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## Forage News [2012-09]

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>

## September 2012

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

### KFGC FORAGE FIELD DAY

The Annual KFGC Forage Field Day will be September 6 in Hart County on the Gerald's Farm. Registration begins at 3:30 p.m. Central time with tours to begin at 4:00. Pre-tour activities include hay judging, visiting with various exhibitors and viewing displays. There will be two tours running at the same time:

#### Walking Tour

Hay Quality: Judging, Evaluating & Testing – *Tom Keene and Kim Field*

Hay Harvesting & Handling Equipment – *Clayton Gerald's*

#### Wagon Tour

Roundup Ready Alfalfa – *Garry Lacefield*

Alfalfa/Orchardgrass Cutting Height – *Ray Smith*

Baleage: Keys to Success – *Brandon Sears*

Making Grazing Work for Us – *Christopher Gerald's*

The Hart County Cattlemen will provide ribeye steak sandwiches with all the trimmings. Homemade cookies will be available for dessert.

Directions from I-65: Take exit 71 to Kentucky 728 (Priceville Road) for approximately six miles to Cave Hill Road. The Gerald's farm is approximately one mile on the right. Signs will be posted.

For more details on the program, visit the UK Forage Website at: <http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage/Field%20Day%202012%20columns%20-%20Gerald's%20Farm.pdf>

### KENTUCKY GRAZING SCHOOL

The Kentucky Grazing School will be held September 11-12, 2012 at the Woodford County Extension Office and C. Oran Little Research Center. This two day event will feature both classroom and field activities. Registration is \$50.00 which includes all materials, grazing manual, breaks and lunch both days. A detailed program is available on our website at

<http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage/Woodford%202012%20Brochure.pdf>

To register contact: Lyndsay Jones at [lyndsay.jones4@uky.edu](mailto:lyndsay.jones4@uky.edu) or call 859-257-7512.

### BEEF BASH 2012

**Everything Beef** can be used to describe this exciting field day at the UKREC in Princeton on September 27. Highlights include: demonstrations, commercial and educational exhibits, wagon and walking tours.

Demonstrations and Educational Exhibits include:

- Beef Cutting Demo
- Dead Animal Composting
- Determining Age of Cattle
- Weed Control in Pastures
- Feeding After the Drought
- Forages Tour: Hay Quality (Sampling, Testing & Feeding)
- Genomics in Selection and Management
- Grazing Wheat
- MAG 60 Marketing/Pre-Conditioning
- Managing Around Fescue Endophyte
- Nutrigenomics Research
- Reducing Hay Loss with Feeding Structures
- Simplified Ration Balancing
- Trailer Safety

Forages will be featured on several demonstrations, exhibits and tours. The forage tour will include:

Evaluating Hay Quality – Tom Keene and Kim Field

Nitrates & Prussic Acid: What you need to know? – Ray Smith

Grazing Options for Fall and Beyond – Garry Lacefield

Other forage-related tours/exhibits will include: Weed Control in Pastures, Grazing Wheat, Managing Around Tall Fescue Endophyte, Feeding After the Drought and Feeding Structures.

For more information see <http://ces.ca.uky.edu/beefirm/bash/>

### NATIONAL HAY ASSOCIATION TO FEATURE KENTUCKY SPEAKERS

The 117<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the National Hay Association will be held in Naples, Florida October 17-20, 2012. The program committee has put together an excellent program with outstanding speakers from across the USA. Hay Quality (What is it? How to determine? and What quality really means?) will be the featured program with keynote speakers from six states making presentations. I am so proud of two Kentuckians Mr. Clayton Gerald's, Hay Producer from Hart County and Mr. Tom Keene, Extension Hay Marketing Specialist University of Kentucky for being selected to speak at this important event. See [www.nationalhay.org](http://www.nationalhay.org) for more information.

### 13<sup>TH</sup> KENTUCKY GRAZING CONFERENCE

The 13<sup>th</sup> Kentucky Grazing Conference will be at the U.K. Research & Education Center in Princeton October 30. Featured speakers include the National Forage Spokesman Brent White, Dr. Ray Smith, Dr. Bob Coleman and Dr. Kenny Burdine from the University of Kentucky, Dr. Glen Aiken USDA/ARS and Dr. Gary Bates, Forage Extension Specialist University of Tennessee. The Kentucky Forage Spokesman Contest will be conducted following the lunch and Awards Program. Get more details at: <http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage/13th%20Kentucky%20Grazing%20Conference%20Program%20columns.pdf>

### PARTRIDGE PEA OR *CHAMAECRISTA FASCICULATA* (MICHX.)

#### GREENE

Partridge pea is a warm-season legume commonly used in wildlife seed mixes. Conservation Reserve Program lands are often seeded with these wildlife mixes. Partridge pea provides good nutrition and cover for birds and other wildlife. The current drought has resulted in the opening of many CRP lands for livestock foraging and many producers have questions about the safety of feeding partridge pea to livestock.

The fruits and seeds of partridge pea contain anthraquinones that may cause irritation of the digestive tract if consumed in large quantities. When this occurs there may be diarrhea and some abdominal pain (colic). Treatment of the diarrhea is seldom required due to the short duration of symptoms and the fact that they usually stop eating when they feel sick. There have been no good dosing studies of partridge pea toxicity in cattle and no published reports on the maximum amount of partridge pea that can be safely fed to cattle. Some have reported that if the diet is < 25% partridge pea there should be no problems, but no documentation could be found to confirm this recommendation. However, it seems reasonable to suggest that if the partridge pea is diluted with other forages so that it comprises a low percentage of the diet, it should not cause a problem. (SOURCE: Michelle Arnold, Ray Smith, Cynthia Gaskill, Roy Burris, Jeff Lehmkuhler and Garry Lacefield, Univ. of KY)



**Flower of Partridge Pea**  
**Photo courtesy of: Patrick J. Alexander @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database**



**Partridge Pea**  
**Photo courtesy of: Clarence A. Rechenhain @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database**

### FORAGE BRASSICA CROPS IN GRAZING SYSTEMS

Forage brassica crops such as turnip, swede, rape, and kale can be spring-seeded to supplement the perennial cool-season pastures in August and September or summer-seeded to extend the grazing season in November and December. Brassicas are annual crops which are highly productive and digestible and can be grazed 80 to 150 days after seeding. In addition, crude protein levels are high, varying from 15 to 25 percent in the herbage and 8 to 15 percent in the roots depending on the level of nitrogen fertilization and weather conditions.

**Grazing Management** – Grazing management is important to optimize the true potential of brassica crops. Strip grazing small areas of brassica at a time provides the most efficient utilization. Grazing large areas increases trampling and waste of the available forage. Rape is more easily managed for multiple grazings than are the other brassica species. Approximately 6 to 10 inches of stubble should remain after grazing rape to promote rapid regrowth. Regrowth may be grazed in as few as 4 weeks after the first grazing. Graze rape close to ground level during the final grazing.

When turnips are grazed more than once, only the tops should be grazed until the final grazing when the whole plant can be consumed. Like rape, regrowth of turnips can be sufficient to graze within 4 weeks of the first grazing.

For more information about establishing and managing brassica crops see: *Using Brassica Crops to Extend the Grazing Season*, Agronomy Facts 33, Penn State University (<http://pubs.cas.psu.edu/freepubs/pdfs/us100.pdf>) (SOURCE: Excerpted from *The AFGC Forage Leader Marvin Hall*, Penn State University, Fall 2012)

### DARKLING/MEALWORM BEETLES CAN CAUSE "BLISTER BEETLE SCARE"

A variety of insects and a mite can infest grass or alfalfa hay, feed grain, or processed feeds. Common species include the mealworm / darkling beetle, flour beetles, drugstore beetle, Indian meal moth, fungus beetles, weevils, and grain mites. Some feed and develop only in intact kernels; others prefer fines and cracked kernels. Fungus beetles and grain mites tend to sweet feeds or grain with excess moisture.



**Figure 1. Darkling beetle/mealworm beetle adult is about 3/4 inch long.**

Many of these species are naturally present in small numbers around barns and buildings; occasionally, some arrive as accidental contaminants in feed or grain. Over time, they find spills or residual feed to use as breeding sites. Their numbers can increase dramatically in just a few months and they can disperse to other feed bunks or storage areas.

Darkling beetles are very common. They avoid light and tend to accumulate under objects on the ground, large numbers can be found under stored hay bales or feed. As a black beetle, there is concern that it is a blister beetle. Fortunately, there is a distinct difference in appearance.



**Figure 2. Blister beetle (left) with distinct "neck", the darkling beetle (right) does not have a narrow neck behind its head.**

Consumption of a small amount of these arthropods probably does not pose a threat to animal health but long term infestations can lead to a significant loss of quality or condition so that the feed is rejected. Also, bringing infestations under control requires a significant amount of work. A thorough, persistent effort is needed and accomplishments may be short-lived if high standards of sanitation are not maintained.

**Figure 3. The wireworm-like larval stage is often called a mealworm. They can be found in accumulations of spilled feed or in bags that have been around for some time.**



Unfortunately, infestations in feed may not be noticed until large numbers of individuals are present. Identification of the species present, sometimes more than one, is important in developing a control strategy. In some cases, there is confusion because different life stages of the same insect are not recognized. The adult stages of most stored grain insects are "hard-shelled beetles" but they have a larval stage, too. Often this is a very small, white, worm-like creature that is not seen or thought to be unrelated.

Sanitation is the key to eliminating the problem. In addition to obvious places, infestations can linger in cracks and crevices where fines collect, or on the ground around feeders. Thorough sanitation and even correction of moisture problems are vital steps to solving current infestations and reducing chances of chronic troubles.

It is relatively easy to clean up around feeding sites but infestations in stored bulk feed are more difficult to address. Complicating factors include type of feeds that are present, volume on hand and use rate, type of storage, and time of year. If a small supply is on hand, it may be best to feed it out, and then thoroughly clean the storage area and surroundings before they are re-filled. Brooms and shop vacs need to be used to clean all accessible fines. A pyrethrins spray labeled for use in feed storage areas after cleanup will help to eliminate surviving insects. (SOURCE: Lee Townsend, *Kentucky Pest News* #1300, May 1, 2012)

### UPCOMING EVENTS

- SEP 6 KFGC Field Day, Hart County
- SEP 11-12 UK Grazing School, Woodford County
- SEP 27 UK Beef Bash, U.K. Research & Education Center, Princeton
- OCT 30 Kentucky Grazing Conference, U.K. REC, Princeton
- 2013**
- JAN 6-8 AFGC Annual Conference, Marriott River Center Covington, KY
- FEB 21 33<sup>rd</sup> Kentucky Alfalfa Conference, Fayette County Extension Office, Lexington

*Garry D. Laceyfield*

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 September 2012