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Forage News

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## Forage News [2016-09]

University of Kentucky Department of Plant and Soil Sciences

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# FORAGE NEWS

**September 2016**

*S. Ray Smith, Extension Forage Specialist and Krista Lea, MS*

## **Dr. Chris Teutsch Accepts Forage Extension Specialist Position in Princeton, KY.**

This month it was formally announced that Dr. Chris Teutsch has accepted the UK Forage Extension Specialist position in Princeton, KY and is expected to begin early next year. 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 is currently an associate professor at the Southern Piedmont Agricultural Research and Extension Center at Virginia Tech. Ray Smith said recently



Photo Credit: Virginia Tech

*“Chris will be a great addition to the forage team in KY. I worked closely with Chris when I was at Virginia Tech. Chris is well liked by agents and producers in VA. He brings to KY an incredible forage expertise and a proven ability to work with producers and county agents.”* On behalf of the UK Forage Extension Program, we would like to thank all

of those that have supported filling the position and ask that you join us in welcoming Dr. Teutsch to the team.

## **UK and USDA Specialists to speak at KFGC Field Day**

University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment and USDA specialists will present the latest research on forage and livestock production management during the Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council Field Day.

The field day is Tuesday, Sept. 13 at Eden Shale Research and Demonstration Farm in Owenton. Registration begins at 3:30 p.m. EST. Becky Thompson and Dan Miller of the Kentucky Beef Network will give participants an overview of the farm at 4:15 p.m. Wagon tours will depart at 4:30 p.m.

On the tour, Dr. Glen Aiken (USDA) and UK specialists Dr. Steve Higgins and Dr. Ray Smith will discuss novel endophyte tall fescue and seedhead suppression, alternative summer forages to maximize beef weight gain and watering systems based on rainfall collection and livestock manure management. At 7 p.m., a program will be presented on the late Russell Hackley's legacy to forages in the state and nation. Hackley was an award-winning Grayson County cattle

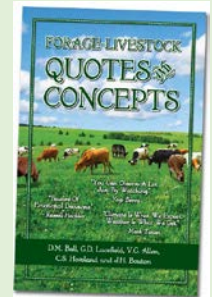
and forage producer known for his innovative management practices and his love of agriculture.

The field day is a qualified educational meeting of the County Agriculture Investment Program. The Kentucky Cattlemen's Association will provide a meal. Attendees can register for the field day by visiting <http://KFGCFieldDay.eventbrite.com> or by calling 502-484-5703. Supporting organizations include the Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council, Kentucky Beef Network, Owen County office of the UK Cooperative Extension Service, Kentucky Cattlemen's Association and Byron Seed.

### **Forage News Quote of the Month “You Can Observe a Lot Just By Watching”**

*~ Yogi Berra*

Yogi Berra said this about baseball, but the concept also applies to pastures, including determining when application of fertilizer should be considered. Because most nutrients consumed by livestock are recycled, deposits of dung and urine result in spots where plants exhibit increased growth and usually have a darker green color. The decision to apply fertilizer should be based mainly on soil test results and the extent to which pasture forage is needed and can be utilized, but when such spots are conspicuous, it should give a livestock producer a clue regarding the growth response that would occur if the right type and amount of fertilizer was applied.



To purchase the Forage-Livestock Quotes and Concepts book, contact KFGC at [ukforageextension@uky.edu](mailto:ukforageextension@uky.edu).

## **16<sup>th</sup> Kentucky Grazing Conference Schedule Announced**

The Center for Rural Development in Somerset KY will be the location for the 16<sup>th</sup> Kentucky Grazing Conference October 19, 2016. The schedule includes out of state guest speakers, a producer panel and the KFGC Forage Spokesman Contest.

- 8am EDT – Registration, exhibits and silent auction
- 8:45 – Welcome
- 9:00 – Producer's Guide to Pasture-Based Beef Finishing, Dr. Greg Halich
- 9:20 – Marketing Grassfed Beef, Anne Bays
- 9:40 – Cutting Edge Grazing Research, Dr. Glen Aiken
- 10:00 – Break
- 10:30 – Farmer Success-NRCS Cost Share, Adam Jones
- 10:45 – Adaptive Grazing for Healthy Soil, Dr. Greg Brann
- 11:15 – Soil Health = Farmer Wealth, Dr. Peter Byck
- 12:00 – Discussion

- 12:15 – Lunch and awards
- 1:15 – Silent auction results
- 1:30 – Maximizing Grass Sugar Content, Kelly Prince
- 1:50 – Forage spokesman contest
- 3:30 – Adjourn

Registration is \$20 and can be done in advance by visiting <https://KYGrazingConference.eventbrite.com>. CCA credits have been applied for. For more information, visit the UK Forage website at [www.uky.edu/ag/forage](http://www.uky.edu/ag/forage).

### Difficulty with Alfalfa Establishment in 2016

Alfalfa has a tremendous ability to survive and be productive under dry conditions, but this summer was one of the wettest ones on record for much of Kentucky. A number of producers sent samples of diseased alfalfa into the UK Plant Diagnostic Lab, especially from seedling stands. The lab reported cases of water mold/root rot/seedling blight (*Aphanomyces*, *Phytophthora*, etc.) early this growing season. Normally, fungicides on coated alfalfa seed prevent most seedling diseases, but it appears the wet humid conditions overwhelmed the seed treatments in many fields. There was a tremendous amount of summer black stem this summer. This disease is not uncommon in Kentucky, but this year it showed up early and continued throughout the season. The lab also had cases of *Rhizoctonia* web blight, which is definitely unusual and indicates very wet/humid conditions. There is no genetic resistance to either summer blackstem or *Rhizoctonia*, but good management normally allows alfalfa to survive these diseases. Some stands were so severely affected that they had to be replanted or will have to be taken out of production.

We expect the disease load during 2016 is a “one time” event and the climate will return to more normal conditions in future years. For more detailed information on alfalfa diseases download the “Alfalfa Analyst” at <https://www.alfalfa.org/pdf/AlfalfaAnalyst.pdf>.

### Featured Publication: Wildlife Benefits of Switchgrass Production in Kentucky (AGR-221)

Warm-season grasses with high biomass yields including switchgrass have recently been considered for use as bioenergy crops. However many of these grasses are expensive and time-consuming to establish and have few other uses. Switchgrass has been identified as a uniquely viable option because it can be grown for hay or pasture in addition to biomass production. Producers can establish the crop and manage yearly for forage production until contracts for biomass are secured, helping to offset the cost of establishment and reducing the risk of establishing a biomass crop that may have no value at the time of harvest.

Switchgrass has long been present in tall-grass prairies—habitats that were occasionally disturbed by drought, fire, and grazing by wildlife. While managed stands of switchgrass are not ecologically equivalent to diverse tall-grass prairies, they can have similar characteristics. Switchgrass is a bunch-type grass; this growth pattern produces an open understory with areas of bare soil for animals to move under the canopy of the grass. Because of its height (up to 6 ft), switchgrass can also provide cover for larger animals such as deer and turkey and landing space for tall-grass prairie birds. See full publication at [www.uky.edu/ag/forage/publications](http://www.uky.edu/ag/forage/publications)

### Considerations in Selecting a Cool Season Cereal Variety

The major factors in selecting cool season cereal grass varieties are yield, winter survival and regrowth. If cutting a

cereal grass for silage or baleage then yield at the first harvest of the season is most important. For all cereals, winter survival is an important factor. For example, most winter oats and some triticale varieties do not survive KY winters. Fortunately winter wheat and cereal rye rarely show winterkill in Kentucky regardless of the variety. Winter oats are a marginal crop in Kentucky because severe winterkill usually occurs one out of every three years. See UK publication PR-704, 2015 Annual Grass Report: Warm Season and Cool Season (Cereals) and PR-699, 2015 Annual and Perennial Ryegrass and Festulolium Report for more information. All of our forage test reports are available at [www.uky.edu/ag/forage](http://www.uky.edu/ag/forage).

Table 21 & 22. Dry-matter yield of cereal rye varieties sown October 11, 2013 at Lexington, Kentucky.

Early First Harvest – Yield (tons/acre)				
Variety	Apr 9	May 1	May 25	Total
Oklon	0.82	1.56	0.72	3.10*
Elbon	0.97	1.40	0.65	3.02*
Maton	0.66	1.57	0.70	2.92
Southern Blue	0.77	0.95	0.58	2.29
<i>Mean</i>	<i>0.81</i>	<i>1.37</i>	<i>0.66</i>	<i>2.84</i>
<i>LSD, 0.05</i>	<i>0.12</i>	<i>0.31</i>	<i>0.25</i>	<i>0.28</i>
Late First Harvest – Yield (tons/acre)				
Variety	Apr 22	May 13	May 29	Total
Oklon	2.63	0.68	0.11	3.41*
Elbon	2.50	0.69	0.09	3.28*
Maton	2.51	0.62	0.07	3.20*
Southern Blue	2.03	0.60	0.10	2.75
<i>Mean</i>	<i>2.42</i>	<i>0.65</i>	<i>0.10</i>	<i>3.16</i>
<i>LSD, 0.05</i>	<i>0.49</i>	<i>0.17</i>	<i>0.08</i>	<i>0.65</i>

*\* Not significantly different from the highest numerical value in the column, based on the 0.05 LSD*

### KFGC Award Nominations

The Awards Committee of the Kentucky Forage & Grassland Council is now accepting nominations for the 2016 Forage Awards to be presented at the Kentucky Grazing Conference on October 19. Annual Awards are given in four categories: Public (County), Public (State), Industry and Producer. To nominate a deserving individual, send a ½ to one-page nomination to Ray Smith, KFGC Awards Chairman, at [raysmith1@uky.edu](mailto:raysmith1@uky.edu).

### KFGC Board Nominations

The Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council is now accepting nominations to the KFGC Board. The Board meets in person twice a year and as needed via conference call. Terms are three years. To nominate an individual, please contact Ray Smith, [raysmith1@uky.edu](mailto:raysmith1@uky.edu) by Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>.

### Upcoming Events ([www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage](http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage))

- SEPT 13 KFGC Field Day, Edenshale Farm
- SEPT 22 Beef Bash, Princeton, KY
- OCT 1 Mountain Proud Field Day, Quicksand, KY
- OCT 19 KY Grazing Conference, Somerset, KY
- JAN 22-24, 2017 AFGC Annual Meeting, Roanoke, VA
- FEB 21, 2017 36<sup>th</sup> Annual KY Alfalfa and Stored Forage Conference, Cave City, KY