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Forage News [2002-12]

University of Kentucky Department of Plant and Soil Sciences

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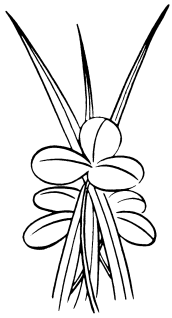


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FORAGE NEWS

December 2002

Garry D. Lacefield and Jimmy C. Henning, Extension Forage Specialists Christi Forsythe, Secretary

KENTUCKY GRAZING CONFERENCE

Over 175 attended the 3rd Kentucky Grazing Conference held at the Western Kentucky University Expo Center in Bowling Green on November 26, 2002. The Conference featured speakers from the University of Kentucky, Natural Resource and Conservation Service and Western Kentucky University. Keynote speakers included Mr. Mark Kennedy, Missouri Grazing Specialist and Mr. Ed Ballard, University of Illinois. KFGC presented their annual awards to four outstanding forage leaders (see KFGC Awards)

FORAGES AT KCA

You are invited to attend the Forage Conference to be held January 10, 2003 at the Convention Center in Bowling Green. This makes the 8th consecutive year we have had a "forage emphasis" program to kickoff the Kentucky Cattlemen's Convention. The program will begin at 9:20 a.m. and have you out early enough to visit the trade show before the KCA Opening Luncheon. A full proceedings along with other publications and handouts will be available and there is no registration fee for the Forage Conference. The program includes three very timely and practical topics:

- 9:20 Welcome -
Dr. Garry Lacefield
Mr. Dave Maples
Mr. Phil Rowland
- 9:30 What we Know and What we Need to Know About Tall Fescue-Endophyte-Animal Relations - *Dr. Jimmy Henning*
- 10:00 Pasture Fertility: Principles & Practices - *Dr. Monroe Rasnake*
- 10:30 Using Legumes to RENEW Drought Damaged Pastures - *Dr. Garry Lacefield*
- 11:00 Discussion & Adjourn to KCA Exhibits and Opening Luncheon

See you in Bowling Green on January 10, 2003.

23RD ALFALFA CONFERENCE SET FOR FEBRUARY 20

The 23rd Annual Kentucky Alfalfa Conference will be held February 20, 2003 at the "newly remodeled" Cave City Convention Center. The expanded space will permit more exhibits and breakout sessions in the afternoon. World

renowned alfalfa breeder, Dr. Jim Moutray, will be our keynote speaker along with Mr. Alfalfa, Mr. Warren Thompson. In addition, the 23rd Conference will feature our own Jason Sandefur, who is the current National Forage Spokesman. Other speakers include specialist from the University of Kentucky and Kentucky Department of Agriculture personnel. Alfalfa Awards will be presented at lunch. In addition, we will recognize 2002 Hay Award Winners. There will also be an expanded Silent Auction at this year's conference.

- 8:00 Registration, Visit Exhibits, Silent Auction
8:45 Welcome – *Dr. Mike Barrett*
8:50 Alfalfa Quality: What is it? – *Dr. Garry Lacefield*
9:20 Advances in Developing BETTER Alfalfa Varieties – *Dr. Jim Moutray*
- 10:00 Break
10:30 Alfalfa for Summer Grazing – *Mr. Jason Sandefur*
11:00 Alfalfa: Queen of the Forage Crops-Reflections After Sixty Years Experience – *Mr. Warren Thompson*
11:30 Alfalfa Hay and MRLS: What we Know After One Year of Testing – *Dr. Jimmy Henning*
12:00 Lunch, Hay Awards, Visit Exhibits, Silent Auction
1:00 Alfalfa Awards and Silent Auction Results
1:15 Breakout Sessions:
1. Weed & Disease Management – *Dr. Paul Vincelli & Dr. J.D. Green*
2. Alfalfa Haylage & Silage – *Dr. Mike Collins*
3. Making-Testing-Marketing Alfalfa Hay – *Dr. Jimmy Henning & Mr. Allen Johnson*
- 2:00 Break
2:15 Repeat Breakout Sessions
3:00 Adjourn

WHAT IS ARKPLUS TALL FESCUE?

ArkPlus is the newest variety of tall fescue infested with a non-toxic endophyte. The endophyte was selected by Dr. Chuck West from the University of Arkansas and inserted into a tall fescue germplasm developed by the Missouri Agricultural Experiment Station. This new variety has been licensed to FFR Cooperative of Lafayette, Indiana. FFR markets seed through member cooperatives across the country. Southern States is the member cooperative in Kentucky. Since the variety is new, we do not have any agronomic or animal performance data. Plantings were made in fall 2002.

GRAZING CAN BE JUST AS PROFITABLE

Although grazing has several advantages, many farmers think they will lose income by adopting this practice. Not so, according to the September 2002 issue of the Journal of Dairy Science. Scientists at Cornell University compared the financial reports of 57 grazing farms and 237 nongrazing farms in New York state. When the return on assets was compared, graziers had the same, if not higher, return than nongraziers. Factors that influenced this return included location in the state, milk production level, milk price, and herd size. The study found that farmers with less cows were more apt to graze than larger producers. Grazing farms had less hired labor and machinery expense. But nongrazing farms did have higher milk production than graziers. At the same time, grazing cows is known to improve herd health, reduce time spent with crops, and give other life-style benefits to farmers. This study adds to these benefits by proving to graziers that they can maintain a level of profitability that is equal, if not better, than nongraziers. (*HOARD'S DAIRYMAN*, November 2002)

FERTILITY OF KENTUCKY PASTURE FIELDS

Kentucky pasture fields have historically been low in soil fertility. Summaries of soil tests on pasture fields conducted by UK 15 years ago showed 40% were below pH 6.0; 45% were low in phosphorus and 33% low in potash. That meant that almost half our pasture fields that were tested were critically low in fertility – especially in terms of growing clovers. We did the same summary of samples tested in 2001 and saw some encouraging changes. Those testing below pH 6.0 had decreased to 35% and, more encouraging, low phosphorus test decreased to 30%. Low potash tests remained at 33%. We also estimated that only about 10% of Kentucky pasture fields are being tested every three or four years as recommended. So, while we are making some progress, there is still lots of room for improvement. (*Monroe Rasnake*)

MEAT GOAT WETHER PERFORMANCE ON ENDOPHYTE-INFECTED TALL FESCUE – A PILOT STUDY

From January to August 2002, ¾Boer and ¾Kiko wethers were fed in drylot to assess meat goat responses to endophyte-infected tall fescue (TF). Goats were fed orchardgrass (OG) hay from January to April. In Trial 1 (May-June), wethers of each breed were evenly divided between TF and OG seed diets. Seed was carried in a commercial concentrate mix that supplemented OG hay. There was no breed x diet interaction. The pretrial growth rates did not differ between TF and OG-fed goats. The TF seed diet lowered growth rates by 32% over 8 weeks. For Trial 2 (July-August), half of the wethers within each breed were switched between TF and OG diets. Experimental diets in Trial 2 were in the form of TF or OG hay. There was no breed x diet interaction. Trial 1 growth rates did not differ between TF and OG-fed goats when grouped for Trial 2. The TF hay diet lowered growth rates by 33% over 8 weeks. These pilot trials demonstrated the potential of

endophyte-infected tall fescue to significantly lower the performance of meat goat wethers. (*SOURCE: Richard Browning, Jr., et.al., Tennessee States University, Tall Fescue Toxicosis Workshop 2002*)

SPOILAGE LOSSES IN LARGE ROUND BALES

Few producers realize the magnitude of loss associated with spoilage of large round bales. A thin layer of mold on the surface of a large bale accounts for a large amount of forage loss. The following table provides estimates on amount of DM loss associated with varying levels of spoilage.

| Dry matter loss associated with spoilage on the surface of large round bales | |
|--|---|
| DM Loss | 5' diameter bale Inches from bale surface towards bale center |
| 10% | 1.5 |
| 20% | 3.2 |
| 70% | 5.0 |
| 50% | 9.0 |

(*SOURCE: Pennsylvania Forage & Grassland News, Vol. 12, #4, Fall 2002*)

KFGC AWARDS

Congratulations to the following four individuals who received the Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council Awards during the Awards Ceremony in Bowling Green on November 26, 2002.

Producer – Jimmy May

Industry – Charlie Leppert

Public Service-County – Doug Shepherd

Public Service-State – Dr. Charles Dougherty

UPCOMING EVENTS

- DEC 12 Forages Commodity Conference at Farm Bureau Convention, Louisville
- JAN 10 Forages Conference at Kentucky Cattleman Convention, Bowling Green
- JAN 23 Heart of America Grazing Conference, Hannibal, Missouri
- FEB 20 23rd Kentucky Alfalfa Conference, Cave City
- MAR 11 Central Kentucky Alfalfa Conference, Lexington
- APR 22-23 Kentucky Grazing School, Bowling Green
- JUN 12 UK Agronomy Field Day, Lexington
- JUL 17 UK All Commodity Field Day, Robinson Station, Quicksand



Merry Christmas
and
Happy 2003

Garry D. Lacefield

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Jimmy C. Henning

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Extension Forage Specialists

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