



## **2019-125: Investigating the role of copper fertility in ergot infestation of forage crops**

**Researcher: Jillian Bainard**

**Funding: \$12,500**

**Mitigating ergot in wet years would significantly improve the value of grain, and ensure a reliable source of feed for our animals. This study hypothesizes that addressing a copper deficiency in soils might lead to a shorter period of forage opening on plants, which would then decrease ergot contamination. Dr. Jillian Bainard will collect soils with different levels of known copper deficiency and then contaminate the previously sterile soils with ergot. After measuring the impact of ergot on these plants, the research hopes it might provide another tool for producers throughout this part of the country.**