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Forage News

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## Forage News [2015-01]

Department of Plant and Soil Sciences, University of Kentucky

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# FORAGE NEWS

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

## January 2015

*Garry D. Lacefield and S. Ray Smith, Extension Forage Specialists • Christi Forsythe, Secretary*

## HAPPY NEW YEAR

### FORAGES AT KCA

The KCA Annual Convention will be in Owensboro January 16-17 at the new Convention Center. This will be our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Forages at KCA and we are featuring FARMERS. You won't want to miss this program beginning at 2:00 on Saturday January 17.

#### Theme - Forage Improvement Practices that WORK

2:00 Welcome, Introduction & Overview - Garry Lacefield

#### My Top 5 Forage Improvements/Practices

- 2:15 Commercial Hay - Clayton Gerald
- 2:30 Dairy - Bill Payne
- 2:45 Goats and Sheep - Jason Tower
- 3:00 Cow-Calf - Chris Pantle
- 3:15 Stocker - Russell Hackley
- 3:30 Top TEN Forage Improvements: The BIG Picture - Garry Lacefield
- 3:45 Panel Discussion
- 4:30 Adjourn

### 2015 KENTUCKY SMALL RUMINANT GRAZING CONFERENCE

The 2015 Small Ruminant Grazing Conference will be held at the Logan County Extension Office in Russellville, Kentucky February 7, beginning with registration at 7:30 a.m. CST. For information on program and registration see our website [www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage](http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage) (click on the program link in the Upcoming Forage Events column).

### 35<sup>TH</sup> KENTUCKY ALFALFA CONFERENCE

Our 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Kentucky Alfalfa Conference will be at the Cave City Convention Center February 26, 2015. We have an outstanding program planned that will feature leading alfalfa enthusiasts from the producer, university and industry sectors. We have two keynote speakers, one from Auburn, Alabama and one from Tangent, Oregon. In addition we will conclude with a Blue Ribbon Producer Panel discussing "What Hay Quality Means to Me". At lunch we will give our 2014 Alfalfa & Alfalfa-Grass Awards and our Alfalfa Awards.

For details on the program, see our website <http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage/35th%20Kentucky%20Alfalfa%20Conference%20program%20in%20columns.pdf>

Do not hesitate to contact Christi 270-365-7541, Ext. 221 or me 270-365-7541, Ext. 202 if you have any questions.

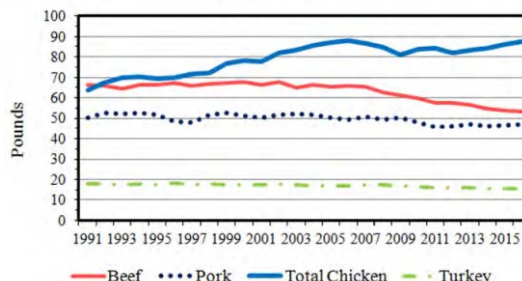
### 2014 KENTUCKY REVIEW

- KY ag cash receipts will total \$6 billion in 2014, compared to the 2013 adjusted official USDA level of \$5.7 billion.
- KY crop receipts are forecast at \$2.8 billion (-2%) benefiting from higher priced 2013 crops sold in 2014.

- Strong beef, dairy, poultry and hog prices boosted KY livestock receipts to a record \$3.2 billion (+15%).
- KY net cash income (cash receipts + government payments – cash expenses) may retreat from the 2013 record high level but will remain relatively strong.
- World burley production increased 12% in 2014, following a 22% larger crop in 2013, with most of the growth in low quality/filler tobacco from Africa (Universal Leaf Company estimates).
- USDA estimates the 2014 U.S. burley crop at 211.5 million pounds, 10% above the 2013 crop.
- U.S. burley disappearance (domestic use plus exports) was relatively stable at around 210 to 220 million pounds from 2008-2012, but fell to 200 million pounds in 2013 and will likely fall farther in the 2014 marketing year responding to both lower leaf exports and slumping domestic cigarette sales.
- Despite a crop that most buyers expect to be smaller than current USDA estimate, 2014 U.S. burley production will still likely be greater than anticipated use; leading to more critical grading and prices retreating from their record high of \$2.06/lb for the 2013 crop.
- The 2014 U.S. dark fire cured crop is expected to total around 50 million pounds, and the 2014 U.S. dark air-cured crop totaling around 15 million pounds (just slightly above last year's levels).
- Expansion in smokeless tobacco consumption appears to be slowing in 2014, but the current supply/demand balance for dark tobaccos indicates relatively strong leaf prices for the current crop (\$2.65-\$2.70/lb for top quality dark-fire and \$2.35-\$2.40/lb for dark-air).
- Lower burley demand, coupled with a mixed quality crop, will likely cause the value of 2014 production to fall below \$400 million.

(SOURCE: UK Dept. of Agricultural Economics 2014-2015 Agricultural Situation & Outlook)

US RED MEAT & POULTRY CONSUMPTION  
Per Capita, Retail Weight, Annual



(SOURCE: USDA Ag. Statistics.)

## ALFALFA SEED SUPPLY ADEQUATE FOR 2015

### MODERATELY HIGHER PRICES SHOULD BE ANTICIPATED

Alfalfa growers can expect slightly higher prices and adequate supplies of proprietary seed for the 2015 season. So say representatives of the three major alfalfa-breeding companies.

"In general, the early seed crop was in really good condition," says Matt Fanta, Forage Genetics International president. Drought affected a few seed fields in the Southwest, but not enough to hurt production, he explains.

Non-dormant seed is in good supply, reports Ron Cornish, Alforex Seeds' general manager.

"The dormants and semi-dormants are at a comfortable level," he says. "We have good supply of our major varieties. As long as we don't have any unusual weather events like a major winterkill, we're going to be in a good position."

### Low-Lignin Alfalfas Move Toward The Market

Plant breeders have been working for years to reduce the amount of lignin in alfalfa.

But the companies are still trying to shore up their seed inventories after responding to the intense demand caused by 2013 alfalfa winterkill in the Upper Midwest. As of late October, Alforex was working as quickly as possible to fill its warehouses, says Cornish.

"Over the course of the last two years, we've been ramping up our alfalfa production. Our sales have been going up, and we've been trying to meet the demand," he says.

"We've put in more seed acres," adds Robin Newell, DuPont Pioneer senior business manager for forages. "We're trying to build back our stocks. There is less Pioneer inventory of older varieties than in some prior years. But we're producing pretty much what we believe the market wants in terms of a variety mix." He also reports average yields as alfalfa seed is conditioned, and "quality appears to be good."

Growers shouldn't expect to see an abundance of common or variety-not-specified (VNS) seed this year, Newell says.

"There are probably bargains out there, but folks are going to have to search longer to find them."

Cornish believes much of the VNS seed crop, from South Dakota and into Canada, was harvested as hay when hay prices continued to stay high.

A "moderate increase" in seed prices is likely, Fanta says. "That will vary depending on the product and the location."

Demand, he predicts, will increase. "We continue to see strong demand for new products; we continue to see strong demand for Roundup Ready products."

Newell also anticipates an increase in alfalfa acreage seeded in 2015. "We might see an era here where there's a little bit more interest in establishing alfalfa hay," he says. (SOURCE: *Hay Weekly*, Nov 18, 2014)

## EIGHT NEW ALFALFAS ARE APPROVED BY VARIETY BOARD

### NAFA ANNUAL GUIDE IS NOW AVAILABLE

Of the eight new alfalfas approved by the National Alfalfa & Miscellaneous Legumes Variety Review Board, five are Roundup Ready varieties and three are conventional alfalfas.

Information on the pest resistance and winterhardiness of all eight is available in the National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance leaflet, published in the November *Hay & Forage Grower*. Each variety within the eight-page guide is currently being marketed and is eligible for certification by seed-certifying agencies.

But here's a peek at the newest elite varieties:

**Of the conventional varieties, DKA40-16** is a winterhardy fall-dormancy 4 with improved salt tolerance and high multifoliolate leaf expression from Dekalb. It has high resistance to the top six alfalfa diseases – bacterial, verticillium and fusarium wilts; anthracnose race 1; phytophthora root rot; and aphanomyces race 1 root rot – as well as stem nematode. It also shows resistance to pea aphid.

A fall-dormancy 5 alfalfa from Farm Science Genetics, **FSG 524**, has high multifoliolate leaf expression and high resistance to the top pests. It exhibits resistance to stem nematode and pea aphid.

A Dairyland Seed variety, **Magna 715**, is a fall-dormancy 7 conventional with high resistance to fusarium wilt, anthracnose, pea aphid and northern and southern root-knot nematode. It's resistant to bacterial and verticillium wilts, phytophthora root rot and stem nematode.

**Of the Roundup Ready alfalfas**, two are fall-dormancy 4 varieties – Dekalb's DKA40-51RR and Croplan's RR VaMoose – both with high resistance to the six major alfalfa diseases. DKA40-51RR also exhibits high resistance to aphanomyces race 2 root rot and resistance to spotted alfalfa aphid and stem nematode. The salt-tolerant RR VaMoose also shows high resistance to potato leafhopper, resistance to pea aphid and moderate resistance to spotted alfalfa aphid and stem nematode.

A fall-dormancy 5 variety from Pioneer, **55VR06** highly resists all but one of the six major alfalfa pests – fusarium wilt. But the alfalfa exhibits resistance to fusarium wilt as well as to spotted alfalfa and pea aphids, and moderate resistance to aphanomyces root rot and stem nematode.

**RR Six Shooter**, a fall-dormancy 6, high-expression multifoliolate from Croplan, highly resists all the six major pests except aphanomyces root rot. It also exhibits high resistance to spotted alfalfa and pea aphids and stem nematode. It's resistant to southern root-knot nematode.

Nexgrow's fall-dormancy 7, salt-tolerant alfalfa, **6829R**, displays high resistance to spotted alfalfa and pea aphids, stem nematode and phytophthora root rot. It's resistant to bacterial, verticillium and fusarium wilts. (SOURCE: *Hay Weekly*, November 18, 2014)

"Life is an opportunity, benefit from it.

Life is beauty, admire it.

Life is a dream, realize it.

Life is a challenge, meet it.

Life is a duty, complete it.

Life is a game, play it.

Life is a promise, fulfill it.

Life is sorrow, overcome it.

Life is a song, sing it.

Life is a struggle, accept it. Life

is a tragedy, confront it.

Life is an adventure, dare it.

Life is luck, make it.

Life is life, fight for it."

-- Mother Teresa

## UPCOMING EVENTS

JAN 11-13 American Forage & Grassland Council Conference, St. Louis, MO

JAN 16-17 20<sup>th</sup> Forages at KCA, KCA Convention, Owensboro

FEB 7 2015 Kentucky Small Ruminant Grazing Conference, Logan County Extension Office, Russellville, KY

FEB 26 35<sup>th</sup> "Anniversary" Kentucky Alfalfa Conference, Cave City Convention Center, Cave City, KY

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January 2015