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## Forage News [2017-01]

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 2017

## Featured Publication: 2016 Long-Term Summary of Kentucky Forage Variety Trials (PR-720)

Gene Olson, the UK Forage Variety Coordinator, has just released the trial results from 2016 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 "2016 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. 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](http://www.uky.edu/ag/forage), then click on the "Forage Variety Trial" Link.

## Purchase Improved Clovers for Frost Seeding Now

Adding white and red clover to Kentucky pastures and hayfields is an excellent way to improve forage quality, forage yield, reduce fescue toxicity, and provide free nitrogen through N fixation. Frost seeding is mid-February is usually considered the ideal time, but anytime in February is ok and even late January. The important thing is to have the seed on the ground when there are still 4-6 weeks of potential below freezing temperatures to allow sufficient "frost heaving" so the seed will be buried.

Right now is the time to buy clover seed of improved varieties. If you wait until mid-February the best varieties may be sold out. Go to the "2016 Long-Term Summary Report" discussed above to choose the best varieties. For example, page 9 shows the highest yielding white clover varieties and page 7 shows the varieties that have the best tolerance to grazing. With white clover, many producers choose a variety that shows both good grazing tolerance and high yield. Variety choice definitely makes a difference. The lowest yielding white clover variety in our trials was only 67% of average while the highest yielding was 132% above average.

## 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

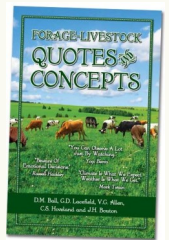
double-edged sword. University of Kentucky forage specialists are teaming up with the Alliance for Grassland Renewal to host a one day workshop to teach producers how to renovate some of their old KY 31 tall fescue pastures with a novel endophyte variety. The Tall Fescue Renovation Workshop will take place March 9 at UK's Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory and UK Spindletop Research Farm. To register or for more information visit the UK Forage Extension website at [www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage/](http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage/).

## Quote of the Month:

### "Legumes Are Forage Crop Superstars"

Forage legumes are extremely valuable in forage-livestock production because they offer several ways to enhance economic sustainability. In association with special types of bacteria on their roots, they offer biological nitrogen fixation, thus reducing or eliminating the cost of nitrogen fertilizer. When grown with grasses, they often increase forage yield (especially as compared to grass receiving little nitrogen fertilizer), and extend the grazing season. Most importantly, legumes generally provide higher forage quality than grasses, thus improving nutritional status and performance of livestock. Legumes have attained "superstar" status because they have so much to offer. They should be regularly grown whenever feasible.

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).



## Differences in Roundup Ready Alfalfa Varieties

Roundup Ready (RR) alfalfa varieties have been widely available for several years in Kentucky, but we now have enough yield data to accurately compare RR variety performance. Look on page 1 of the "2016 Long-Term Summary Report" to choose the best variety to purchase. Many hay producers tell me that they would like to plant a RR variety, but they also want a mixed grass stand. In this case, simply plant a RR variety as a pure stand and clean up weeds with Roundup for the first 1 to 2 years. Then interseed orchardgrass or another grass species in the fall for a weed-free mixed alfalfa/grass stand. One producer told me he sprayed his mixed hay field with Roundup in year 4 (killing weeds but also the orchardgrass) and then

interseeded orchardgrass again that fall producing a vigorous weed-free mixed alfalfa/grass stand for 3 more years.

### Kentucky Alfalfa Conference Expanded to include Stored Forages and Summer Grazing Options

The 36th Annual Kentucky Alfalfa and Stored Forages Conference is scheduled for Tuesday, February 21st at the Cave City Convention Center in Cave City, KY. Keynote speakers will be Dr. Dennis Hancock, Univ. of Georgia Forage Specialist and our new Kentucky Forage Extension Specialist in Princeton, Dr. Chris Teutsch. Chris comes to us with 16 years of experience as Forage Specialist in Virginia and as one of the leading forage experts in the country. He has conducted groundbreaking research on the relationship between yield and quality of warm season annual grasses.

#### Full Program:

- 8:00 (CST) Registration and Exhibits
- 8:45 Welcome - Dr. Ray Smith, University of Kentucky
- 9:00 **Hay Making Weather in Kentucky: How to Get Good Information** - Dr. Matthew Dixon, UK
- 9:20 **Understanding and Improving Fermentation in Alfalfa and Grass Baleage** - Dr. Dennis Hancock, Univ. of Georgia
- 10:00 Break, Exhibits and Silent Auction
- 10:30 **Why is Intake Reduced When Cattle are Fed Tall Fescue?** - Jimmy Klotz, USDA-ARS-FAPRU
- 10:50 **Hay Production: East vs. West** - Tom Keene, UK
- 11:10 **What's New in Seed Coatings?** - Bill Talley, Summit Seed Coatings
- 11:30 **The Economics of Forage Quality** - Dr. Kenny Burdine, UK
- 12:00 Lunch, Exhibits and Silent Auction
- 12:50 KY Alfalfa Awards
- 1:20 **Selecting Summer Annual Varieties Using Yield and Digestibility** - Dr. Chris Teutsch, UK
- 2:00 **Producer Panel**
- 3:30 Adjourn

For more information or to register for the event, visit [www.uky.edu/ag/forage](http://www.uky.edu/ag/forage). Exhibit space is also available.

### Master Grazer Producer Highlight - Turpin Farms

UK Grazing News is published six times a year and covers all aspects of forage management, especially topics related to grazing. Often leading forage based livestock producers are highlighted. The current issue highlights "The Turpin Farm" in Madison County, owned and operated by Billy-Glenn Turpin and his son Scott. It is a 155 acre farm stocked with a herd of spring and fall calving Angus/Simmental cattle and has been in the family for over 100 years. Billy-Glenn retired as an ag teacher in 2001 and he and Scott have worked hard over the last 15 years to make "forages first" on their farm.

Improved practices include stockpiling fescue in several paddocks for late fall and winter grazing. Until recently, Billy-Glenn and Scott's main source of forage was cool-season grasses, but they now also plant and graze drought tolerant summer

annuals. The use of a rotational grazing system has allowed them to increase livestock numbers by 25% while providing better quality forage. The farm uses seven permanent waterers which are heated to limit winter freeze ups. All of the waterers, except one, are supplied by a cistern pump from rain water collected off existing buildings. The water lines are all connected to the cistern pumphouse, but at the turn of a valve they can water their cattle with city water during periods of drought.

The Turpins are forage farmers first and strive to produce enough pasture growth so none of their cattle receive any stored forage until after the first of January. They emphasize forage quality, reducing the need for stored feed, and continually strive to improve pasture utilization. Go to the UK forage website and click on Master Grazer to subscribe to "Grazing News."

### Understanding and Improving Fermentation in Alfalfa and Grass Baleage-Dennis Hancock

The use of baleage or Round Bale silage has increased over the years and for good reason. The stored forage you end up with is high quality, palatable and can be harvested during rainy periods or under poor drying conditions. Many have never tried to put up baleage because they thought it was too complicated.

Dennis Hancock, one of our keynote speakers at the Feb. 21 "Alfalfa and Stored Forage Conference" will explain the basic principles or keys to putting up high quality baleage. An excerpt of his presentation is shown to the right.

**1: Cut down no more than you can handle.**

- Lay down an appropriate amount of forage for wilting, baling and wrapping.
- Cut mid-afternoon on one day, bale & wrap the next day.
- Amount cut = how much can be baled and wrapped on same day.
- Bales should be wrapped w/in 12 hrs of baling.

**2: Choose the right bale wrapper.**

Consider:  
Cost, Labor, Speed, Volume

### Upcoming Events

See a full list and details at [www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage](http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage)

- JAN 18-19 Heart of America Grazing Conf., Quincy, IL
- JAN 20 Forages at KCA, Lexington, KY
- JAN 22-24 AFGC Annual Meeting, Roanoke, VA
- JAN 30 Pastures Please!! Horse Conf., Lexington, KY
- 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
- SEPT 27-28 KY Grazing School, Versailles, KY

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