Forage News [2007-08]

Department of Plant and Soil Sciences, University of Kentucky

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livestock or having to sell,” Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer said. “These services could make the difference between holding on to hay and having hay tested. He said the Hay Hotline will be a work in progress” with new features added over time.

The University of Kentucky has estimated forage losses in Kentucky due to the freeze and the drought at $45 million. Yields of first cuttings averaged about 50 percent of normal, according to UK. Tom Keene, hay specialist with the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, said some pastures have recovered slightly as more rain has fallen over much of the state in July, but there will be an ongoing need for forages until next spring. “It’s going to be a real challenge for producers to stretch their hay until we can make a new crop,” he said.

Keene said producers have numerous tools at their disposal to acquire hay and make it last, such as utilizing the Hay Hotline, storing hay properly and having hay tested. He said the Hay Hotline will be a “work in progress” with new features added over time.

To get to the Hay Hotline Web page, go to www.kyagr.com; click on the Programs menu at the top of the page, and click on Hay Hotline. To access the KDA’s hay directory, go to www.kyagr.com; click on the Programs menu, and click on Hay for Sale (tested).

For forage information from the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, go to www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage. (SOURCE: News Release from the KY Department of Agriculture July 16, 2007)

Hay Hotline Helps Farmers in Search of Forage

Kentucky livestock producers in need of hay can call the Kentucky Department of Agriculture’s toll-free Hay Hotline to find farmers with hay to sell.

The Hay Hotline number is 1-888-567-9589. Growers with hay to sell also may call the number. Producers who call the number to buy or sell will be listed on the Hay Hotline page on the Department’s Web site, www.kyagr.com.

“These services could make the difference between holding on to livestock or having to sell,” Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer said. “The early April freeze and the recent drought together have greatly reduced Kentucky’s hay supply. The Kentucky Department of Agriculture will do whatever we can to help farmers ride out this dry spell.”

The Department maintains a permanent online hay directory that lists hay for sale by county, relative feed value, bale size and type. The hay that is listed on the directory is tested for nutritional value. The Department performs the tests at a cost of $10 per sample.

Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer said. “These services could make the difference between holding on to hay and having hay tested. He said the Hay Hotline will be a work in progress” with new features added over time.

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the acreage pegged upland cotton plantings at 10.76 million acres and the March intentions of 1.990 million acres. Durum plantings came in higher than expected at 2.225 million acres, compared with trade estimates averaging 1.996 million acres.

USDA pegged "other" spring wheat plantings at 13.144 million acres, well below trade expectations, which were reported at 13.808 million acres back in March. Spring wheat plantings at 13.835 million acres, and 5.1% below planting intentions, plantings at 13.144 million acres, well below trade expectations, which were reported at 13.808 million acres back in March. Spring wheat plantings at 13.835 million acres, and 5.1% below planting intentions, planting intentions of 90.454 million acres and an 18.6% increase over last year's plantings of 78.327 million acres. Planted acreage is the highest since 1944.

Corn Acres Soar, Soy Acres Plunge

USDA stunned the grain and soybean trade last Friday morning by pegging U.S. corn plantings well above expectations at nearly 93 million acres and putting soybean planted acres well below expectations at just over 64 million. The soybean acreage figure looks extremely bullish for soybean prices, while the corn market should feel a negative impact from the huge corn acreage figure.

USDA pegged U.S. corn plantings at 92.888 million acres, versus trade estimates averaging 90.958 million acres in a range from 89.25-91.704 million acres. USDA’s corn acreage figure represents a 2.7% increase from the March planting intentions of 90.454 million acres and an 18.6% increase over last year’s plantings of 78.327 million acres. Planted acreage is the highest since 1944.

USDA pegged U.S. soybean plantings at 64.081 million acres, compared with trade estimates averaging 57.838 million acres in a range from 66.0-69.0 million. The USDA soybean acreage figure represents a 4.6% drop from the March planting intentions of 67.14 million acres and a 15.1% drop from last year’s plantings of 75.522 million acres. Planted acreage is the lowest since 1995, when producers planted only 62.495 million acres of soybeans.

Wheat prices may find further support from USDA’s estimate of U.S. spring wheat plantings. USDA pegged “other” spring wheat plantings at 13.144 million acres, well below trade expectations, which averaged 13.835 million acres, and 5.1% below planting intentions, which were reported at 13.808 million acres back in March. Spring wheat acres are down 11.8% from last year.

Durum plantings came in higher than expected at 2.225 million acres, compared with trade estimates averaging 1.996 million acres and the March intentions of 1.990 million acres. Total spring wheat/durum acres still came in 462,000 below the March intentions and 1.4 million acres below last year’s plantings.

The cotton market also saw bullish acreage news from USDA, as the acreage pegged upland cotton plantings at 10.76 million acres against trade expectations averaging 11.56 million acres. The cotton plantings figure was down 11.4% from the March intentions figure of 12.15 million acres and 29.5% from last year’s plantings of 15.27 million acres. (SOURCE: e-Hay Weekly, July 3, 2007)

RELATIVE FEED VALUE (RFV) AND RELATIVE FORAGE QUALITY (RFQ)

Relative Feed Value (RFV) and Relative Forage Quality (RFQ) are methods used to evaluate hay quality. To calculate RFV it is necessary to have a forage analysis for acid detergent fiber (ADF) and neutral detergent fiber (NDF). Protein is not considered but higher RFV values are usually associated with higher protein. The ADF analysis is used to predict the digestible dry matter = (88.9 – (-77.9 % ADF)) and NDF calculated by multiplying digestible dry matter by dry matter intake and then dividing by 1.29 (the expected digestible dry matter intake as % of body weight for full-bloom alfalfa). The RFV for full-bloom alfalfa would be expected to be 100. For an alfalfa hay containing 29% ADF and 36% NDF the RFV = (66.3 * 3/3.19 * 29) = 170. Grasses typically have higher ADF and NDF concentrations and consequently have lower RFV than legumes. For instance a grass or mixed grass/legume hay having 32% ADF and 50% NDF would have an RFV = (64 * 2.4)/1.29 = 119. Note that grasses and corn silage have a greater RFV than legumes. However, the RFV calculation does not account for digestibility of the fiber.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADF %</th>
<th>NDF %</th>
<th>NDF-ADF</th>
<th>RFV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alfalfa A (mature)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfalfa B (immature)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grass</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Relative Forage Quality (RFQ) Index is similar to RFV except NDF digestibility is used. NDF digestibility allows for a more precise estimate of the energy in the feed and many laboratories are offering an in vitro NDF digestibility to account for fiber digestion. Grasses typically have fiber digestibility’s greater than legumes because legumes have more lignin associated with the fiber. Legumes make up for this by having more cell contents (non-NDF material) that are highly digestible thus elevating energy concentrations to higher levels than in grasses. When using RFV or RFQ it is best to compare hays that are within a similar classification such as alfalfa, grass, or mixed. RFQ gives more credit for digestible fiber in grasses and grasses will typically have higher RFQ than RFV but will still be less than many legumes. (Source: Charles Stallings, Virginia Tech. Univ. In Pennsylvania Forage & Grassland News, Vol. 17, #3, Summer 2007)

KFGC AWARDS

Award nominations are now being accepted for KFGC Producer, Industry, Public Service-State, and Public Service-County Awards. To nominate a deserving individual, send a one-page nomination to Dr. Garry Lacelife, P.O. Box 469, Princeton, KY 42445, FAX: 270-365-2667 or e-mail: glacefield@uky.edu. Awards will be presented at the 8th Kentucky Grazing Conference October 30 at the WKU Expo Center in Bowling Green. For a history of KFGC Award recipients, see our website at: http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage/KFGC%20AwardW2Winners%20History.pdf

FORAGE SPOKESMAN NOMINATIONS

Forage Spokesman Nominations are now being accepted. To nominate a producer to compete in the KFGC Forage Spokesman contest, send name, address, and a 100 word or less description of their forage-related operation to Dr. Ray Smith, Plant and Soil Science Dept., 105 Plant Science Bldg., 1405 Veterans Road, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40546-0312 or e-mail raysmith1@uky.edu. Any Kentucky forage producer is eligible to compete. Only five producers will be selected to compete in the contest to be held at the Kentucky Grazing Conference at the WKU Expo Center in Bowling Green October 30. Contestants will be given 12 minutes to tell their forage story with 3 minutes for introduction and questions. The winner will represent Kentucky at the AFGC National competition.

UPCOMING EVENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8th Kentucky Grazing Conference, WKU Expo Center, Bowling Green</td>
<td>OCT 30</td>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart of America Grazing Conference, Columbia, MO</td>
<td>JAN 7-8</td>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>SRM/AFGC Forage Conference, Louisville</td>
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<tr>
<td>28th Kentucky Alfalfa Conference, Cave City</td>
<td>FEB 21</td>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>2008</td>
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</tbody>
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Garry D. Lacelife
Extension Forage Specialist
August 2007