**Forage Sampling and Analysis Action Plan**

**Situation**

Forages represent a primary source of nutrients for beef cattle. Forages vary widely in their nutrient composition due to various factors including forage species, stage of maturity at harvest and weather conditions during the growing season. Although, beef cattle producers are often aware that forage nutrient composition is highly variable few producers routinely obtain and submit forage samples for nutrient analysis. Many producers are unaware of how to properly sample forages and do not understand the terminology commonly used on forage analytical reports. Forage sampling and analysis is basic management tool/practice that allows beef cattle producers to better manage their forage resources, which may reduce overall feed costs, and improve animal performance.

**Short-term outcome**

Increase the knowledge of producers regarding forage sampling protocols

Increase knowledge of forage analysis terminology

Increase knowledge of how to use forage analysis results to improve animal management.

**Indicators of short-term outcomes**

Producers demonstrate increased knowledge of forage sampling protocols.

Producers demonstrate increased knowledge of forage analysis terminology

Producers demonstrate increased knowledge of the importance of forage analysis for animal management decisions

**Medium term outcome**

Producers routinely sample harvested and purchased forages for analysis

Producers base animal management and production practices decisions on information from forage analysis

**Medium term indicators**

Percentage of producers that submit forage samples for analysis

**Long-term outcomes**

Improved utilization of forages in beef cattle operations

**Long-term indicators**

Improved animal performance (reproduction, gain, etc.)

**Public Value Statement**

Forages are a fundamental component of beef cattle diets on many operations. Increasing producer knowledge of proper forage sampling protocols and analysis facilitates strategic use of feed resources and improves beef production efficiency which leads to increased economic sustainability of beef cattle producers and rural communities.