

Sod Strength Test at Virginia Beef's Latham Research Farm, June 3, 2008



The sod hand harvester cuts a 12 inch swath across each rep in a row.



Dr. Erik Ervin separates each plot with the hand cutter.



Each piece of sod is carefully lifted from the plot and returned to its exact position after being evaluated.



The sod is carried to the sod tensile strength machine.



Once the sod is plated and locked down, it is stretched until it tears and the pounds at which it separated is recorded.



Dr. Xunzhong Zhang performed the photo-chemical efficiency test on all the grasses in the plots. The fluorometer Dr. Zhang is shown using has been improved since the last ratings. We no longer need to lay discs on the plots to block out the sun so that photosynthesis is stopped. Grasses are now placed between the two halves of the black rubber clamp and the laser light is fired through a gun into a target built into the two sides of the clamp.



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