

Forage Production Evaluations at Coffee Point  
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The Plant Materials Center develops plants and technology for the use and management of plants to conserve soil, provide high quality forage for livestock, habitat for wildlife, and improve water quality in the intermountain west. One project we are currently working on is the Off-Center test site at Coffee Point, located approximately 25 miles northwest of Aberdeen. The purpose of the test site is to evaluate the potential of grasses for revegetation and forage for livestock and wildlife in areas of 8-10 inch annual precipitation.

The Coffee Point site was seeded in November, 1994. We are testing 26 different grass varieties for their ability to establish and produce forage under the extremely dry conditions found on the desert. A display nursery was also planted to allow landusers to compare 47 varieties of grasses, forbs and shrubs adapted to the area. During 1995, we evaluated stand establishment, plant height, density and vigor. Varieties which had the best stands were 'Hycrest' crested wheatgrass, 'Vavilov' Siberian wheatgrass, and 'Sodar' streambank wheatgrass.

In July, we will clip the plots to gather forage production data for the first time since the site was seeded. Forage production data will continue to be collected for the next four years to see how forage production varies from year to year and to identify the best varieties.

If you would like to visit the site or have any questions please contact me at the Plant Materials Center or give me a call at 397-4133.

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