

## UF/IFAS North Florida Research and Education Center (NFREC) Nutrition Lab **Sorghum Silage as an Alternative for Beef Cattle Backgrounding in Florida**

Sorghum is a drought tolerant crop with high forage production. In North Florida, sorghum could be planted from May to July and could be harvested for grain or silage in the Fall.

The development of Sorghum brown mid-rib (BMR) hybrids offers great yield and highly digestible fiber.

Sorghum silage may offer one of the lowest feed cost per ton of nutrients. For example, a yield of 15,000 lb DM/acre yield (21 tons of green chopped forage/acre) would cost approximately \$0.05 lb of silage DM once all planting, chopping and bagging costs are included. This is equivalent to a total feed cost of approximately \$112/ton of DM.

### Nutritive value of sorghum silage

**35-50%**  
Dry matter

**9-11%**  
Crude protein

**55-67%**  
TDN

### Advantage of sorghum silage

- Drought tolerant.
- New hybrids are increasing tolerance to sugarcane aphids and diseases.
- The starch in the kernel provides sufficient energy when harvested for silage at soft or hard dough stage.
- Planting costs are a fraction of those of corn.



(Left) Forage sorghum ADVF7232 at UF/IFAS NFREC. Photo Credit Federico Tarnonsky. (Center and Right) Sorghum silage harvesting at UF/IFAS NFREC. Photo Credits: Dr. Nicolas DiLorenzo.