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## Forage News [2002-01]

University of Kentucky Department of Plant and Soil Sciences

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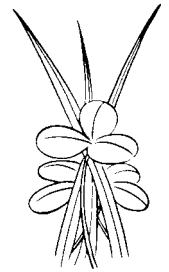
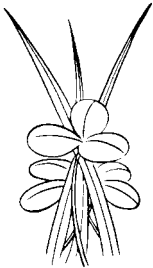
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# FORAGE NEWS



## In this month's issue:

! Forages at KCA ! Heart of America Grazing Conference ! 22<sup>nd</sup>  
Kentucky Alfalfa Conference-February 21 ! Pasture Aeration: Will it Pay?  
! Upcoming Events

**January 2002**

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

## HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

### FORAGES AT KCA

Mark your calendars and plan to attend and participate in the Kentucky Cattlemen's Convention to be held at the beautiful University Plaza Hotel and Convention Center in Bowling Green beginning at noon on January 11. We are excited about the program and all it offers to our cattlemen in the state. We are also pleased with the return to Bowling Green and expect excellent attendance. The University Plaza Hotel & Convention Center will allow plenty of elbow room for our exhibitors and program.

This marks the eighth year we have had a "Forage Conference" as the opening program for the convention. The program committee has put together an excellent, practical program and we invite you to attend and participate. The program will begin at 9:30 on January 11 with a discussion of our most abundant pasture grass - tall fescue. That topic will be followed by presentations on stand establishment and pasture aeration.

We are fortunate to have as our keynote speaker Mr. Russell Hackley, a beef producer from Grayson County, is the American Forage and Grassland Council's National Forage Spokesman. Russell received this high honor in competition in Arkansas this past year. Russell's topic will be, "How I make grazing work on my farm."

Listed below is the agenda for the morning program. A complete proceedings will be provided complimentary to all in attendance. There is no charge for attending the Forage Conference. The conference will conclude at 11:00 so participants can visit exhibits before the opening KCA luncheon.

- 9:30 Welcome
- 9:45 What's New with Tall Fescue? – Dr. Garry Lacefield
- 10:00 How to Get Good Stands for Pasture and Hay – Dr. Jimmy Henning
- 10:15 Does Pasture Aeration Pay? – Mr. Ken Johnson
- 10:30 How I Make Grazing Work On My Farm – Mr. Russell Hackley, National Forage Spokesman
- 10:45 Discussion
- 11:00 Adjourn to trade show

### HEART OF AMERICA GRAZING CONFERENCE

The "first ever" five-state Grazing Conference will be held January 24 at Rend Lake College in Ina, Illinois (just off I-57 south of Marion). The program committee has put together a most interesting, practical program with outstanding speakers. The conference is sponsored by University of Illinois Extension, University of Missouri Outreach & Extension, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service, Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service, and Ohio State University Extension with support from many other organizations. Exhibitors will include many industry, commercial, and educational groups. The registration fee is \$20 and includes a complete proceedings, all breaks and the noon lunch. For information contact Conference Chairman, Mr. Ed Ballard, University of Illinois Extension, 1209 Wenthe Drive, Effingham, IL 62401-1697, phone 217-347-5126.

The morning program consist of four keynote speakers and the afternoon program will consist of four breakout sessions that will be repeated. The program includes:

- 8:45 Introduction and Welcome
- 9:00 Benefits of Grazing -- Jim Gerrish, Extension Grazing Specialist, University of Missouri
- 9:30 Principles and Practices of Effective Grazing -- R.L. Dalrymple, Forage Agronomist, Noble Foundation
- 10:00 Break
- 10:30 Positive Environmental Impact of Grazing -- Robert Hendershot, Grassland Management Specialist, Ohio USDA – NRCS
- 11:00 Extending the Grazing Season -- Garry Lacefield, Extension Forage Specialist, University of Kentucky

#### Afternoon Break-Out Sessions

Each session will be offered twice – at 1 P.M. and again at 2:30 P.M.



## Beef

Matching Forage Quality with Production -- Monty S. Kerley,  
Extension Beef Cattle Specialist, University of Missouri  
Better Pasture Management Makes Money for Us -- Jason  
Sandefur, Kentucky Beef Producer

## Dairy

Why Go to a Grass-Based Dairy? -- Dave Surprenant, Illinois  
Dairy Producer  
Economics of Grazing Dairy in Missouri -- Stacey Hamilton,  
Extension Dairy Specialist and Tony Richard, Extension  
Dairy Specialist, University of Missouri

## Horse

Maximizing Pasture on a Horse Farm -- Steve Johnson,  
Manager, Margaux Farm, Kentucky  
Management Strategies of Fescue Pastures for Horses --  
Wayne Loch, Research Professor of Animal Sciences,  
University of Missouri

## Sheep, Goats and other Small Ruminants

Grazing and Forages for Meat Goats -- Jean-Marie  
Luginbuhl, Meats, Goats, Forage Systems Specialist,  
North Carolina State University  
Goats for the New Millennium -- Charles Reed, Owner,  
Running RR Ranch, Missouri

## 22<sup>ND</sup> KENTUCKY ALFALFA CONFERENCE - FEBRUARY 21

The program for the 22<sup>nd</sup> Kentucky Alfalfa Conference  
has been finalized. Listed below are topics and speakers for  
the February 21 conference to be held at the Cave City  
Convention Center.

- 8:00 Registration, visit exhibits, silent auction  
9:00 Welcome  
9:15 Advances in Alfalfa Breeding – What will the Alfalfa  
Variety of the Future smell, taste, look, and act  
like? -- Dr. Jimmy Henning  
9:30 Managing Alfalfa for Yield-Quality-Persistence -- Dr.  
Garry Lacefield  
9:45 Grazing Alfalfa on the WKU Farm -- Dr. Byron  
Sleugh  
10:00 Break, visit exhibits, silent auction  
10:20 Designing a Grazing System for Alfalfa -- Mr. Ken  
Johnson  
10:40 Innovating Loading and Stacking Systems for  
Custom Hay Sales -- Mr. Tom Keene  
11:00 Marketing Kentucky Hay -- Commissioner Billy Ray  
Smith  
11:45 Presentation of Hay Awards  
12:00 Lunch, visit exhibits, silent auction  
Alfalfa Awards  
1:00 Silent Auction results  
1:15 Advances in Hay Harvest Equipment -- Dr. Mike  
Collins  
2:00 Hot Topics Discussion: Speakers - University and  
Industry representatives  
Roundup Ready Alfalfa; Super Conditioners;  
Seed Coatings; Grazing Tolerance; AM-PM  
Cutting; Leafhopper Resistance  
2:30 Adjourn

## PASTURE AERATION: WILL IT PAY?

We have been asked this question many times over the  
past several years. Dr. Gary Bates, Extension Forage  
Specialist from the University of Tennessee was one of the  
featured speakers at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kentucky Grazing Conference  
held in Lexington. Dr. Bates has reviewed the literature and  
conducted research on pasture aeration. The following is a

synopsis from his presentation taken from the Kentucky  
Grazing Conference Proceedings held November 29, 2001.

"Cattle producers in much of the U.S. depend on cool-  
season perennial grasses to provide the majority of forage  
for their cattle operations. Grasses such as tall fescue can  
be utilized for many years without any type of tillage tool  
being used on the field. There are concerns that traffic from  
cattle and machinery in pastures and hayfields may result in  
soil compaction, which could limit water infiltration and result  
in reduced yield. Over the last several years, spike-tooth  
aerators have been promoted as a tool to decrease soil  
compaction caused by this traffic. These aerators penetrate  
into the soil, which supposedly decreases any soil  
compaction in the upper soil surface. The holes in the soil  
allow water to infiltrate the soil, rather than run off without  
being absorbed. The improved water infiltration should  
improve yield, with claims of up to 50 percent being made.  
Research that has been conducted with aerators has failed  
to illustrate any improvements in yield, however. Aeration  
did not increase the yields of bermudagrass (Ingram and co-  
workers, 1998), bahiagrass (Williams and Kalmbacher,  
1996; Ingram and co-workers, 1998) or alfalfa (Stritzke and  
co-workers, 1994). In fact, work has shown that the spike-  
tooth aerators may actually increase compaction around the  
penetration area (Ingram et al., 1998).

Limited work has been done with these tillage tools on  
tall fescue, which is the predominant forage species in  
Tennessee and Kentucky. Anecdotal evidence has provided  
a minimal amount of support for these tools, however  
investigation of these instances has failed to provide definite  
information, either positive or negative. A research project  
was begun to determine if spike-tooth aeration would  
improve the yield of tall fescue. The project involved two  
separate studies - one on tall fescue hayfields and one on  
tall fescue pastures.

**Results of pasture aeration** - Yields from 2000 and  
2001 showed no differences between plots that were  
aerated and those that were not aerated. The range in  
yields for the two years was less than one-quarter of a ton  
per acre.

**Conclusions from aerator research** - Results of this  
study indicate that spike-tooth aeration does not seem to  
improve forage yield of tall fescue. Compaction problems  
that may occur in tall fescue stands in Tennessee are  
probably reduced through freezing/thawing cycles during  
winter and by root channels, thereby reducing the potential  
for spike-tooth aeration to be beneficial in these conditions.  
There may be soil types in other regions that can benefit  
from aeration. However, thorough investigation of those  
types needs to be done before producers invest in the  
substantial cost of purchasing/utilizing these implements."  
(SOURCE: Dr. Gary Bates, University of Tennessee)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- JAN 11 Forages at KCA, Bowling Green  
JAN 24 Five-State Grazing Conference, Rend Lake  
Community College, Illinois  
FEB 21 XXII Kentucky Alfalfa Conference, Cave City  
APR 17-18 Spring Grazing School, Lincoln County  
JUL 18 UK All Commodity Field Day, Princeton

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