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Forage News

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## Forage News [2016-08]

University of Kentucky Department of Plant and Soil Sciences

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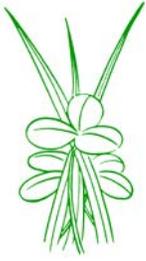
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# FORAGE NEWS

**August 2016**

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

## Eden Shale Farm to Host KFGC Field Day Sept. 13<sup>th</sup>

The Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council Annual Field Day will be held Sept. 13<sup>th</sup> at Eden Shale Farm in Owenton, KY. This year's program includes:

3:30 – Registration and Exhibits

4:15 – Overview of Farm, Becky Thompson and Dan Miller

4:30 – Wagon Tours:

- Novel Endophyte Tall Fescue and Seedhead Suppression, Drs. Glen Aiken and Ray Smith

- Alternative Summer Forages to Maximize Beef Gains in Kentucky, Dr. Jeff Lehmkuhler

- Rainfall Collection Watering Systems and Manure Management for Livestock Producers, Dr. Steve Higgins

6:30 – Meal

7:00 – Russell Hackley's Legacy to Forages In KY and the US

Go to <http://KFGCFieldDay.eventbrite.com> for advanced registration or call 502-484-5703. This event is a CAIP qualified educational meeting. Special thanks to our sponsors: KFGC, Kentucky Beef Network, Owen County Cooperative Extension Service.

## Heart of America Conference Highlight: Grazing Corn

Corn is a high quality versatile grass that can be grown across a broad geographic area. Rapid growth can allow cattle to graze soon after planting, but most producers choose to graze standing mature corn over winter. We all know that corn provides high levels of animal performance, but the main question is whether grazing corn is economical.

Mississippi researchers compared sending feeders directly to the feedlot after grazing annual ryegrass to grazing ryegrass followed by corn before feedlot finishing. They found that the mean gross feeding margin was \$92/hd for the conventional system while grazing corn reduced this margin by \$25 to \$67/hd. These results are very encouraging, but the economics from other research has not been as clear cut. It is important for each producer to consider why they are grazing corn and conduct a cost analysis specific for their farming system. There are many things to consider before grazing corn. Several are listed below:

- Strip graze – critical to increase utilization and reduce risk of foundering/acidosis if grazing when grain has developed.
- Protein supplement – Corn is relatively low in protein once it is past the V12 stage and a protein supplement will be necessary for optimal gains of growing cattle if past this stage.
- Heat stress – Standing corn can act as a wind break. If it is grazed late summer during periods of high temperatures and

humidity portable shade structures or having access to natural shade is important.

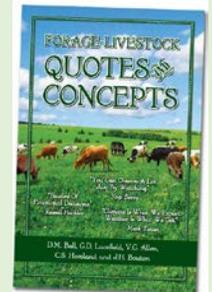
- Knock down enough corn – Drive down corn with a tractor, truck or ATV when setting up the temporary fence for strip grazing. Too small a strip can result in a shorted out fence from cattle knocking stalks down when grazing.
- Having stockpile fescue or hay available will help lower the chance of foundering when grazing mature corn.
- Give cattle access to a grass waterway or stockpile fescue to bed down. Cattle will avoid laying down on the corn stalks as they are uncomfortable.
- Muddy conditions should be avoided to reduce compaction ~ Jeff Lehmkuhler and Eric Vanzant. See full article and all Heart of America Proceedings at [www.uky.edu/ag/forage](http://www.uky.edu/ag/forage).

### *Forage News Quote of the Month*

*“Forages, Particularly the Grasses, are the most important plants on the face of the earth”*

Forage became a critical source of human food with the killing and eating of the first grazing animal. Today, forage grasses provide most of the nutrition for cattle, sheep, goat, horses and mules. They also protect and improve our soils, contribute to clean water and air, play a major role in decelerating release of carbon into the environment, account for about 25% of the total value of U.S. agriculture, occupy about 50% of the total land area of the U.S. and provide recreation, wildlife habitat and aesthetic value. In addition, large seeded grasses that include the grain crops, corn, rice, wheat, barley, rye, oats, sorghum and millets supply about three-fourths of the energy and about half of the protein consumed by humans. As Dr. Burton stated many years ago, without question, forages really are the most important plants on earth.

To purchase the Forage-Livestock Quotes and Concepts book, contact KFGC at [ukforageextension@uky.edu](mailto:ukforageextension@uky.edu). Books are \$5 each.



## Sugarcane Aphid Found in Kentucky

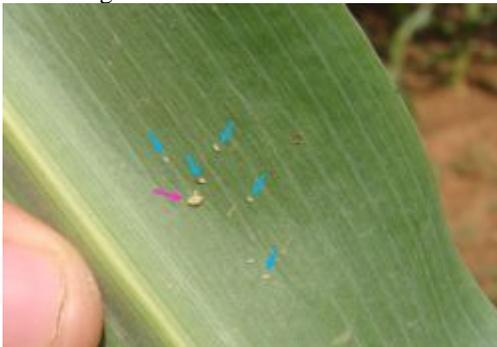
The invasive sugarcane aphid (SCA) *Melanaphis sacchari* arrived to Kentucky almost a month ahead of last year. Sugarcane aphids have caused yield losses of 30% to 100% for sorghum growers since 2013 in many states of the U.S. Sugarcane aphids severely affected grain and sweet

sorghum fields last year in Georgia, South Carolina, Missouri, and Tennessee.

On July 15, 2016, a small number of sugarcane aphids were detected in a field of sweet sorghum in Trigg County. Although the numbers are relatively low, populations may pick up soon, because of the rapid life cycle of this pest.

#### **Insect Description**

Sugarcane aphids can be identified by their grey to tan yellow body color. Also, their cornicles or “tailpipes,” feet, and antennae are dark. (Figure 2). Sugarcane aphids feed on the lower surface of the leaves, and their feeding produces yellow to red or brown leaf discoloration, which is visible on both sides of the leaf. Indirect damage is caused by the abundant honeydew, which may support the growth of black, sooty mold fungi.



Adult sugar cane aphid and first instar nymphs.



Winged and wingless adults and their nymphs.  
(Photos by: Raul T. Villanueva, UK)

For more information on scouting and control go to KY Pest News: [www.kentuckypestnews.wordpress.com/2016/07/19/](http://www.kentuckypestnews.wordpress.com/2016/07/19/)

#### **UK breeder develops new tall fescue variety**

University of Kentucky plant breeder Tim Phillips has developed a new tall fescue variety that is nontoxic to grazing animals. The variety, Lacefield MaxQ II, is the result of selections Phillips made from endophyte-free Kentucky 31 and related lines. Phillips named the variety for UK Professor Emeritus Garry Lacefield upon his retirement to honor his numerous contributions to the forage industry.

“Lacefield MaxQII has the persistence and performance of the endophyte found in Kentucky 31, but it doesn’t have the bad qualities of that endophyte,” Phillips said. “It’s the best of both worlds.” The variety has been tested for 12 years in on-farm trials at UK’s research farms, private farms in KY and farms located from Michigan to Mississippi. Phillips said it has tested well in all locations for seeding vigor, high yield potential, grazing tolerance, liveweight gains by stocker cattle and resistance to winter injury. Lacefield MaxQ II seed is expected to be commercially available in 2017. ~ Katie Pratt

#### **Featured Publication: Stockpiling for Fall and Winter Pasture (AGR-162)**

Many cattle producers can take advantage of the late summer-fall growing conditions to obtain high-quality pasture for fall and early winter grazing. This practice is called stockpiling. Management decisions for optimum stockpiling include selecting grass species, timing, fertilizing, grazing management or utilization, selecting classes of cattle, and designing grazing systems for efficient utilization.

The high quality of stockpiled tall fescue produces good gains on both weaned stock and mature cows. These gains are a response to the high crude protein and digestibility of the fall growth of tall fescue. In particular, the sugar content rises to high levels in response to lower temperatures and shortening day length. This nutritional change does not take place overnight due to the first frost but is spread over time. See full publication at [www.uky.edu/ag/forage/publications](http://www.uky.edu/ag/forage/publications)

#### **Planting Brassicas and Cereals for Fall Forage**

August is the time of the year to seed brassicas and cereals if you want very high quality late fall grazing. Brassicas include turnips, rape, kale and others. The quality of brassicas is so high though (up to 85% TDN), added fiber is needed to slow down passage rate. Fiber can be free choice hay, but a more economical option is simply to plant cereal rye or oats with the brassicas. A popular mixture is an August planting of 1 bu/acre spring oats, 1 bu/acre cereal rye, and 4-5 lbs/acre of turnips (add 50-60 lbs actual N/acre at planting). This mixture provides high quality because of the turnips, the oats and rye provide fiber and excellent fall growth, and the rye survives the winter for early grazing next year. Winter oats usually do not survive KY winters, so spring oats are recommended. To make this mixture even better suited for pasture production make sure to plant a grazing type turnip that regrows after grazing (purpletop turnips have good production, but do not grow back after the first grazing).

~ Dr. S. Ray Smith. The full article can be found in the August edition of Cow Country News.

#### **Choose Varieties Wisely**

Planning a new seeding? If so, attention to detail will increase your chances of success. One of the many decisions to make is “which variety” to use. Selecting and establishing the right varieties can often make the difference between success and failure, low yield and high yield, persistent and non-persistent. To assist you in this important decision, the University of Kentucky Forage Variety Program has compared many varieties of several important forage species over the years in various locations across Kentucky. For a summary of all U.K. Forage Variety results, see your County Extension Agent or go to our Forage Website at <http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage/ForageVarietyTrials2.htm>

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

AUG 11 Organic Assoc KY Pasture Walk. Washington Co.  
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