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## Forage News [2002-09]

University of Kentucky Department of Plant and Soil Sciences

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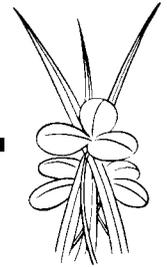
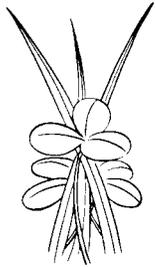
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# FORAGE NEWS



## In this month's issue:

! KFGC Forage-Beef Field Day ! Kentucky Grazing Conference-November 26 ! Perennial Forages: Preserving Your Future  
! Pasture Thoughts ! Forage Production in Kentucky ! Upcoming Events

**SEPTEMBER 2002**

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

## KFGC FORAGE-BEEF FIELD DAY

The KFGC-UK Forage-Beef Field Day will be held September 5 at the new Beef Unit at the University of Kentucky Animal Research Center in Woodford County. The program will begin at 4:30 with registration with the following program:

- 5:00 Welcome and introduction to the farm - Bill Talley, President, KFGC and Dr. Bob Harmon, Chair, UK Dept. of Animal Science
- Stop 1 Using supplemental fat to offset the effects of the endophyte in tall fescue - Dr. Les Anderson
- Stop 2 Does the endophyte affect the reproductive fertility of beef heifers - Justin Rhinehart
- Stop 3 Supplementation for stockers grazing endophyte infected tall fescue - Dr. Eric Vanzant
- Stop 4 Changing from the forage you have to the forage you want - Ken Johnson
- Stop 5 Putting species together to make a working system - Dr. Garry Lacefield

Supper will be served at the end of the field day, compliments of the Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council and its commercial sponsors.

### Final Comments

Helping Kentucky realize its potential with forages and beef cattle  
Dr. M. Scott Smith and Dr. Nancy Cox, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture

### Directions

The UK Animal Research Center, Entrance No. 3, is located about 8 miles south on US 60 from exit 58 on I-64 or 2 miles north of the intersection (stop light) of US 62 and US 60 north of Versailles. The turn will be marked with a large UK sign.

**IMPORTANT:** The UK Animal Research Center is a biosecure facility. To tour the farm, you must have not traveled outside of the US in the 7 days prior to the field day. We know that you will want to help us comply with this policy.

## KENTUCKY GRAZING CONFERENCE - NOVEMBER 26

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Kentucky Grazing Conference will be held November 26, 2002 at the WKU Expo Center in Bowling Green. Featured speakers are Mr. Ed Ballard from the University of Illinois who's topic will be "Economics of Integrating Grazing into Cropping Systems," and Mr. Mark Kennedy, NRCS Grazing Specialist from Missouri, will address the topic "Using Warm Season Perennial Grasses for Grazing." Other speakers from the University of Kentucky, Western Kentucky University and NRCS will address key practical concepts relating to "grazing."

- 8:00 Registration, visit exhibits, silent auction
- 8:45 Welcome - Dr. Gary Ransdell, President, Western Kentucky University
- 9:00 Why should I consider rotational grazing? -Dr. Garry Lacefield
- 9:30 How do I get the most from my pasture plants? - Dr. Jimmy Henning
- 10:00 Break, visit exhibits, silent auction
- 10:30 Getting started with rotational grazing - Ken Johnson
- 11:00 Economics of integrating grazing into cropping systems - Ed Ballard
- 11:30 Financial assistance available for improving grazing systems - David Stipes
- 12:00 Lunch, visit exhibits, silent auction
- 12:45 Awards, silent auction results

### OPTIONS FOR EXTENDING THE GRAZING SEASON

- 1:00 Overview of options for extending grazing season - Dr. Garry Lacefield
- Corn and other warm season annuals - Dr. Jimmy Henning
- Warm season perennial grasses - Mark Kennedy
- Ryegrass and small grains - Keenan Turner
- Legumes - Dr. Byron Sleugh
- 3:00 Adjourn



## PERENNIAL FORAGES: PRESERVING YOUR FUTURE

The vast majority of the American public is concerned about water and air quality, and about loss of wildlife habitat. They also agree that stricter regulations are needed to protect the environment and that incentives should be made available to farmers who adopt improved management practices. Perennial forages, such as alfalfa, other clovers, and forage grasses, have traits that make them highly effective tools to reduce soil erosion, protect and improve soil, water, and air quality, and provide wildlife habitat. Because they are grown continuously for several years on the same field, they reduce water and nutrient runoff and improve soil tilth. Their long season of growth reduces nitrate leaching to sensitive drinking water aquifers and streams. Some species have deep roots that can remove leached nitrate from other crops, or even from fertilizer spills. At the same time, perennial forage legumes grown in rotation with annual crops reduce the need for purchased chemical fertilizer. The perennial nature of these forage crops provides cover and feed for a wide variety of wildlife, and improve the visual aesthetics of the rural landscape. Ecological benefits can be maximized by planting perennial forages in strategically selected field. Farmers who grow perennial forages should be recognized for the environmental benefits they provide to the nation. (SOURCE: Michael P. Russelle, AFGC Proceedings, Vol. 11, July 2002, Bloomington, MN)

### PASTURE THOUGHTS

Once again, we are looking at drought stressed cool season grass pastures in some areas of Kentucky. In addition, grazing stress has further stressed some pastures.

**Are my pastures dead?** Probably not. Most grass pastures have a large ability to bounce back. Give them some rest and some fertilization and in most cases they recover. Seldom are pastures completely dead. Fall nitrogen fertilizer applications will stimulate thickening of the grass stand. However, areas where the soil is shallow or that are infertile (no root depth) can lead to spots within a field that are dead. These areas would benefit from overdrilling more grass or perhaps some overseeding of clover in the late winter.

**Can I drill grass into my drought stressed pastures for extra grazing this fall?** This practice is not as good as the advertising would make you think. Right now, there seem to be more than the usual number of advertisements for forages like annual ryegrass with claims of renewed fall pastures. Many of these ads far exceed the real capabilities of annual ryegrass, which is a very good forage in its own right. However, it is very unrealistic to think that drilling annual ryegrass or any grass into a dry, hard, and perhaps weedy pasture field will lead to tall, waving

fields of grass by early fall. It just won't happen unless irrigated.

**Well is drilling grass into grass a bad idea?** Confusingly, this can be a useful tool, but only if expectations are realistic. High vigor forages like perennial ryegrasses and orchardgrass give the longest lasting effect, while annual ryegrasses or cereal rye will give the most growth in mild winters and in the early spring. The best grass stands will occur where the spots are most bare. And of course this assumes that other variables like soil fertility, seed placement and variety choice are correctly addressed.

In summary, our cool season grasses pastures have taken a beating in some areas this year. We can rejuvenate them in at least a couple of ways. The simplest involves rest and fertilization with nitrogen later this fall. In some cases, drilling more grass into these areas might be needed.

### FORAGE PRODUCTION IN KENTUCKY

Production of **hay** was forecast to be slightly lower than the 2001 crop. Rainfall this spring was very beneficial to hay growth while production has slowed during the summer due to dry soils. **Alfalfa** yields were projected at 3.60 tons per acre, down slightly from a year earlier. Harvested acreage was unchanged from 2001 at 250,000 acres. **Other hay** yield was estimated at 2.20 tons per acre. Acres for harvest was estimated at 2.10 million acres, unchanged from a year earlier. (SOURCE: Kentucky Agri-News, Vol. #21, Issue #16, August 13, 2002)

### UPCOMING EVENTS

SEPT 5 KFGC Forage Field Day, Lexington  
OCT 15-16 Fall Grazing School, Owensboro  
NOV 26 3<sup>rd</sup> Kentucky Grazing Conference, Bowling Green  
DEC 12 Forages Commodity Conference at Farm Bureau Convention, Louisville

#### 2003

JAN 10 Forages Conference at Kentucky Cattleman Convention, Bowling Green  
JAN 23 Heart of America Grazing Conference, Hannibal, Missouri  
FEB 20 23<sup>rd</sup> Kentucky Alfalfa Conference, Cave City  
APR 22-23 Kentucky Grazing School, Bowling Green  
JUL 17 U.K. All Commodity Field Day, Robinson Station, Quicksand

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September 2002