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Forage News

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## Forage News [2017-02]

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

February 2017

## **Dr. Chris Teutsch Begins Work as Forage Extension Specialist at Princeton**

On January 3, 2017 Dr. Chris Teutsch officially started as the UK Forage Extension Specialist in Princeton, KY. Dr. Teutsch earned his BS in 1994 and MS in 1996 in Crop Science from The Ohio State University before completing a PhD in Agronomy in 2000 at the University of Kentucky. He was an associate professor at the Southern Piedmont Agricultural Research and Extension Center at Virginia Tech for 16 years.



Chris still has two graduate students who are completing their degrees at VT and will move his family to KY after his oldest son

graduates from high school this June, but he has jumped into his new position with both feet. Chris has already given a keynote presentation at the recent Kentucky Cattleman's Association annual meeting and will soon give one of the keynote presentations at the 36th Alfalfa and Stored Forage Conference Feb. 21 in Cave City. As we did in Forage News back in August, on behalf of the UK Forage Extension Program, we would like to thank all of you who supported filling this position and ask that you join us in welcoming Dr. Teutsch when you see him at meetings around the state. You can read the text of Chris's presentation under "Forages at KCA" in the Proceedings section of the UK Forage website [www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage](http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage).

## **Benefits of Clovers: Cattle Health and Increased Production**

In addition to Dr. Teutsch, we heard from Dr. Michael Flythe at the recent Forages at KCA session. Michael is a research scientist at the USDA-ARS Forage Animal Production Research Unit located on the UK campus in Lexington. He and other researchers at the USDA lab have now confirmed initial laboratory findings in the field showing multiple health benefits of red clover for livestock, especially when planted into existing KY-31 tall fescue stands.

This is the perfect time of the year to add both red and ladino white clover to existing pastures. The simple way to add clover is frost seeding in February. Our UK recommendation is to frost seed in mid-February when there will still be 4-6 weeks of potentially below freezing temperatures at night. With the uncertain weather we have had this winter, I recommend frost seeding as soon as possible. Simply make sure the pasture is grazed closely and then broadcast the clover seed on top of the ground. The honey-combing that occurs when the soil freezes and thaws will gently bury the seed.

Our standard recommendation is 1-2 lbs/acre ladino white clover and 6-8 lbs/acre of red clover. Once you are into March, then use a no-till drill to add clover because there will not be enough cold nights to bury the seed. After the clover has germinated and the grass is growing strong, then watch your pastures carefully. When the grass is tall enough that it is overshadowing the small clover seedlings, use a quick once-over grazing or flash grazing to reduce grass competition to the young seedlings. Remember that the only way to keep red clover in pastures is to use rotational grazing. It needs a rest period to build back its carbohydrate root reserves before being grazed again. Also, even the best varieties of red clover rarely persist more than 3 years, so regular reseeding is required. Read more detail about Michael's research on the benefits of red clover at the UK Forage website in the Proceedings section. ~Dr. S. Ray Smith

## **Does Industrial Hemp Have Potential as a Forage?**

Hemp was an important industrial crop in the US until the 1938 Marijuana Tax Act deemed it an illegal crop. Recent regulations have now authorized hemp production on a restricted basis and many are interested in its use as a forage crop. First, Hemp is not marijuana. Hemp must have <0.3% THC, the main psychoactive compound in marijuana (average street marijuana will have around 10% THC). Hemp is also similar to kenaf, a crop that has been used as a forage crop in the past.

Dr. Ben Goff, UK forage agronomist, recently presented the results of a study evaluating hemp and kenaf as forage crops at the AFGC annual meeting in Roanoke, VA. Grain, fiber and dual-purpose varieties of hemp and one variety of Kenaf were planted at two planting dates (late May and late June) and evaluated for forage quality and yield. Both planting dates resulted in crude protein values greater than 12% DM for the first 90

days after planting suggesting that both hemp and kenaf could be viable forage crops.

Although it will never become a major forage crop, hemp may be able fill a niche role as a warm season annual forage. Additional research is needed to determine the best agronomic practices and feeding trials are needed to evaluate animal performance. Seed availability and costs, heavy regulations and public perception will likely hinder wide-spread use of this crop in the near future. ~Ben Goff and Krista Lea

### **Annual Conference Takes Fresh Approach to Alfalfa, and Stored Forages—February 21**

The University of Kentucky and the Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council will host the 36th annual Kentucky Alfalfa and Stored Forage Conference on Feb. 21. The daylong event will begin at 8:00 a.m. CST at the Cave City Convention Center in Cave City, KY.

“We are continuing the long tradition of the Kentucky Alfalfa Conference and are excited to expand the conference’s scope to include all stored forages,” said Ray Smith PhD, forage extension specialist in the UK College of Agriculture, Food and Environment. “Our goal is to help Kentucky producers improve the efficiency and quality of all their hay, silage, and baleage production.”

Event participants will hear presentations from UK College of Agriculture, Food and Environment specialists as well as forage specialists from the University of Georgia, the USDA’s Agriculture Research Service, industry representatives, and some of the state’s top forage producers. Attendees can also participate in the conference’s annual silent auction.

Conference organizers have applied for continuing education units for Certified Crop Advisers. Registration is \$25 per person before Feb. 15. After that date, or at the door, registration is \$30 per person. To register, go to [kyalfalfa.eventbrite.com](http://kyalfalfa.eventbrite.com). More information on the conference and directions to the convention center are available on the UK Forage Extension website. ~ Katie Pratt, UK

### **Featured Publication: Renovating Hay and Pasture Fields (AGR-26)**

Renovate means to renew and improve. This publication discusses managing a pasture or hay field that has become less productive and renovating or “renewing” it so that it will become more productive. In Kentucky, this usually means adding lime and fertilizer, controlling weeds, and planting an adapted legume such as red clover and/or ladino white clover. The primary benefits of renovation come as a result of getting legumes established in grass-dominated fields. Adding legumes to hay and pasture fields brings at least four benefits: Higher yields, improved quality, nitrogen fixation and more summer growth. See UK Forage Website under publications.

### **UK to Host Tall Fescue Renovation Workshop**

Anyone who has spent a considerable amount of time around livestock or forages knows tall fescue is a double-edged sword. University of KY forage specialists are teaming up with the Alliance

for Grassland Renewal to host a workshop that teaches producers how to renovate their old tall fescue pastures with a novel endophyte variety.

The Tall Fescue Renovation Workshop will take place March 9 at UK’s Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory and UK Spindletop Research Farm. Producers have widely used tall fescue in pastures for decades, because it survives well under many conditions including drought, cold, overgrazing, insects and diseases. However, the most common variety, KY-31, also contains toxins that can severely affect cattle and horse performance.

“Now, with a growing number of novel or friendly endophyte tall fescue varieties on the market, there is a solution to fescue toxicity,” said Ray Smith, forage specialist at UK. “UK’s own novel endophyte variety, Lacefield MaxQ II, will be available in the fall 2017.”

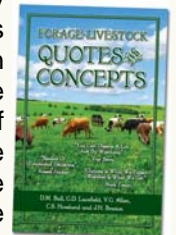
During the workshop, participants will hear from UK specialists as well as those from the U.S Department of Agriculture’s Forage-Animal Production Research Unit, University of Missouri, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Missouri Forage and Grassland Council’s Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative, producers and industry representatives. While this will be the first time the workshop is in Kentucky, the Alliance for Grassland Renewal has hosted similar workshops in Missouri and surrounding states.

“This will be one of the most practical workshops available to Kentucky livestock producers in 2017,” Smith said. To register or for more information visit the UK Forage Extension website. ~ Katie Pratt

### **Quote of the Month:**

#### **“Poor Storage of Hay Lets Dollars get Away”**

Most producers realize that doing a poor job of storing round bales of hay outside results in hay losses, but it seems that many producers don’t realize how much loss can occur. In climates having significant rainfall, there are three major ways that doing a our job of storing hay costs money. First, forage quality can be greatly reduced because water moving through hay can leach soluble nutrients and result in mold. Second, dry weight of the bale can be sharply reduced by microorganism activity in moist hay. Third, animal refusal of weathered hay is much higher, so a smaller amount of the hay stored will be consumed than would be otherwise. To purchase Forage-Livestock Quotes and Concepts books for \$5 each, contact the KY Forage and Grassland Council at [ukforageextension@uky.edu](mailto:ukforageextension@uky.edu).



### **KY Grazing School in Princeton Upcoming Events**

List of upcoming events at [www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage](http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage)  
FEB 18 Small Ruminant Conf., Elizabethtown, KY  
FEB 21 KY Alfalfa & Stored Forages Conf., Cave City, KY  
MAR 9 Tall Fescue Renovation Workshop, Lexington, KY  
APR 25-26 KY Grazing School, Princeton, KY  
JUNE 8 Equine Farm and Facilities Expo, Lexington, KY  
SEPT 27-28 KY Grazing School, Versailles, KY

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