

# Arkansas NRCS Fact Sheet



## Forage Harvest Management (511)

*Using hay production as a tool to remove phosphorus from high soil-test phosphorus soils.*

Many pastures in Arkansas have excessive levels of phosphorus due to several applications of animal manure. Phosphorus in surface run-off from these fields can decrease water quality. Increases in phosphorus in streams, lakes, and water bodies can lead to excessive algae growth.

Livestock grazing simply recycles phosphorus back into the soil with very little being used by the animal. Hay production has the potential to remove the phosphorus and therefore, should be considered a tool to use to decrease phosphorus levels in high soil-test phosphorus soils.

### Primary Purposes

- Optimize yield and quality of forage the desired levels.
- Promote vigorous plant re-growth.
- Manage for the desired species composition.
- Use forage plant biomass as a soil nutrient uptake tool.

Feed the hay harvested from high phosphorus fields onto fields with less than optimum phosphorus. Feed hay away from environmentally sensitive sites.

Do not feed hay in the same site consecutively. Move the feeding sites to maximize distribution of hay, manure, and urine.

