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Forage News [2002-03]

University of Kentucky Department of Plant and Soil Sciences

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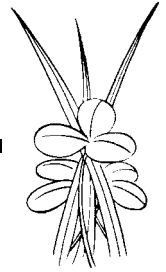
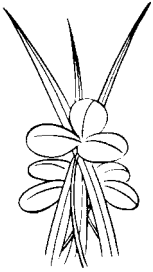
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FORAGE NEWS



In this month's issue:

! Central Kentucky Alfalfa Conference ! New Herbicides for Forage Crops ! New Alfalfa May be Ideal for Poor Soils ! Alfalfa Awards ! Some Alfalfa Don'ts ! Kentucky Cattle Numbers Rise Slightly ! Upcoming Events

March 2002

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

CENTRAL KENTUCKY ALFALFA CONFERENCE

The Central Kentucky Alfalfa Conference will be held Tuesday, March 5, 2002 at the Clark County Extension Office in Winchester. Registration fee is \$10 and includes breaks, lunch, and a copy of the proceedings. The program begins at 9:15 a.m. and concludes at 3:00 p.m.

- 9:15 Welcome
- 9:30 What is coming in alfalfa varieties?--*Jimmy Henning*
- 10:00 Fertilizing alfalfa for high yielding hay and pasture--*David Ditsch*
- 10:30 Weed control options for alfalfa--*Jim Martin*
- 11:00 Grazing alfalfa--*Garry Lacefield*
- 11:30 Innovative loading and stacking systems for custom hay sales--*Tom Keene*
- 12:00 Lunch
- 1:00 Advances in hay harvesting equipment--*Jimmy Henning*
- 1:30 Dairy quality hay: What my clients are looking for--*Dan Riddell*
- 2:00 Horse quality hay--*Bob Coleman*
- 2:30 Discussion
- 3:00 Adjourn

To get to the Clark County Extension Office in Winchester, take Exit 96 off I-64, go north toward Paris. Turn left into the Industrial park, between the BP station and firehouse. The office is the next building on the right after firehouse.

NEW HERBICIDES FOR FORAGE CROPS

Alfalfa—**RAPTOR** (imazomox) -- Marketed by BASF. Apply RAPTOR at 4 to 6 oz/A to seedling and established stands of alfalfa. Apply with a Crop Oil Concentrate or Surfactant plus Liquid Nitrogen. RAPTOR primarily controls or suppresses growth of selected annual broadleaf weeds and grasses. Apply to weeds that are small and actively growing (3 inches in height). For *seedling alfalfa* apply RAPTOR when alfalfa is in the second (2nd) trifoliolate stage or larger and when the weeds are 1 to 3 inches in height or before rosettes exceed 3 inches. A temporary reduction in alfalfa growth may be observed when applied to seedling alfalfa. For *established alfalfa* stands apply in the fall, winter, or in the spring to

dormant, or semi-dormant alfalfa, or between cuttings. Any application to established alfalfa should be made before significant alfalfa growth or regrowth (3 inches) to allow RAPTOR to reach target weeds. There should be an interval of at least 20 days between application of RAPTOR and cutting or feeding of alfalfa forage or hay.

Grass Pastures—**REDEEM R&P** (triclopyr + clopyralid) -- Marketed by Dow AgroSciences. Apply REDEEM R&P at 1 to 4 pt/A plus a Surfactant for weed control on permanent grass pastures, non-crop areas such as fencerows, and around farm buildings. REDEEM R&P provides control of various annual and perennial broadleaf weeds that are actively growing. Clovers and other legumes within the treated area will be killed or severely damaged by REDEEM R&P. Harvest restrictions for lactating dairy animals include do not graze or harvest green forage from treated area for 14 days after treatment or harvest hay until the next growing season. However, for other livestock, such as beef animals, there are no grazing restrictions and do not harvest hay for 7 days after treatment. There is a 3-day withdrawal period for livestock from grazing treated grass or consumption of hay before slaughter.

REMEDY (triclopy) -- Marketed by Dow AgroSciences. Apply REMEDY for control of woody plants and broadleaf weeds on permanent grass pastures and non-crop areas such as fencerows. Application rates will vary with application method and type of vegetation to control. When application rates of REMEDY is less than 2 qt/A, harvest restrictions for lactating dairy animals include do not graze or harvest green forage from treated area for 14 days after treatment or harvest hay until the next growing season. However, for other livestock, such as beef animals, there are no grazing restrictions and do not harvest hay for 7 days after treatment. For application rates greater than 2 qt/A there are more restrictive waiting periods for lactating dairy animals and livestock when grazing treated areas or harvesting for hay. For all applications there is a 3-day withdrawal period for livestock from grazing treated grass or consumption of hay before slaughter.

Plateau labeled for Warm-Season Grasses—**PLATEAU** (imazapic) -- Marketed by BASF. PLATEAU herbicide has been granted by the EPA a revised label for weed control in pastures, rangeland, and other noncrop areas. Therefore, the new label now allows PLATEAU to be used during the establishment and maintenance of various warm-season grasses such as big bluestem, little bluestem, Indiangrass, and

Eastern gamagrass on pasture areas that will be grazed or consumed by livestock. **Areas treated may be grazed immediately or harvested for hay within 7 days after treatment.** PLATEAU herbicide controls various annual and perennial grasses and broadleaf weeds and some viney type species. Use rates and tolerance of desirable grass species will vary; therefore, consult the label for specific guidelines before applying PLATEAU. (Source: Drs. J.D. Green and J.R. Martin, University of Kentucky)

NEW ALFALFA MAY BE IDEAL FOR POOR SOILS

Agricultural Research Service scientists in St. Paul, MN, have added a gene to alfalfa that not only gives it tolerance to acid soil and aluminum, but also lets it naturally produce more nitrogen to stimulate plant growth.

Aluminum makes up about 7 percent of the earth's crust, but it only causes a problem for plants if they are growing in soil that's also acidic. When crop roots in acid soils take in aluminum, the aluminum inhibits that roots' growth, reducing their ability to take up water and nutrients needed by the plant. This reduces the plant's yields.

The gene added by the ARS scientists causes the alfalfa's roots to produce more organic acids that render the aluminum nontoxic.

About 40 percent of the world's arable land has acid soil. Some soils are naturally acidic, while others become acid for a variety of reasons, including overuse of certain fertilizers. In the southeastern United States, millions of acres of pasture have acid subsoils that limit the productivity of forages. Lime applications on acid soils are often impractical, and the lime may not reach the acid subsoils where roots grow.

In experiments, the genetically transformed alfalfa grew longer roots in acid soils that contained aluminum, indicating the roots were more aluminum-tolerant. But the transformed alfalfa did not grow as well as standard alfalfa in non-acid soil.

The ARS researchers aid to boost production of alfalfa on the American landscape and provide farmers with a profitable and environmentally friendly crop for rotation that improves the soil and breaks pest and pathogen cycles.

The scientists also found that the added gene increases the plant's ability to naturally produce nitrogen—process known as “fixing” nitrogen, in which the plant is able to transform atmospheric nitrogen into a form that the plant can use to stimulate growth.

The study was funded by a U.S. Department of Agriculture grant and was a joint effort of ARS and the Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station. ARS is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's chief scientific research agency. (SOURCE: ARS News & Information Website <http://www.ars.usda.gov>)

Editor's note: We will keep you posted as commercial varieties become available and we get research data from Kentucky.

ALFALFA AWARDS

Three Alfalfa Awards were presented during the Awards Ceremony at the 22nd Kentucky Alfalfa Conference held at the Cave City Convention Center on February 21. We congratulate the 2002 Award winners:

Recipient	Award
Tom Keene	Warren Thompson Alfalfa Industry Award
John Nowak Commissioner	Charles Schnitzler Alfalfa Producer Award
Billy Ray Smith	Garry Lacefield Alfalfa Public Service Award

CONGRATULATIONS. Tom, John, & Billy Ray!!!

SOME ALFALFA DON'TS

Editor's note: We found the following recommendations interesting. They were written **94 years ago**.

- ! Don't fail to provide for ample inoculation; soil from an old alfalfa field is best.
- ! Don't sow poor or weedy seed.
- ! Don't sow on a weedy soil.
- ! Don't sow on any but a sweet, well-limed soil.
- ! Don't sow on poorly drained soil.
- ! Don't sow on any but a finely prepared, well-settled seed bed.
- ! Don't pasture the first or second year.
- ! Don't lose the leaves; they constitute the best part of the hay.
- ! Don't seed a large acreage to begin with. Experiment on a small area first.
- ! Don't give up. **Many prominent alfalfa growers** finally succeeded only after many failures.

(Source: J.M. Westgate. 1908. *Alfalfa*. USDA Farmers' Bull. #339)

KENTUCKY CATTLE NUMBERS RISE SLIGHTLY

Cattle numbers in **Kentucky** grew slightly in 2001. Total Cattle and Calves on Kentucky farms January 1, 2002 numbered 2.30 million head, up 2 percent from last year. Milk cows and cattle on feed showed declines from January 1, 2001. Milk replacement heifers, calves less than 500 pounds, and other heifers remained unchanged, while all other inventory levels were up.

All Cow inventory for 2002 totaled 1.20 million head up from 1.19 million in 2001. Beef cow inventory was up 1 percent from last year to 1.08 million head. Milk cows were down 4 percent to a record low 125,000 head. Bulls over 500 pounds totaled 75,000 head, up 7 percent from 2001.

Heifers over 500 pounds inventory was set at 310,000 head, up 3 percent from a year ago. Beef replacement heifers were also up from the previous year totaling 170,000 head, a 6 percent increase. Milk replacement heifers remained unchanged at 40,000 head, heifers for other uses also remained unchanged at 100,000 head. Steers over 500 pounds totaled 215,000, 8 percent above the previous year. Calves under 500 pounds remained unchanged at 500,000 head.

The 2001 calf crop was estimated at 1.08 million head, 1 percent below the 2000 level. Cattle on feed for slaughter totaled 15,000 head, down from 20,000 head on January 1, 2001. (Source: *Kentucky Agri-News*, Vol. 21, #4, Feb. 5, 2002)

UPCOMING EVENTS

MAR 5	Central Kentucky Alfalfa Conference, Winchester
APR 17-18	Spring Grazing School, Lincoln County
JUL 14-16	American Forage & Grassland Conference, Minnesota
JUL 18	UK All Commodity Field Day, Princeton

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Extension Forage Specialists
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