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FORAGE NEWS

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

JANUARY 2007

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

FORAGES AT KCA

Our annual "Forages at KCA" program will be held on January 12, 2007 in the Elkhorn B & C Rooms at the Lexington Convention Center. Our program will begin at 1:00 p.m. A proceedings will be available, along with other forage-related information. Program includes:

- 1:00 Welcome – *Garry Lacefield*
- 1:10 Where to Find Forage Information on the Web - *Tom Keene*
- 1:30 How I Produce, Manage and Market Forages - *Bill Payne*
- 2:00 Can I Afford to Seed Max Q Tall Fescue? - *Kenny Burdine*
- 2:30 Matching Pasture to Animal Needs - *Ray Smith*
- 3:00 Forage Quality: What is it? What can we do about it? Will it pay? - *Garry Lacefield*
- 3:30 Discussion and Adjourn

For more information on the KCA Program, see our website at www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage

SEE YOU IN LEXINGTON!!!

GERRISH TO SPEAK AT HOAGC

Jim Gerrish, World Renown Grazing Expert, will serve as the keynote speaker at the Heart of America Grazing Conference in Mt. Vernon, Illinois January 24-25. Jim is a U.K. graduate and has been a leader in the U.S. Grazing Research & Education Program for over twenty years. For additional details and registration information, see our forage website: www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage

HAY QUALITY MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Data from Wisconsin shows clearly that hay quality makes a difference in animal performance and profit.



Call 1-800-248-4628 and make an appointment with personnel from the Kentucky Department of Agriculture Forage Testing Program to have your hay tested. For a fee of only \$10.00

per lot of hay, you can get your hay sampled, tested, and results returned to you electronically or via mail.

HEART OF AMERICA GRAZING CONFERENCE JANUARY 24TH AND 25TH

The Heart of America Grazing Conference began in Illinois as a joint educational effort between Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky and Missouri University, Government, Industry, and Producer representatives to provide livestock producers with the most current regional grazing information and resources. The 2007 Conference continues this diverse program approach and returns to Mount Vernon on January 24th and 25th at the Holiday Inn.

The conference kicks off at 6 pm on January 24th, 2007 with dinner followed by keynote speaker Jim Gerrish of American Grazing Lands Services LLC presenting Grazing Across the Country and Around the World: Implications for the Heart of America.

The program resumes at 8:20 am on January 25th with a main session covering a variety of topics including pasture supplementation, grazing organic livestock, stocking rates, legume utilization and residual forage height management. Following lunch the program continues with a producer panel followed by four breakout sessions. Breakout sessions include Tall fescue management, Grazing and crop rotation, Fence and water, and Pasture establishment.

In addition to educational programming a grazing and pasture focused trade show and silent auction will also be part of the conference. Advanced registration is \$50 for two days or \$30 for one. After January 12th, registration increases to \$60 and \$40 per attendee for full and single-day registrations. Registration includes proceedings, conference materials and meals. To view the entire program visit <http://www.livestocktrail.uiuc.edu/pasturenet> and check under Events, to register visit <http://web.extension.uiuc.edu/HOAGC>. For more information contact Justin Sexten at (618)242-9310 or sexten@uiuc.edu (SOURCE: Justin Sexten, Extension Specialist, Animal Systems/Beef, Univ. of Illinois)

KENTUCKY ALFALFA CONFERENCE: 27 YEARS & GROWING

I extend a cordial invitation for you to attend and participate in this our 27th Kentucky Alfalfa Conference to be held February 22 at the Cave City Convention Center. For conference information and a list of speakers and topics, see our forage website at www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage

NATIONAL GRAZING CONFERENCE

FEATURES THREE KENTUCKY PRODUCERS

Over 1,000 from several states attended and participate in the 3rd National Grazing Conference December 10-13 in St. Louis. Invited speakers from Kentucky included: Lowell Clifford, Harrison County; Russell Hackley, Grayson County; and Ken Johnson, Monroe County.

Lowell's topic was, "A Grazing Operation in the Bluegrass of Kentucky". Russell's topic was "Beef Production in Central Kentucky". Ken Johnson spoke on the topic of "Grazing Economics: Does Additional Fence and Water Pay?"

Congratulations to all three for a great job and thanks for making all of us from Kentucky PROUD.

GOATS IN KENTUCKY

Kentucky's total goat population on January 1, 2006 was estimated at 74,000 head. Kentucky's Angora goat population was estimated at 700 head, milk goats and kids at 5,300 and all meat and other goats and kids at 68,000. All breeding goats and kids were estimated at 63,550 head and the kid crop was 59,190.

All goat inventory in the United States on January 1, 2006, totaled 2.83 million head. Breeding goat inventory totaled 2.35 million head and market goats totaled 471,800 head. On January 1, 2006, meat and all other goats totaled 2.26 million head, milk goats totaled 288,000 head and angora goats totaled 278,000 head. The 2005 kid crop was 1.84 million head for all goats. (SOURCE: Kentucky Agricultural Statistics Annual Report 2005-2006 edition)

KENTUCKY AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY

2006 Review: 2006 was another good year financially for most Kentucky farmers with farm cash receipts totaling \$4.1 billion, the second highest on record. Livestock receipts led the way at \$2.785 billion representing 61% of the total. Significant gains were registered in equine, cattle and calves and poultry. Most of these gains were due to continued strong prices. Crop cash receipts totaled \$1.326 billion, up 4.4% over the previous year. Row crops led by corn, soybeans and wheat registered gains, while hay and vegetable receipts declined modestly. Tobacco cash receipts declined to \$320 million but crop year sales included tobacco sold from the pre-buyout 2004 crop. Collectively, poultry, cattle and calves and equine enterprises represented more than 60% of total farm cash receipts in 2006. Equine continued to be the largest reported commodity with cash receipts exceeding \$1 billion for the second consecutive year.

Kentucky net farm income was a record \$2.082 billion in 2005 according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, while favorable climate and markets played a role, government transfer payments (primarily tobacco buyout dollars) were up significantly to more than \$825 million. We expect the 2006 net farm income figure to decline due to lower government transfer payments and rising production costs, particularly energy based inputs (fuels, fertilizers, chemicals).

(SOURCE: Larry Jones, Craig Infanger and Will Snell in The Kentucky Agricultural Economic Outlook for 2007)

Kentucky Agricultural Cash Receipts-1980-2007



Source: Ky Ag Stats/NASS

UTILIZING SERICEA LESPEDEZA AS A GOAT FORAGE IN KENTUCKY

According to the UK Livestock Disease and Diagnostic Center, the number one cause of death among goats in Kentucky is internal parasites. Unfortunately, the repeated use and reliance on chemical de-wormers for gastrointestinal parasite control has led to parasite resistance in several Kentucky goat herds. One of the many internal parasite control strategies being studied is the use of forages which contain compounds that may act as "natural" de-wormers.

Sericea lespedeza (*Lespedeza cuneata*) is a perennial warm-season legume commonly found on reclaimed surface mined land and seeded on marginal lands in Kentucky. It is deep-rooted, tolerant of drought, soil acidity, and low fertility. Several varieties of sericea lespedeza contain high levels of condensed tannins which can reduce animal acceptance and forage digestibility. However, grazing goats appear to be more tolerant of the bitterness and reduced digestibility associated with high tannin levels than cattle or horses. Limited research suggests that goat diets containing high tannin concentrations may suppress or reduce the infestation of gastrointestinal parasites.

In August of 2004, a goat forage grazing study was initiated in Laurel County Kentucky to measure the effect of goats grazing sericea lespedeza (cv. Interstate, treatment 1) versus a cool season grass/legume pasture (treatment 2) on weight gain, body condition, fecal egg counts and FAMACHA score. Each treatment consisted of five-one acre paddocks. Thirty (30) percentage boer does of similar age and weight were assigned to each treatment. This resulted in a stocking rate of 6 does per acre and a stocking density of 30 does per acre. Thirty does grazed each one acre paddock for seven days and then were moved to the next paddock of the same treatment. Goats in each treatment rotated to a new paddock every 7 days providing each paddock with a 28 day recovery period. Goats on both treatments of this grazing study were fed concentrate once daily at approximately 2% body weight. Goats were worked on approximately 30 day intervals from May to October 2005 for a total of 152 grazing days.

Treatment means were not significantly different for body condition score, FAMACHA score and fecal egg count. Weight gain was significantly different among the two treatments. On average, goats that grazed the mixed cool season grasses/legume pastures lost approximately 5.5 lbs throughout the 2005 grazing season. In contrast, goats grazing sericea lespedeza gained an average of 5.5 lbs during this same grazing period. The 2005 growing season was hot and dry from June through August in Laurel County. These data suggest that higher weight gains for goats grazing sericea lespedeza compared to the mixed grass/legume treatment is likely due to greater forage availability during the middle part of the grazing period. Hot and dry conditions favored sericea lespedeza growth over cool season grass growth.

In summary, this grazing study did not provide evidence that improved internal parasite control was obtained when goats grazed sericea lespedeza containing condensed tannins. However, sericea lespedeza did prove to be an excellent forage for goats during the hot and dry periods from June through August. (SOURCE: Brandon Sears and David Ditsch, Univ. of KY)

UPCOMING EVENTS

- JAN 11-13 KCA Annual Convention & Trade Show, Lexington
- JAN 24-25 Heart of America Grazing Conference, Mt. Vernon, IL
- FEB 22 27th Kentucky Alfalfa Conference, Cave City
- JUN 24-27 American Forage & Grassland Council Annual Meeting, State College, PA
- JUL 26 UK All Commodity Field Day, UKREC, Princeton
- 2008**
- JAN 26-FEB 1 SRM/AFGC Forage Conference, Louisville

Garry D. Lacefield
Extension Forage Specialist
January 2007