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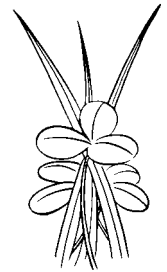
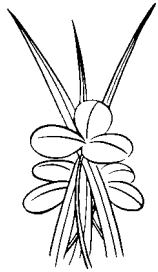
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FORAGE NEWS



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November 2000

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

STATEWIDE GRAZING CONFERENCE SET FOR BOWLING GREEN

The first STATEWIDE conference devoted strictly to GRAZING will be held NOVEMBER 28, 2000 at the Western Kentucky University Exposition Center in Bowling Green. This conference has been in the planning for several months and excitement is building for a most interesting, educational event. The conference is being sponsored by the Kentucky Forage & Grassland Council in conjunction with the University of Kentucky and several other groups and organizations.

Leading speakers from Kentucky will present the latest information on "grazing". A farmer panel will share their insights and experiences. In addition, two nationally known speakers will keynote the conference. Mr. Jim Gerrish, world renowned authority on grazing and founder of the Missouri Grazing School will address the topic, "How Far Can We Go With Grazing?" Dr. Gary Bates, Extension Forage Specialist from the University of Tennessee will speak on the topic "Summer Grazing Options".

We are expecting a full "Exhibit Area". Exhibitors will be present representing seed, chemical, fencing, water, fertilizer, animal health along with other supplies and services of interest to graziers. Commodity group and educational displays will also be featured. A silent auction will offer a variety of supplies, services, books, publications along with other practical, useful items.

The registration fee will be \$15.00 and will cover refreshments, lunch, conference proceedings and other publications. Listed below is the agenda for the conference. We look forward to seeing you in Bowling Green November 28.

FALL GRAZING SCHOOL

Participants from four states (KY, WV, GA and TN) enjoyed wonderful weather and beautiful fall colors during the Grazing School held at the UK Research & Education Center in Princeton October 16-18. The Spring Grazing School will be April 17-19, 2001 in Springfield.

THREE-CORNERED ALFALFA HOPPER

We have seen several alfalfa fields over the past

month where stems would yellow (purple), wilt, break off, or die. In some situations, the entire field exhibited the "unthrifty" appearance. Although many factors can be involved including cold weather, leafhopper, boron deficiency, etc. many of the fields (plants) we examined were caused by the "Three-Cornered Alfalfa Hopper". The three-cornered alfalfa hopper attacks many crops and alfalfa is one of the most common. Adults and nymphs suck plant sap by puncturing stems either randomly or in a regular line completely girdle the stem. A gall usually forms on weakened stems and translocation ceases. The adult is triangular, light green, and small (about 6mm long). The nymphs are similar in shape but are either straw colored or have a greenish hue. They are covered with spines and hairs. Varieties differ in susceptibility, but we are not aware of any resistant varieties. The good news is this insect kills stems but not crowns. Assuming sufficient root reserves were present before the attack and realizing not all stems are complete girdled, we do not expect stands thriving as a result of this problem alone.

FUNDING SOURCE FOR LIVESTOCK/FORAGE DEVELOPMENT

Kentucky counties are currently in the process of developing plans to use Tobacco Settlement Phase I funding for the first two years. Most counties have committees in place and are meeting to consider ideas for the best way to utilize their share of the money. Forage/livestock farmers need to be sure their ideas are heard by the county committees. The best chances for success are ideas that can impact a large number of farmers and can be applied over a multi-county area. There should be many opportunities in the forage/livestock area to take advantage of these funds. Co. Ext. Ag. Agents are helping coordinate the planning efforts and can provide information on what is going on at the county level. (*Monroe Rasnake*)

FORAGES AT KCA

Keys to Forage Profitability is the theme for the "Forages at KCA" program to be held at the Executive Inn

West in Louisville from 9:30 to 11:00 on January 19. The program will feature four speakers and cover: 1) Keys to Profitable Forage Production, 2) Which Warm Season Grasses Work Best for Kentucky, 3) Practical Strategies for Controlling Weeds in Pastures, and 4) Round Bale Silage. The program will conclude in time for the Kickoff Luncheon of the Kentucky Cattlemen's Convention.

FORAGE TESTING

One of the most important investments in a hay feeding program for many is a "forage test". A forage analysis will let us know the quality of the hay. That's important information along with nutritional needs of our animals will permit us to match hay based on quality to animals based on needs. We are fortunate in Kentucky to have a forage testing program through the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. Cost for a forage analysis is \$10.00 per lot of hay. To schedule a trained technician to come to your farm and sample your hay, call 1-800-248-4623.

Editor's Note: The following article begins a new feature in Forage News. As we travel across Kentucky and work with the best County Agricultural Agents in the nation, we are always amazed at how much practical forage-livestock research and demonstration work is being done by agents. We invite agents to share their results with our Forage News readers. Our inaugural article was written by Mr. George Kelley, Hopkins County Agricultural Agent.

FORAGE TESTING HAS ECONOMIC VALUE

The value of hay testing was demonstrated in Hopkins County this summer as 18 forage producers entered fifty-two lots of hay in the county fair hay quality contest. The samples were pulled in late July and analyzed by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. A ration was calculated by the Cooperative Extension Service for each hay based on the nutrient requirements of a 1,000 pound mature dry cow in the last three months of pregnancy.

Results of the ration balancing confirmed once again that energy is often times the nutrient that is most deficient. Only 23 percent of the hays needed additional protein supplementation; however, 92 percent of the hays were deficient in Total Digestible Nutrients (TDN). In fact, only four of the hays actually met both the protein and energy requirements at this stage of production. Most of these hays were second-cut red clover.

The effects of inadequate nutrition before calving on reproduction of the beef cow has been documented. Pregnancy rates decrease and the time from calving to re-breeding is longer when energy and protein levels are inadequate prior to calving. As a general rule, cows need approximately 10% crude protein and 57% TDN at calving.

A comparison of hay types among the Hopkins County samples showed that first-cut fescue taken throughout the month of June required additional energy at the rate of 3 to 4 pounds of shelled corn per head per day. The extra energy requirement for the grass/clover mixtures, also harvested in June, was somewhat less at 2-3 pounds of corn per head per day.

The following table shows the pounds of shelled corn needed to meet TDN requirements of 52 hay rations from

Hopkins Co. and the extra cost at \$2.05 per bushel:

| TDN LEVELS | lbs/cow/day | Number of samples | Cost/cow/90 day |
|-------------|-------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 53.2 - 62.3 | 0 | 4 | 0 |
| 52.9 - 53.1 | 0-1 | 2 | \$ 1.65 |
| 50.1 - 52.8 | 1-2 | 4 | \$ 4.94 |
| 48.8 - 50.0 | 2-3 | 7 | \$ 8.24 |
| 45.7 - 48.7 | 3-4 | 10 | \$11.53 |
| 43.4 - 45.6 | 4-5 | 13 | \$14.82 |
| 40.6 - 43.3 | 5-6 | 5 | \$16.47 |
| 36.9 - 40.5 | 6-7 | 7 | \$21.41 |

The amount of money needed to supplement many of these rations suggests an investment opportunity--perhaps renovation with clovers, improved fertility, and/or consideration of baleage as a means of capturing a higher quality forage product for 2001. And don't forget forage analysis! It is an inexpensive way to determine if hay supplementation is necessary. Beef producers still have time to test hay before winter feeding begins. (George Kelley, Hopkins County Extension Agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources)

UPCOMING EVENTS

| | |
|-------------|--|
| NOV 5-9 | American Society of Agronomy, Minneapolis, MN |
| NOV 11 | BEEF: Evaluation of Opportunities, North American Livestock Exposition, Louisville |
| NOV 28 | Kentucky Grazing Conference, Bowling Green |
| DEC 4 | Forage Commodity Conference, Farm Bureau Convention, Louisville |
| 2001 | |
| JAN 19 | Forages at KCA, KCA Convention, Louisville |
| FEB 10-21 | International Grassland Congress, Brazil |
| MAR 1 | 21 st Kentucky Alfalfa Conference, Cave City |
| MAR 6 | Central Alfalfa Conference, Lexington |
| APR 17-19 | Grazing School, Springfield |

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