



Artigos Técnicos

MAINTENANCE FERTILIZATION FOR PASTURE MANAGEMENT

The maintenance fertilization can be applied to pastures of *Andropogon*, *Brachiaria* and *Panicum*, in different localities of the North. It consists of applying an annual or every two years, soluble fertilizer phosphorus and potassium in coverage, at the beginning of the rainy season. The amount of fertilizers to be applied should be based on analyzes of plants and soils and efficiency capacity and nutrient utilization by forage grasses. The leaf analysis should be performed preferably in two seasons: one in the rainy season (January-February) and the other during the dry season (July-August) in leaf samples collected in the first or second fully expanded leaf of the apex to the base of the plant. The application may be made in coverage, broadcast on the surface of the pasture, after analysis of soil and leaf analysis is possible. You should give preference to soluble fertilizers such as superphosphate, triple superphosphate and potassium chloride and, depending on the solubility, natural phosphates, notably those treated with acid. The soil analysis must be done in the months April to June, in the depth 0-20 cm to evaluate fertility and 20-40 cm for estimating fertility and subsurface acidity.

The amounts of fertilizer to be applied shall be calculated based on soil analysis and recommended by a technician who knows the region's soil characteristics and conditions of the property and animal husbandry or region. The application of nitrogen fertilizers should follow two guidelines. First, if the pasture is for more intensive use, such as rearing or fattening of animals, the application of nitrogen should be done during the rainy season, with only one application for doses up to 75 kg N / ha and split into two or three times the dose is above 100 kg N / ha. In the second case, if the owner wants to lengthen the production of pasture during the dry period, the application must be made at the end of the rainy season. This latter option allows for greater production of green material in the dry season, reducing the risk of fires. The decision on the use of nitrogen fertilizer should be taken in accordance with the system of production, giving preference to the activities of growing and fattening, which allow a return on investment in the shortest time. It is expected that this technology provides a significant increase in availability of fodder, and in the carrying capacity and persistence of the pastures.

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