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Forage News [2013-11]

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>

November 2013

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

JIMMY RAY MAY, SR. 1943-2013

Mr. Jimmy May, long time member of KFGC, former board member, Grazing Conference speaker and forage conference exhibitor passed away at the age of 70 on Saturday, September 28 at his home in Auburn, Kentucky. He was a Wildlife Biologist with Kentucky Fish and Wildlife for 22 years. The May family asked that donations be made to the American Cancer Society.

KFGC AWARDS

The Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council presented their 2013 Annual Awards at the 14th Kentucky Grazing Conference in Lexington October 10.

Grassroots Producer – John McCoy
Public Service (County) – Joanna Coles
Public Service (State) – John James
Industry – Chris Agee

Congratulations John, Joanna, John and Chris!



L to R: Chris Agee, John James, Garry Lacefield, John McCoy and Sherry McCoy. Not pictured Joanna Coles

2013 KFGC FORAGE SPOKESPERSON CONTEST

Myron Ellis of Mercer County and Jay McElwain of Muhlenberg County participated in the Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council, Forage Spokesperson Contest on October 10 as a part of the 14th Annual KY Grazing Conference. Both contestants gave excellent presentations with only two points separating the judging scores. Myron was declared the winner and will represent Kentucky at the 2014 American Forage and Grassland Council Forage Spokesperson Contest in Memphis, Tennessee.

SMALL RUMINANT GRAZING CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN LEXINGTON ON FEBRUARY 01, 2014

On Saturday, February 01, 2014, the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment along with other sponsors will host an all-day event focusing on grazing small ruminant animals such as sheep and goats at the Fayette County Extension

Office. The program will begin at 8:30 a.m. and end at 2:30 p.m. The deadline for pre-registration is January 24, 2014. A registration fee of \$25 includes lunch and educational materials.

Dr. Ray Kaplan, renowned parasitologist, from the University of Georgia will headline the program with talks on "De-wormers" and "Reducing Parasites with Grazing Management". Other topics addressed on the program will be Agronomic and Livestock Benefits to Rotational Grazing, Hay Testing, Environmental Stewardship as well as updates on marketing from the Kentucky Department of Agriculture and an update on the UK Robinson Center for Appalachian Resource Sustainability.

Rounding out the Program will be a producer panel discussion with leading small ruminant producers discussing "What works for them".

Lastly, FAMACHA Training will be offered by Dr. Michelle Arnold, UK Extension Ruminant Veterinarian at the end of the Program at a cost of \$15.00 per person (for training materials). This training is not offered very often and will be a good opportunity for producers concerned about managing parasites in their operation.

For more information log on to the Robinson Center website at www2ca.uky.edu/rcars. or call 606-666-2438. (David Ditsch, Extension Agronomy Specialist/Robinson Station Superintendent)

GRASS - A PANDRAMA IN WORDS

Grass is the forgiveness of nature – her constant benediction. Fields trampled with battle, saturated with blood, torn with the ruts of cannon, grow green again with grass, and carnage is forgotten. Streets abandoned by traffic become grass-grown like rural lanes, and obliterated. Forests decay, harvests perish, flowers vanish, but grass is immortal. Beleaguered by the sullen hosts of winter, it withdraws into the impregnable fortress of its subterranean vitality, and emerges upon the first solicitation of spring. Sown by the winds, by wandering birds, propagated by the subtle horticulture of the elements which are its ministers and servants, it softens the rude outline of the world. Its tenacious fibres hold the earth in its place, and prevent its soluble components from washing into the wasting sea. It invades the solitude of deserts, climbs the inaccessible slopes and forbidding pinnacles of mountains, modifies climates, and determines the history, character, and destiny of nations. Unobtrusive and patient, it has immortal vigor and aggression. Banished from the thoroughfare and the field, it bides its time to return, and when vigilance is relaxed, or the dynasty has perished, it silently resumes the throne from which it has been expelled, but which it never abdicates. It bears no blazonry or bloom to charm the senses with fragrance or splendor, but its homely hue is more enchanting than the lily or the rose. It yields no fruit in earth or air, and yet should its harvest fail for a single year, famine would depopulate the world. *Dedicated to those who love green pastures. (SOURCE: John James Ingalls (1833-1900) was Senator from Kansas (1873-1891) printed in The Kansas Magazine in 1892.)*

GRASS-BASED HEALTH

A true discussion of sustainability must focus on improving the condition of humanity. Too often, however, such a discussion is a "dialogue of values that defies consensual definition" (Ratner 2004), with participants implicitly accepting as true numerous foundational beliefs that are factually incorrect or unproven. Dietary policies recommending carbohydrate-based diets are one example. Falsehoods persist despite decades of contradictory research results and clinical findings, contaminating a variety of diverse disciplines and

discussions. A rational, objective discussion of sustainability in grassland agriculture must confront the issue of public health policy, consider our physical health, the fiscal health of our communities, and promote the role of animal products from ruminants in human diets. (SOURCE: Peter Ballerstedt IN Proceedings of the 22nd International Grassland Congress www.igc2013.com)

TIMING OF GRAZING EFFECTS ON PASTURE PRODUCTIVITY

What is the potential impact of more frequent grazing during particular times of the year? A range of grazing management systems was implemented at the U.S. Dairy Forage Research Center at Prairie du Sac, Wisconsin, on 1.0 acre paddocks of meadow fescue, orchardgrass, quackgrass, and reed canarygrass. Within each paddock, we determined how timing of grazing (spring, summer, and fall) affects grass growth. In this experiment, grasses were grazed when they reached a 6-, 12-, or 18-inch height to a 3-inch residue in the spring (early to late May), summer (early to late July), or fall (late August to late September). Grasses were grazed at a 12-inch height to a 3-inch residue during the remainder of the season. Yield was measured before each grazing event, and tillers were counted at the end of the treatment period. Maximum annual yield was obtained when grasses were grazed at 18 inches in the spring (a situation similar to making hay) although tiller density was reduced compared to grazing at 12 inches throughout the season. Grazing when grasses reached 6 inches in height in the spring (a situation similar to setting the grazing wedge) reduced annual yield 20% compared to grazing at 12 inches during the whole season. Only meadow fescue tiller density was negatively affected by grazing at 6 inches during the spring. Grazing when grasses reached 6 inches in height in the summer (a situation similar to grazing drought-stressed pastures) reduced annual yield 10% compared to grazing at 12 inches throughout the season. Grazing when grasses reached 6 inches in the fall did not influence annual yield the following year, but a 3-inch residue height was always maintained. Vegetative-stage grasses are at greater risk of damage from inappropriate grazing management than mature grass, and grass under stress (moisture, fertility) is at greater risk of damage from poor grazing management than those that are not. (SOURCE: Geoff Brink, USDA-ARS, Dairy-Forage Research Center in PFGC News, Vol. 23, No. 4, Fall 2013)

HAY BALE FIRES STILL A THREAT

CHECK STACKS, BARNs FOR HEATED BALES

Recent reports of hay bale fires should remind growers to continue to monitor stacks and storage barns.

In August, 300 round bales burned near Lockwood, MT, according to a [report in the Billings Gazette](#). Last week, firefighters battled a [semi load of hay](#) on fire in Iowa, caught on video by the *Des Moines Register*, and a "massive" fire at Haykingdom Inc., near Winters, CA. An estimated \$6 million worth of hay, stored in the hay export company's barns, was destroyed, according to a [report at KTVU.com](#).

"Generally, hay fires occur within six weeks after baling, but have been known to occur even after a year," according to a [University of California Alfalfa & Forage News blog](#). They begin through a process called "spontaneous combustion ... which depends on the initial moisture content of the hay, the ease with which moisture can dissipate from the bales and environmental conditions."

The blog also mentions that the frequency of hay fires has increased as more growers have switched to large square bales.

In addition, as drought worsens in Arkansas, growers there should be concerned about the potential for round bale fires, remind state public safety officials.

Round bale fires, says Jon Barry, a University of Arkansas Extension forester and volunteer firefighter, can be particularly tough to put out.

One major challenge, he says, is that round bales are assembled in layers, like tightly compressed rolls of paper. "Because the hay is tightly compressed, a round bale doesn't burn intensely or quickly. It is a smoldering fire that burns up into the bale. The bale has to be taken apart to get to the fire so it can be put out. And all of it has to be put out or it will flare up again."

Where bales are located and on what terrain determine how bale fires will be extinguished. If a burning bale is in a hayfield, "the most effective approach is to get the farmer to tear the bale apart with his tractor," Barry says. "If the terrain is flat, sometimes we just push the

bale along and unroll it. Since we are going to spray water all over and into the bale, it is a total loss to the farmer anyway."

Grass, compressed in round bales, forms a distinct, tough grain pattern almost like wood grain, he says. "When we are trying to get into the bale to find the smoldering area, we have to work across the grain, and that's hard work," he says. (SOURCE: eHay Weekly, October 1, 2013)

MINNESOTA DAIRY NAMED FORAGE SUPERBOWL GRAND CHAMP

Kentucky Farmer has BEST Dairy Hay

Doug and Sandy Kerfeld's Dairyland HybriForce 2420 haylage entry took Grand Champion honors in the World Forage Analysis Superbowl. Fuchs Kerfeld Dairy, with its 110-cow Holstein herd near Albany, MN, produced a sample with a relative forage quality score of 298 and took home a \$3,000 check.

A total of 321 entries in seven forage categories represented 17 states in the contest, where more than \$22,000 in cash prizes were awarded to top finishers. Winners were announced Oct. 2 at the World Forage Analysis Superbowl Awards Luncheon, sponsored by Mycogen Seeds, at World Dairy Expo.

Ed Byers Dairy, Enon Valley, PA, was named Grand Champion First-Time Entrant with a cash award of \$1,500. Other top winners in each category were:

Dairy Hay: 1st place, *S Y Dairy, Guthrie, KY*; 2nd, Srnka Farms LLC, Algoma, WI; 3rd, Dee's Dairy Inc., Morgan, UT; 4th, Karl & Barb Wogsland, Scandinavia, WI; 5th, Rosedale Genetics Ltd., Oxford, WI.

Dairy Haylage: 1st, Gregg Troyer, Dalton, OH; 2nd, Ever-Green-View, Waldo, WI; 3rd, Devin Haywood, Hastings, MI; 4th, Baker's Golden Dairy, New Waterford, Ohio; 5th, Heatherstone Enterprises, Baraboo, WI.

Standard Corn Silage: 1st, Doody Farm, Tully, NY; 2nd, Maynard Lehman, La Grange, IN; 3rd, Vander Made Dairy, Sherwood, OH; 4th, Vista Grande Farms LLC, Fleetwood, PA; 5th, Emmons Farms, Fayette, OH.

BMR Corn Silage: 1st, Holmes Acres, New Woodstock, NY; 2nd, White Eagle Farms LLC, Hamilton, NY; 3rd, Indianhead Holsteins Ltd, Barron, WI; 4th, Tayl-Wind Farm, Cassville, NY; 5th, Pankow Farm, Castile, NY.

Commercial Hay: 1st, Hardrock Farms, Wheatland, WY; 2nd, Lazy 2K Livestock, Wheatland, WY; 3rd, Harlan Fegler, Arapahoe, MI; 4th, Berney Ranch Inc., Okanogan, WA; 5th, Lee Erickson, Mountain Lake, MN.

Baleage: 1st, Olson Farms, Lena, WI; 2nd, Hardrock Farms, Wheatland, WY; 3rd, Beer's Robo Holsteins LLC, Mascoutah, IL; 4th, Leroy Yoder, Topeka, IN; 5th, Nick Wallace, Keystone, IA.

Grass Hay: 1st, Rosedale Genetics Ltd., Oxford, WI; 2nd, Gerry Danko, Powell, WY; 3rd, Anderson Livestock, Pine Bluffs, WY; 4th, Flat Rock Seed, Flat Rock, IN; 5th, Gryphon Ranch, Rochester, WA. (SOURCE: eHay Weekly, October 8, 2013)

UPCOMING EVENTS

- JAN 12-14 AFGC Conference, Memphis, TN
- JAN 13 AFGC Dow Pasture Symposium, Memphis, TN
- JAN 15-18 Kentucky Cattlemen's Association Convention, Lexington
- JAN 17 Forages at KCA, Lexington
- FEB 1 Kentucky Small Ruminant Grazing Conference, Lexington
- FEB 4-7 NCBA, Nashville, TN
- FEB 20 34th Kentucky Alfalfa Conference, WKU Expo Center, Bowling Green


Garry D. Lacefield
Extension Forage Specialist
November 2013

Change the way you look at things and the things you look at will change. - Wayne Drer



Happy Thanksgiving!