program,” Dunkin says. ■



*The Allred brothers of Dunkin Farms near Marion Junction, Alabama, have used GrazonNext® HL and PastureGard® HL herbicides to control weeds, reduce brush and grow more forage.*



# Switch in weed control pays in savings, grass

Bryan Morris recalls his learning curve as a new ranch manager was more like a rocket's trajectory.



Bryan Morris of EG Cattle Company, Ivanhoe, Texas

For one thing, he started the job in 2011, the single driest year in Texas history.

For another, he'd moved from the native rangeland of where he grew up in West Texas to a bermudagrass grass in northeast Texas.

Things were just different at EG Cattle Company, Ivanhoe, Texas, where he started as manager. The ranch is owned by the Edwards family of Fort Worth, Texas.

"This was the first time I'd managed introduced forages, and it was a huge learning curve," Morris says.

On native range, he thought broadleaf weeds were mostly a function of grazing pressure. In his introduced pastures, weed infestations seemed to be a function of East Texas.

Rotational grazing seemed to have little effect on weeds. Shredding (mowing, bush hogging) had been the main method of dealing with weeds on the ranch, and that wasn't making much difference. It was also expensive.

To educate himself, Morris consulted the local Extension office, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and retailers. All referred him to the local Dow AgroSciences Range & Pasture Specialist. The specialist met with Morris and toured the ranch, and together they developed a plan using GrazonNext® HL herbicide as the main tool.

"We had lots of weeds that 2,4-D wasn't going to work on," Morris says. "When we sprayed [with GrazonNext HL] in 2012, it was a night-and-day difference."

He still relies on Dow AgroSciences Range & Pasture herbicides today.

Morris recalled a lesson he learned in the Ranch Management Program at Texas Christian University. For every pound of weeds controlled with herbicide, grass yield typically increased by a pound. Some trials with coastal bermudagrass documented 3 to 7 pounds of grass for every pound of weeds controlled.

## TACKLING TOUGH WEEDS

Silverleaf nightshade and horsenettle had been a particular problem for Morris. The Dow AgroSciences specialist told him spraying more than a single year would be required to rid a pasture of those perennials. Morris sprayed every pasture with GrazonNext HL for three years in a row.

"To this day, I hardly have anything in that family," Morris says.

Morris now sprays his hay meadows just after greenup when nighttime temperatures stay above 65 F. That's before he fertilizes. He won't waste fertilizer to grow weeds.

For pastures where croton (doveweed) comes in every year, Morris typically sprays around the middle of May to early June. The tallest croton is up to 6 inches by then, and Morris figures most of the weeds have emerged. With the soil residual activity of GrazonNext HL, one application usually keeps pastures clean through the summer, he says.

"We've saved money by using herbicide," Morris says. "We figured it cost about \$15 per acre to shred, and we really had to shred twice a year to keep the weeds down.

"Herbicide and application was about \$14 per acre, and we've got more grass and higher carrying capacity."

GrazonNext HL at the rate of 1.5 pints per acre continues to be his workhorse, but Morris has also tapped Chaparral™ herbicide, usually for broadcast brush control.

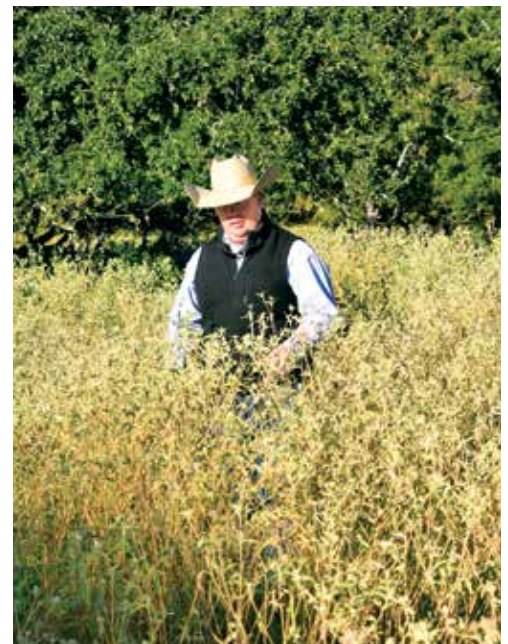
## BLACKBERRY TREATMENT

"Chaparral is my go-to for berry vines," he says. "I'm spraying in early June, and we get a great kill on blackberries."

For blackberry, Morris uses Chaparral at the rate of 3 ounces per acre.

"The first berry vine treatment will get about 80 or 85 percent the first year," Morris says.

Where Bryan Morris can't reach with a sprayer, he has a nontreated check to judge against sprayed pasture.





*Bryan Morris learned to use herbicide to control weeds and grow more bermudagrass. It's the least expensive way to feed a cow to get a calf.*

“Usually, two years at 3 ounces [of Chaparral per acre] will do it.”

That brush rate has also taken bahiagrass out of pastures, Morris says. No fan of bahia, he likes that.

“That’s a benefit. I have more bermuda where I sprayed with Chaparral,” he says.

Morris also has used Chaparral™ herbicide for general weed control when he didn’t want to use something containing 2,4-D. GrazonNext® HL herbicide contains 2,4-D as one of its ingredients. Chaparral does not.

Last year, nearby farmers had planted soybeans and cotton. Both crops are quite sensitive to 2,4-D. Morris didn’t want to risk drift or volatility or even to be known for using anything with 2,4-D.

So, he left a wide buffer on his borders, sprayed when the wind was away from the broadleaf crops and used Chaparral. If he’s only after croton, he’s found Chaparral at 1.5 ounces per acres to be sufficient.

“We needed something that was nonvolatile, that was going to lay down and not move,” Morris says. He heard no complaints, and his weed control worked well.

“I like to use a product from a company like Dow with a rep, good research, who knows their product and stands behind it,” Morris says. “That’s a big deal to me. I use name brand wormers for the same reason.”

### **ROTATION HELPS, BUT IT’S NO CURE**

For all its importance in his pasture management, spraying is still only half the equation, Morris says. It helps him grow more grass, but he still must use that grass efficiently via rotational grazing.

“My two big things are herbicide and rotation,” he says. “We want to keep the seed heads off the bermudagrass, keep it vegetative. When you allow seed heads, the nutrition is going to the seed and not the leaves.”

With ample rainfall, Morris moves cows to a new pasture every four or five days. With less rainfall, it could be every 28 or 29 days.

“You have to look at the pasture the cows are in and the pastures ahead of them,” he says. “We’re looking three or four pastures ahead when it’s dry and figuring so many days here and there. Rotation is a day-to-day decision. You can’t use a calendar.”

What rotation hasn’t done is keep weeds like doveweed from being an every-year problem.

“My opinion growing up was, we could manage weeds with grazing pressure and rotation,” Morris says. “But, here, with introduced forages and the loss of production we can have, herbicides and beef cattle go hand in hand. I can’t remove herbicides from my production.”

Weed control helps him grow more forage, he says. “And if you don’t have enough forage for the cow, you won’t have a calf.”

And that’s true anywhere in Texas. ■

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# Even late, a better option grows more forage



Pat Burch, a Dow AgroSciences field scientist, started with this pasture situation to compare summer options for weed control.

he also mowed again. Cattle were excluded from grazing for one month prior to sampling to allow the site to recover.

Burch offered some observations a year after treatment:

Mowing in the second year opened the weed canopy, but it removed 50 percent of the grass and 25 percent of the clover in the process.

In the mowed plots, weeds continued to outcompete grass and clover. A year later, weeds made up 85 percent of the total biomass,

As a rule of thumb, you grow more grass by spraying weeds early in the growing season. But, life happens and spraying doesn't always get done early. So, what's the cost-effective weed control option then?

Dealing with pasture weeds later in the summer could be a reaction (e.g., "Those weeds are worse than I thought"), or it may be by design, says Pat Burch, a Dow AgroSciences Range & Pasture field scientist based in Virginia.

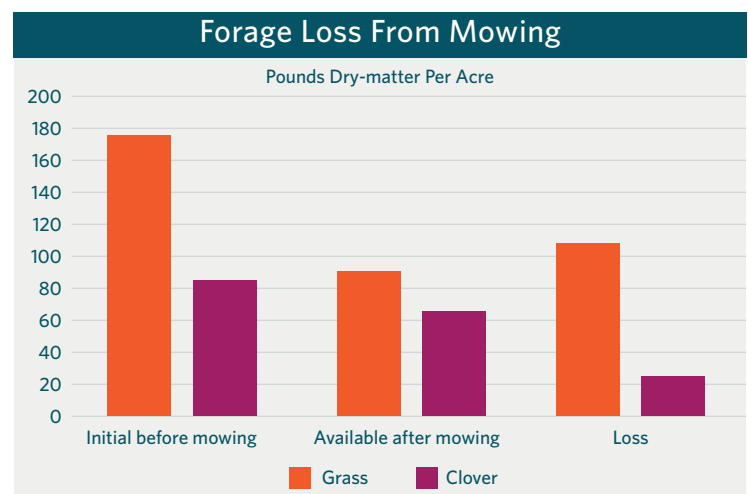
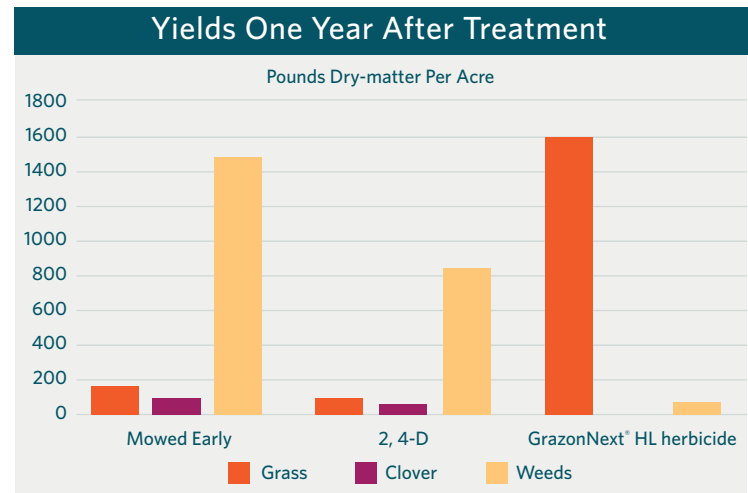
For producers concerned about keeping clover in their pastures, summer mowing or spraying a light rate of 2,4-D have been two options. Mowing by itself should have little effect on clover. The herbicide 2,4-D usually injures the clover it hits, but the clover does recover.

GrazonNext® HL herbicide at recommended rates will provide superb weed control, but will take clover out for at least a year.

In a two-year study, Burch looked at all three options in a weedy corner of southwestern Virginia pasture. Weeds included chicory, cocklebur, dandelion, fleabane, horsenettle, plantain and wingstem. In July 2016, he established replicated plots to demonstrate:

- Mowing
- Spraying 2,4-D amine at the rate of 1.5 pints/A (of a 4-pound product)
- Spraying GrazonNext HL at the rate of 1.2 pints/A.

In July 2017, he took samples from each plot for yield data one year after treatment. The original mowed plots



grass 10 percent and clover 5 percent. Total forage (grass and clover) per acre tallied 266 pounds.

The 2,4-D plots had fewer weeds than the mowed plots, but half the grass and 72 percent of the clover. Weeds made up 85 percent of the total biomass, grass 9 percent and clover 6 percent. Total forage per acre: 152 pounds.

Plots grew almost nine times more grass when sprayed with GrazonNext® HL herbicide than the mowed plots. Weeds made up less than 5 percent of the total biomass, grass 95 percent and clover less than 1 percent. A small amount of clover was starting to come back. Total forage per acre amounted to 1,594 pounds.

Plots sprayed with GrazonNext HL yielded nearly six times more total forage (grass and clover) than the mowed plots and 10 times more forage than the 2,4-D plots.

#### SO, WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Is your goal to support cows? If you're faced with a weedy pasture, you'll grow more forage using better weed control, even if you have to sacrifice the clover for a year.

Think in terms of days of grazing. For simple math, consider a 1,000-pound cow consuming 2.5 percent of her body weight per day. At 50 percent grazing efficiency, the mowed acre a year after treatment with no other inputs would support a cow for five days. Sprayed with GrazonNext HL, that acre hypothetically would support her for 31 days. ■

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*The Environmental Stewardship Award recognizes cattle producers who go the extra mile to benefit the environment and represent the cattle business.*

## Nominate a steward for 2019

Now is the time to think about nominating a cattle producer for the Environmental Stewardship Award of the National Cattlemen's Foundation.

Although nominations for the 29<sup>th</sup> annual award aren't due until March 8, 2019, the foundation encourages photos as part of a nomination, and the growing season is usually the best time to make those.

The Environmental Stewardship Award recognizes producers whose management benefits both the environment *and* the bottom line. The program is funded by Corteva Agriscience,<sup>™</sup> Agriculture Division of DowDuPont<sup>™</sup>; the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; McDonald's; and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Any organization, group or individual may nominate a U.S. cow-calf producer, stocker operator or cattle feeder. From the field of nominees, seven regional winners are selected by an expert panel representing the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), conservation and sportsmen's groups, federal and state agencies, and land-grant universities.

Judges consider the management of soil, water, wildlife, vegetation and air, as well as nominees' leadership and the sustainability of the business.

NCBA announces the regional winners at its summer business meeting each year. From the seven regional winners, judges choose a national winner to be named at the Cattle Industry Convention the following February.

The 28th class of regional winners will be announced Aug. 1, 2018. Look for an introduction to those winners in the Fall issue of *Range & Pasture Steward*.

"Good stewardship in the cattle industry isn't unusual, but it's often unnoticed," says Damon Palmer, business leader, Pasture and Land Management, for Dow AgroSciences. "Through this program we can help tell the stories of cattle producers, and it encourages other producers."

By nature of their selection and experience, all the winners have credibility with policymakers and agencies. NCBA has tapped that credibility to influence government policies affecting agriculture and the environment. NCBA also trains the winners to tell their story to media.

For more details on the Environmental Stewardship Award, including examples of nominations, go to [EnvironmentalStewardship.org](http://EnvironmentalStewardship.org) or call Jill DeLucero at the National Cattlemen's Foundation at 303-850-3321. ■

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