

Summary

The effect of four cutting ages (28, 42, 56, and 70 days) on the yield and nutritive value of the grasses Coastcross [*Cynodon dactylon* (L.) Pers. cv. Coastal x *Cynodon nlemfuensis* Vanderyst var. *robustus*], Tifton 68 (*Cynodon* spp.), and Tifton 85 (*Cynodon* spp.) was compared in a study conducted on a Dark Red Dystrophic Latosol. The experiment was carried out at the Animal Science Department of the Universidade Federal de Lavras, Brazil, from November 2000 to May 2001. Establishment fertilization consisted of 120 kg/ha of P_2O_5 as simple superphosphate, 150 kg/ha of N as ammonium sulfate, and 60 kg/ha of K_2O as potassium chloride. A randomized split-plot design was used with five replicates. Dry matter content increased linearly with increasing regrowth age, ranging from 23.96% at 28 days to 26.91% at 56 days. Acid detergent fiber presented a quadratic behavior with increasing age of cutting, with values between 36.75% at 56 days of growth and 39.36% at 70 days of growth. A quadratic decrease was recorded for P, Mg, K, and S contents with increasing age of cutting, whereas Ca presented a linear increase. For all grasses studied, the best age of cutting is between 42 and 56 days, when both yields and nutritive value of forage are good.