

## **BASEBALL AND FORAGE PRODUCTION HAVE A LOT IN COMMON**

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Baseball season is in full swing, and I am spending a lot of time at ballparks right now. Between coaching my son's little league team and going to see the Vols play, the sound of baseball is constantly in my ears. I was thinking the other day of the things I say to the kids during practice and games, and suddenly realized many of the principles for baseball also apply to forage production.

- Being successful during a game usually starts with practice. What others make look easy isn't usually easy the first time. Work on it until it becomes automatic.
- Keep your eye on the ball. You can't hit or catch what you can't see. With forages, you got to keep your eye on them. If you don't watch, you might luck into good production, but not usually.
- Get in front of the ball, and get down. Fundamentals, fundamentals. Soil test, clovers. I could list more, but you get the point.
- Before the pitch, think about what you are going to do with the ball if it gets hit to you. With forages, be prepared before it is time to plant, spray or fertilize.
- It takes a team to win a game. One player can't do it all. There are a lot of parts to a successful forage program. The best ones use several forage species.
- Sometimes, regardless of how much you practice, you still make an error. Pick yourself up and learn from it. Even the best producers still make mistakes. Just try not to constantly repeat them.
- When you're in the field, you have to communicate. In forages, getting information from others is always helpful.
- Take care of your glove. Keep it dry and oiled. Same with your forage equipment.
- Even if you are getting the snot beat out of you, be a good sport and have a good attitude. Nobody likes a poor sport or a whiner.
- When you go to bed, think about that hit, throw, or catch you made that was just like the pros make. Maybe that's what you'll dream about. In forages, think about that pretty pasture, that good hay crop, etc. Those are the things to dream about.