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Forage News [2018-01]

University of Kentucky Department of Plant and Soil Sciences

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Forage News

Keeping Forage-Livestock producers in Kentucky informed

Dr. S. Ray Smith and Krista Lea, MS.- Editors

January 2018

Feature Publication: 2017 Long-term Summary of Kentucky Forage Variety Trials

Gene Olson, the UK Forage Variety Coordinator, has just released the trial results from 2017 showing the yield and grazing tolerance of 20 different forage species. Each year, Gene also pulls together the test results from the last 15 years into a comprehensive summary report. The "2017 Long-Term Summary of Kentucky Forage Variety Trials" shows variety performance in KY over the last 15 years in a user friendly format. Simply refer to one of the 23 tables in the publication to see the varieties that have performed "above" or "below" average over the years. For example, table 2 shows that Freedom red clover yield is 109% of average (100%) and common red clover is only 79%. Also, the more times a variety has been tested the more confidence you can have in it's potential performance on your farm.

This report and all the detailed forage variety reports are available from your local county agent or at the University of Kentucky Forage website at www.uky.edu/ag/forage, then click on the "Forage Variety Trial" Link.

Forage Timely Tips: January

- ✓ Strip graze stockpiled tall fescue to improve utilization and maximize grazing days
- ✓ Test hay before feeding so that supplementation strategies can be implemented
- ✓ Remove cows from pastures during wet periods to avoid pugging and soil compaction
- ✓ Feed hay in your worst pastures to help increase soil fertility and organic mater
- ✓ Evaluate pastures for clover and decide which need to be overseeded - graze these closely
- ✓ Order clover seed, choose a variety that has been tested in Kentucky

KFGC Membership Renewal

Please continue to support the forage council by renewing your KFGC Membership. The easiest way is to renew your membership when you register for the 37th Alfalfa and Stored Forages Conference. Another method is to go to www.AFGC.org and click on membership. Just follow through step by step and select the affiliate membership category and choose "Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council."

Maximizing Success with Frost Seedings of Clover

Literally thousands of acres of Kentucky pasture and hay fields are overseeded with clover, much of it frost-seeded in late winter. Yet this is one of the few times where crops are seeded where we halfway expect not to get a stand. You would not accept this for corn or soybeans. Here are a few tips to ensure you have the best chance of getting clover established from a frost-seeding.

- 1)Address soil fertility needs. Get a current soil test, and apply the needed nutrients. Clovers need soil that is pH 6.5 to 7 and medium or better in P and K. Do not apply additional N except for that supplied from diammonium phosphate (DAP) if used to supply the needed P. But get the soil test; anything else is just a guess.
- 2)Select a good variety. Choose an improved variety with known performance and genetics. Choosing a better red clover variety can mean as much as three tons of additional hay and longer stand life. Spread enough seed. UK recommends 6 to 8 pounds of red and 1 to 2 pounds of white/ladino clover per acre. Apply higher rates if using only one clover type. Applying the minimum (6 lb. red and 1 lb. white) will put over 50 seeds per square foot on the field (37 red, 18 white).
- 3)Make sure seed lands on bare soil. Excess grass or thatch must be grazed and/or disturbed until there is bare ground showing prior to overseeding. The biggest cause of seeding failure with frost seedings is too much ground cover. Judicious cattle traffic or dragging with a chain harrow can accomplish this.
- 4)Get good seed-soil contact. With frost seeding, we depend on the rain and snow or freeze-thaw action of the soil surface to work the clover seed into the top ¼ inch of soil. A corrugated roller can also be used soon after seeding to ensure good soil contact.
- 5)Control competition next spring. Do not apply additional N on overseeded fields next spring, and be prepared to do some timely mowing if grass or spring weeds get up above the clover. Clover is an aggressive seeding but will establish faster and thicker if grass and weed competition is controlled.

Clover can be reliably established into existing grass pastures with a little attention to detail. Soil fertility, variety, seeding rate, seed placement and competition control are the major keys to success. ~ Dr. Jimmy Henning, Adapted from Grazing News. www2.ca.uky.edu/grazer

USDA Hay Market Prices - Dec. 5, 2017

Below are examples of alfalfa prices being paid FOB barn/stack (except for those noted as delivered, which is indicated by a "d" in the table below) for selected states at the end of the day on Friday, December 1. Large ranges for a particular grade and state are often indicative of location and/or bale size. More information can be found by googling "USDA Hay Market Prices."

Alfalfa hay prices reported to USDA from selected states.			
Location	Forage Quality Grade		
	Premium+	Good	Fair
-----\$ per ton-----			
California	182-280	185-260(d)	185-210(d)
Colorado	210-295	212	N.A.
Idaho	145-150	130	90
Iowa	140-300	128-138	115-125
Kansas	130-195	110-170	75-120
Minnesota	95-190	135-180	140-170
Missouri	150-250	120-160	100-120
Montana	140-250	140-160	120-150
Nebraska	150-225	85-140	110-115
New Mexico	165-240	135-165	110-145(d)
Oklahoma	125-140	100-120	80-100
Oregon	170-225	130-165	N.A.
Pennsylvania	220-275	170-220	110
South Dakota	160-220	105-117	95-135
Texas	170-330(d)	140-231(d)	70-135
Utah	90-180	75-95	50-80
Washington	198	155	132
Wisconsin	235	110-168	120
Wyoming	200(d)	N.A.	N.A.

Don't miss the 2018 AFGC Conference this month!

In case you haven't heard yet, the 2018 American Forage and Grassland Council (AFGC) Annual Conference will be held in Louisville, January 15-16 at the Crowne Plaza near the airport. The focus of this year's meeting is *Opportunities for the Next Generation*. Keynote presenter is Greg Peterson, Peterson Brothers Farms. Workshops include Clover Management in the 21st Century, Taking the Guesswork out of Horse Pasture Management, Fescue Toxicosis in Grazing Livestock: Impacts and Solutions, Opportunities for Grassland Agriculture: Thinking Outside the Box, Producing Quality Hay in a Humid Environment and new Technology in Grassland Agriculture. Contests include the National Forage Spokesperson, Emerging Scientist, Photo, Hay Judging and the National Forage Bowl. Producer day will be Monday, January 15th with one day registration just \$75. Visit www.afgc.org for more info or to register.

KY Alfalfa Conference, Feb. 22-Cave City, KY

The annual KY Alfalfa and Stored Forage Conference (sponsored by KFGC and UK) will be held Feb. 22, 2018 at the Cave City Convention Center. This year, the conference will be a workshop covering all aspects of Alfalfa Production from Establishment to Exports. Topics include: 1) Fine tuning variety selection, 2) Alfalfa Establishment, 3) Fertilizing for high producing stands, 4) Integrated weed and pest control systems, 5) Keys to harvest high quality alfalfa, 6) Mechanization to optimize efficiency, 7) Economics of new varieties, 8) Emerging export markets, 9) Understanding GMO traits and their impact. Early registration is only \$30

[see blue.](http://seeblue.com)

and can be completed online or by mail (see enclosed flyer).

Quote of the Month: "Got Feed Expense Blues? Graze Crop Residues"

On farms where both crops and livestock are produced, the residue remaining in corn and sorghum fields after harvest can often provide 100 or more days of grazing with little supplementation. In many cases, grassed waterways, terraces and field borders may further add to the amount of forage available. Crop residues are not high quality forage (especially if weathered) but they are usually the most inexpensive feed available. Strip grazing allows more efficient use of crop residues. Founder, nitrate toxicity and (with sorghum) prussic acid poisoning are possible animal disorders, but are unlikely with residues of mature crops. Purchase Forage-Livestock Quotes and Concepts books for \$5 each by contacting ukforageextension@uky.edu.

KY Small Ruminant Grazing Conference, Feb. 10

The annual KY Small Ruminant Grazing conference will be held in Madisonville, KY on Sat., Feb. 10th from 8-2:30. The conference will highlight maintaining healthy sheep and goats on pasture. Specific topics include Deworming, Pasture Renovation, Summer Annuals, Economic Considerations, Plant ID and a producer Panel. Registration for the full day is only \$35 with a registration deadline of Feb. 5th. Dr. Beth Johnson is offering the FAMACHA Parasite Diagnostic training class immediately after the conference for only \$18. The full agenda and registration details are on the forage website, www.uky.edu/ag/forage. Call Tom Keene (859-257-3144) for more details.

Novel Tall Fescue Workshop March 8th, Lexington

The University of Kentucky and the Alliance for Grassland Renewal will again offer a workshop covering all aspects of the establishment and management of the new novel tall fescue varieties. Cattle producers that replace KY31 pastures with novel varieties consistently have higher conception rates and higher average daily gains. Full details and registration for the workshop are on the UK Forage website.

Upcoming Events

List of upcoming events at www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage

JAN 12 – Forages at KCA Lexington, KY

JAN 15-16 - AFGC Annual Meeting, Louisville, KY

JAN 22 - Equine Pasture Program, Georgetown, KY

FEB 10 – Small Ruminant Grazing Conf., Madisonville, KY

FEB 22 - Alfalfa and Stored Forage Conf., Cave City, KY

FEB 26-27 - Heart of America Grazing Conf., Springfield, MO

MAR 8 - Novel Tall Fescue Workshop, Lexington, KY

APR 24-25 - KY Grazing School, Princeton, KY

May 31 - Equine Farm/Facilities Expo, Harrodsburg, KY

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