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Forage News [2015-04]

University of Kentucky Department of Plant and Soil Sciences

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FORAGE NEWS

For more forage information, visit our UK Forage Extension Website at: <http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage/>

April 2015

S. Ray Smith, Extension Forage Specialist – Arleen Smith, Secretary

This is the first Forage News in 36 years that Garry and Christi were not the main writers, editors and compilers. They have left quite a legacy to me as Forage Specialist, to the University of Kentucky and all our county agents, and most of all to you as the forage producers and industry leaders in the state. As the remaining Forage Specialist, I am picking up Garry's mantle as editor of Forage News. I commit to you, with the help of my secretary Arleen, to providing updates on the latest events, research, and practical advice in the forage world on a monthly basis for many years to come. Garry and Cheryl have moved to Bowling Green, so thankfully they are not far away. I'm sure he will continue to be available as an advisor and mentor and we'll see him at state, regional and national forage conferences in the future.

A number of you attended Garry's retirement celebration preceding the 35th Alfalfa Conference, but Dennis Hancock, Forage Specialist at the University of Georgia, was not able to attend. Dennis wrote the following letter about Garry that I did not receive in time to read at the retirement and I thought you would all appreciate reading it.

Farewell to Garry Lacefield

It is with great regret that I send this note rather than attending in person. I certainly wish I could be there for your final Kentucky Alfalfa Conference as host (though I'm sure it won't be the last you attend).

I write to somehow add my comments to the chorus of accolades that are, no doubt, being said of Dr. Garry Lacefield. I have had the great opportunity to have been surrounded by great teachers, mentors, and advisors. None have had as much positive influence on my life, professionally and personally, than Dr. Garry Lacefield.

Dr. Lacefield taught me about the wonders of forages. Most especially, he taught me about alfalfa, a crop that I knew nothing about before coming to work for him as a student intern one summer 20 year ago. He still recalls how he caught me counting alfalfa plants/stems while setting on an up turned 5-gallon bucket instead of crawling around on my hands and knees.

He also taught me how to do Extension work. He taught me how to relate to an audience by teaching me that they don't care what you know until they know how much you care. He taught me the integrity of standing firm on a recommendation because it was the right thing to do, even if the producer didn't like the answer. He infected me with the missionary zeal of one who loves agriculture and the men and women who so honorably practice it.

Just as important, Dr. Lacefield taught me how to be a Godly man, a family man, and a devoted husband. Garry was one of the first scientists that I knew who stood firm in his beliefs in a loving God, a Creator who so loved the world that he sent His only Son to take on the grief of this world in our stead. He modeled what I've come to know as a servant's mission. His professional accomplishments are unparalleled, but he still managed to make time for his family, despite the constant demands on his time. Of course, that sometimes meant that poor Cheryl had to go to far-flung places for yet another one of Garry's meetings! That is said in jest, of course, because I know Cheryl to always have been happy to be along for the adventure. Truth be told, Cheryl deserves one of the Alfalfa Public Service Awards if she hasn't already gotten one (Cheryl did receive this award at the conference).

In my humble opinion, Garry Lacefield is the greatest Forage Extension Specialist of his time. For me personally, he will always be the high watermark to which I will aspire. He will always be to me what Warren Thompson was to him....an unattainable goal of excellence.

So, Dr. Lacefield, thank you. Thank you for all that you've done for this industry. Thank you for all that you've done for me. And, for all you've done to help the stewards of the land and the furtherance of our Creator's Will, thank you for being a good and faithful servant. God Bless you and your family.

Sincerely, Dr. Dennis Hancock

Silvopasture

During the last 20 years there has been an increased interest in silvopasture. Some of you may say "I've always left a few trees in your pastures for shade", but Silvopasture is a system where you purposely integrate trees and forage, and both are managed to optimize overall productivity.

Here are just a few of the benefits of Silvopasture:

- Increase productivity and resource use efficiency in pasture systems.
- Improve the value of timber stands in degraded/unmanaged woodlots.
- Mitigate stress to livestock, buffering animals and forages alike from climatic extremes.
- Address environmental concerns, because trees can capture nutrients leached from cool-season pastures and they sequester carbon.
- Reduce livestock standing in streams and ponds in the summer to cool off.



Researchers and extension specialists at Virginia Tech are developing Silvopasture research and demonstration sites around the state and partnering with innovative first-adopters to determine the economic and environmental benefits of these systems.

Chris Teutsch, Extension Specialist in Virginia, recently gave an excellent presentation on Silvopasture. Chris' presentation can be viewed at the link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OBwcWiLC-I4>. For more information on SILVOPASTURES, visit the Virginia Tech silvopasture information page at: <http://www.ext.vt.edu/topics/agriculture/silvopasture/>.

High Traffic Area Pads

Spring is a wet time of year in Kentucky and this year is no exception. Animal and machinery traffic area pads are a great solution to managing mud in pastures or concentrated feeding areas.

High traffic area pads are strategically placed in areas of traffic, such as gates, fence lines or feeding/watering areas. Construction includes excavation of the top soil and the use of dense grade aggregate on top of crushed stone and geotextile fabric. When properly installed, high traffic area pads provide safe and dry footing with a surface similar to concrete, but without the cost of concrete. High traffic area pads usually cost less than \$1 per square foot, compared to about \$4 per square foot for concrete.

If managed well, High Traffic Area Pads should last for many years with minimal repairs needed. Excess hay and manure should be scraped off periodically to prevent build-up. Dense grade aggregate may be needed on occasion to build up small areas.

For more information on High Traffic Area pads, see our publication at www.uky.edu/ag/forages/publication.

-Krista Lea

"What if you could watch plants grow in minutes?"

Photography and forage research are two things you would not normally put together. By taking time lapse photos and making movies of research experiments we are able to show amazing results in relatively short amount of time. We have made over thirty time lapse movies in the past year alone ranging from seedling vigor experiments to cutting height and timing experiments and even benefits of a controlled native grass burn. I believe the benefits of this technology are limitless. We have posted some of our videos under the Decision Aid section of the Forage Website so they can be accessed by classrooms around the world. We can now share our love for forage research with all generations of people.

<http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage/Forage%20Decision%20Aids.htm>

-Gabriel Roberts

National Forage Spokesperson Winner Now Online

As reported in the February Forage News, Heather Graham from Wolfe County, won the National Forage Spokesperson contest at the AFGC meetings in January.

Her presentation is now online at the AFGC YouTube website. The link to her presentation is listed below or simply click on the YouTube channel link at www.afgc.org to access Heather's and all the other competitors presentations.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mWkwCw1IAio>

Rotational Grazing

To learn more about rotational grazing and general pasture management our next Kentucky Grazing School will be May 20-21, 2015 at the Woodford County Extension Office and UK C. Oran Little Research Center in Versailles. UK and KFGC have been hosting grazing schools for almost 20 years and the KY Ag Development Fund allows you to attend this year's school for only \$50 per person. For program and details, see our website www.uky.edu/Ag/forages and click on "Grazing School" or contact our Master Grazer coordinator Cody Smith at cody.smith@uky.edu or 859-257-7512 to register.

Grazing News

One of UK's newest publications, Grazing News, will be published nine times this year. This publication covers all aspects of grazing systems, species selection, forage management, and many other helpful management recommendations to maximize your grazing system. The March/April issue is now available online at the Master Grazer website. <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/grazer/>.

This issue contains articles on Starting the Grazing Season Off Right, Producing Quality Hay, and a great section on Helpful Reminders for this time of year. These reminders include:

- Soil test to determine fertilizer applications, and apply fertilizer according to soils test results.
- Heat stress starts as early as May- plan for shade and cool water in every paddock.
- Reduce damage to forages and soils by moving feeding area and livestock often.
- Keep animals and equipment off extremely wet pastures- consider use of a sacrifice area or feeding area.
- Control competition from weeds and undesired forages where new seedlings are emerging.
- Inspect and prepare water systems to supply water to every paddock.
- Continue to provide livestock access to a high magnesium, or high Mag, mineral to reduce risk of grass tetany.
- Start seeding warm-season forages after risk of frost to provide summer grazing.

Upcoming Events

MAY 20-21 Kentucky Grazing School, Woodford County Extension Office. Versailles, KY.

JUNE 2 and 4 Equine Farm and Facilities Expo. Lexington, KY (2nd) Murray, KY (4th)

JUNE 21-27 National Forage Week.

SEPT 9-10 Heart of America Grazing Conference. Wilmington OH.

NOV 20-24 International Grassland Congress. New Delhi, India.

DEC 13-16 National Grazing Lands Coalition Conference (GLCI). Grapevine, TX.

2015

JAN 10-12 American Forage and Grassland Council Annual Meeting. Baton Rouge, LA.