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Forage News [2009-11]

University of Kentucky Department of Plant and Soil Sciences

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FORAGE NEWS

 Research & Education Center
Princeton, KY 42445

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

November 2009

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

FORAGES AT KCA

Our 15th Forages at KCA will be held January 15, 2010 at Lexington at the Kentucky Cattleman's Convention. Our theme is "Role and Importance of Clovers in Kentucky". I am very excited about this program since clovers are so important to forage-based livestock programs in Kentucky and for the fact that my close friend and colleague Dr. Don Ball from Auburn University will be our keynote speaker. I will provide more details later but wanted to get the date and program on your calendar. Program for the afternoon session includes:

- 1:45 Welcome – Dr. Garry Lacefield & Mr. Don Sorrell
- 2:00 Why Grow Clovers? – Dr. Don Ball
- 3:00 Estimating Clovers in Pastures – Dr. Ray Smith
- 3:25 Establishing Clovers in Pastures & Hay Fields – Dr. Garry Lacefield
- 3:50 Role of Clovers "Down on the Farm" – Mr. Don Sorrell
- 4:15 Discussion

Bring your Southern Forage books and Dr. Ball will be available for autographs. If you don't have a copy of the 4th Edition, KFGC will have them available for sale.

10TH KENTUCKY GRAZING CONFERENCE

Over 140 from 8 states participated in the 10th Kentucky Grazing Conference at the University of Kentucky Research and Education Center on October 29. Topics discussed included: Why Improve my Grazing Program, New Developments in Species & Varieties, Eastern Gamagrass, Weed Control in Pastures, Tall Fescue Grazing Research, Stored Feed Needs, Extension the Grazing Season and Animal Welfare – Animal Rights – Role of Grazing. The Forage Spokesman contest was conducted then Mr. Clayton Gerald, reigning Kentucky Forage Spokesman, served as the wrap-up speaker.

KFGC PRESENTS AWARDS

KFGC Awards were presented at the 10th Kentucky Grazing Conference held in Princeton on October 29. Awards were presented in four categories. Recipients were:

Grassroots:	Clayton & Christopher Gerald
Industry:	Jeremy McGill
Public County:	Darrell Simpson
Public State:	Glen Aiken

Congratulations Clayton, Christopher, Jeremy, Darrell and Glenn.

KFGC UPDATE

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the following Board members for their dedication and support to KFGC during their three year term as a Director of the Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council: Gene Dobbs, Kevin Fields, Chad Lee, Jeff Medlin, Roy Reichenbach, Keenan Turner and Brett Winsett.

The following individuals were elected by the KFGC membership for a 2010 -2012 Director position. Congratulations and welcome to the KFGC Board of Directors.

Producers: Buddy Smith is a purebred Angus breeder and hay producer in Anderson County. Buddy hosted the 2009 KFGC Field Day. **Charles Powell** is a commercial hay producer from Christian County. The Powell Farm has won several KDA hay testing awards and placed second in the pure alfalfa class in the 2009 AFGC hay

contest. **Roy Reichenbach** (re-elected) raises alfalfa for cash hay and stocker cattle in Lincoln County. He has worked with UK and private companies with numerous alfalfa research and demonstration projects.

Industry: Terry Ginn of Bedford, KY is currently serving the east Kentucky region as Agronomist for Southern States Cooperative.

Adam Probst is currently the KY Research Director for DLF International and runs the forage and turf research station in northern KY. **Jeff Medlin** (re-elected) is the Forage and Sales Agronomist for Ampac Seed Company. Jeff received the KFGC Industry award in 2008.

Public: Keenan Turner (re-elected) is the retired Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent of Pulaski County. During the past four years Keenan has served as the coordinator of the Master Grazer Program. **Kenny Burdine** is a UK Agricultural Economics Extension Specialist. He has been a keynote speaker at many forage and livestock programs including Master Cattleman, Master Grazer and numerous county and regional meetings.

The KFGC Board of Directors met on October 28 at the UK Research and Education Center in Princeton. Highlights of that meeting included updates from the Nominating, Forage Spokesperson and Industry Committees. New projects that the KFGC Board is working on include: forage coupon book, identify and support the students and leadership needed to implement a Forage Bowl team(s), promote KFGC by having Board members participate in county based educational programs and develop a fact sheet on KFGC activities such as hay and photo contests.

For information on forages and upcoming forage programs go to www.kfgc.org or UK's forage website at www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage. (Don Sorrell, KFGC President)

CALDWELL WILLIG IS NEW KENTUCKY FORAGE SPOKESMAN

Caldwell Willig of Rivercrest Farm in Oldham County won the Kentucky Forage Spokesman Contest held during the 10th Kentucky Grazing Conference in Princeton on October 29. Caldwell will represent Kentucky in the National Contest to be held during the American Forage & Grassland Conference in Springfield, Missouri next June.

FORAGE TESTING A MUST FOR THIS YEARS' HAY CROP

While driving the highways of Kentucky this fall, the need for testing this year's hay has become painfully apparent.

While driving I see rows and rows of round hay bales stored outside, with green grass growing on top of the bales. This is due primarily to two factors. First, the hay was made at a very mature stage and had a tremendous amount of viable seed in the seed heads of the hay when baled. This seed ensures that the hay was way past an optimal nutrient value when it was harvested thus reducing quality dramatically.

The second issue is the over abundance of rainfall that we have had this year when compared to others. This additional rainfall has made the hay stored outside deteriorate at a much greater rate than normal and will cause our storage and feeding losses to skyrocket.

The most economical and efficient correction for this type of hay would be to make sure that the hay is tested either with the KDA hay

Testing Program 1-800- 248-4628 or with another certified laboratory (see foragetesting.org for a listing of certified labs) and then feed according to the class of livestock being fed. You can contact your local county agent for more information. Also, keeping any additional rainfall off of the hay (by tarping or by storing the inside) would help as well. (Tom Keene, UK Hay Marketing Specialist)

"GROWING ALFALFA IN THE SOUTH" & "UNDERSTANDING FORAGE QUALITY," NOW AVAILABLE ON NAFA WEBSITE

The National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance (NAFA) has recently made two publications available on its website (www.alfalfa.org) – an updated and enhanced version of *Growing Alfalfa in the South*, as well as a reprinted version of *Understanding Forage Quality*.

With alfalfa acreage increasing in the South, NAFA, with the help of Dr. Garry Lacefield, updated its *Growing Alfalfa in the South* publication which offers a comprehensive look at the considerations and requirements of growing what is known as the "Queen of Forages" in the southern USA.

"While growing alfalfa in the Midwest and other parts of the country may be commonplace, that is not necessarily the case in the South. That's starting to change though. We're starting to see greater interest in southern alfalfa production in an effort to avoid the costs of transporting it from other areas of the country," said Lacefield, who along with four fellow scientists (Dr. Don Ball Auburn University, Dr. Dennis Hancock University of Georgia, Dr. John Andrae Clemson University and Dr. Ray Smith University of Kentucky), authored the publication. "This publication is a valuable tool to help move alfalfa production forward in the southern U.S.," Lacefield added. While alfalfa has not yet attained the status in the South that it has in other parts of the country, economic conditions have increased the demand for high-quality forage in the South. Production problems such as a lack of well-adapted varieties, pest infestations, and limited yields have, in the past, conspired to create a challenging environment for the production of high quality, persistent alfalfa in the South. *Growing Alfalfa in the South*, however, is a publication intent on changing this reality.

Updated with in-depth information regarding such topics as variety selection, inoculation, weed and insect control, fertility, harvesting, storage, and other economic considerations growers should make, *Growing Alfalfa in the South* is a step-by-step guide to producing, harvesting and storing high quality alfalfa hay – a must for anyone considering alfalfa production in the southern U.S. In addition, NAFA is making available reprinted versions of

Understanding Forage Quality. A collaboration of some of the leading forage agronomists from across the United States, *Understanding Forage Quality* gives producers an in depth look at the factors which affect forage quality and the tools to analyze and better manage those issues. Topics such as species differences, temperature, maturity, fertilization, and variety effects, just to name a few, are all included in this thorough publication. *Understanding Forage Quality* provides valuable information about forage quality and forage testing that can be used to increase animal performance and producer profits.

Low resolution copies are available to download free by visiting www.alfalfa.org. Hard copies are available for a nominal fee, get yours today! (SOURCE: Beth Nelson, National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance Press Release October 22, 2009)

IT'S THE PITTS: A CAN OF WORMS

If one goose is a geese shouldn't a gang of geese be geeses? Definitely, but somewhere in the corruption of the King's English a group of geese on the ground became a gaggle and a skein in the air. Besides devotees of crossword puzzles and the game Trivial Pursuit who knows that? If I had my way a muster of mongeese would be mungooses and a family of fish would be trouts or salmons.

Phrases for farm animals are okay to a point. A collection of cattle or horses is a herd and a group of sheep is a flock. Everyone knows that. But who knew that a group of pigs is a passel or a sounder of swine? Poetic sure, but hard to remember.

This naming of animal plurality is confusing. Besides cattle, the term herd can refer to deer, elephants, seals and whales, despite the fact they have little in common. When we speak of a colony we could be referring to ants, penguins, gulls, rabbits, bats or a group of nudists. And why should we attribute warlike tendencies to "armies" of herons,

caterpillars, frogs, and herring? Sure, caterpillars have declared war on farmers in the past, but what country have frogs ever invaded?

I must admit that some of the words we use to describe groups of animals are perfect. A group of giraffes is known as a tower, two porcupines are a prickle, a faction of hippopotamuses are a bloat, and multiple rhinoceroses are a crash. All excellent names. Cockroaches are an intrusion, lions a pride, sharks a shiver, apes a shrewdness, hyenas a cackle, jays a scold, otters are a romp, gnats a cloud, and a contingent of moles are a labor. You'll agree, if you ever try getting rid of them.

Then there are the terrible terms we've adopted. I'm sure that groups of foxes don't appreciate being called a skulk, we slander crows by calling them a murder, and I'm sure that a sloth of bears would change their name in a heartbeat if they could.

A society of parrots, flies or widgeons is known as a company. I don't even know what a widgeon is, nor do I know what business these companies are in. And speaking of company, a group of ferrets is known as one. Some of the worst terms are a smack of jellyfish, a troop of monkeys, a knot of toads, a barren of mules, a building of rooks and a bale of turtles. A bale of turtles? That's gonna make PETA mad.

For some reason birds have incited excessively flowery speech. We have an unkindness of ravens, an exaltation of larks, a murmuration of starlings, a richness of martens, congregation of plovers, convocation of eagles, watch of nightingales, charm of finches and a mustering of storks or peacocks. One wonders why these birds have wonderful sounding names while a group of lapwings is a deceit and a throng of hawks is known as a kettle, cast or boil. And I think calling a group of owls a parliament is not very complimentary at all. To the owls, that is.

If I were in charge of the English language I'd change some of the terminology we use when referring to groups of animals. A herd of elephants would be a trunk, a wake of buzzards would become a stench, a descent of woodpeckers would be a headache, a sord or brace of mallards would be a quack, a dray or scurry of squirrels would henceforth be a plague, and a pack of wolves would be a disaster. A warren of rabbits would be a multiplication, a troop of kangaroos would be a jump, a school or hover of fish would be a limit, a grist of bees would be a stinger, a clowder of cats would become a nuisance, a gang of buffalo would be a Ted (as in Turner), a chain of bobolinks would be a Bobby or a Robert, a kindle of kittens would be a burden, a brood of chickens would be a bucket (as in KFC), a tribe of goats would become a kindergarten (for the kids), and a rafter of turkeys would be a stupid. All these new names would be much easier to remember. (Lee Pitts)


ESTIMATING CLOVER PERCENTAGE IN YOUR PASTURE

Have you ever wondered just how much clover is in your pastures.

Looks can be deceiving and we commonly overestimate the amount of clover. Dr. Ed Rayburn of West Virginia University and Dr. Jim Green of North Carolina State have developed a tutorial to show you how to improve your estimation skill. Go to the UK Forage Website to view the tutorial. It is in the form of a pdf file that you can download and go through like a slideshow. The pictures that you are viewing show ladino white clover and red clover in a mixed cool season pasture. The grasses are tall fescue, orchardgrass, and Kentucky bluegrass and the weeds shown are common cool season weeds that would be found in most KY pastures. For you to use these pictures as guidelines on your farm it is important that you also have ladino and red clover in your pastures. Dutch (common) white clover is so short that visual estimations usually overestimate the amount of clover that livestock. It is also important that the stands you are estimating are 6 to 10 inches tall since that is the height of the pasture shown in the pictures.

UPCOMING EVENTS

JAN 15 Forages at KCA, Lexington
JAN 20-21 Heart of America Grazing Conference, Wilmington, OH
FEB 25 30th Anniversary: Kentucky Alfalfa Conference, Cave City Convention Center



Garry D. Lacefield
Extension Forage Specialist
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