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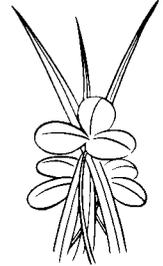
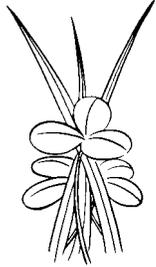
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FORAGE NEWS



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April 2000

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

SPECIAL VERSION OF 3-DAY GRAZING SCHOOL IS SET FOR APRIL 25-26-27

Pre-Registration is Necessary!

The spring 2000 version of the 3-day Kentucky Grazing School is set for April 25-26-27 in Springfield, Kentucky. The cost is \$20 per day and you can come any one, two, or all three days - your choice. The first day focuses on pasture growth, assessment and management; the second on system layout and design; and the third on cattle management.

These schools are made possible through a Value Added Grant from the Kentucky Department of Agriculture and are less than half the regular price. Please contact Jimmy Henning (606 257 3144 phone, 606 323 1952 fax, jhenning@ca.uky.edu) to pre-register. Spaces are limited to the first 45 who pre-register.

Checks should be made payable to 'Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council.'

KFGC IS ON THE WEB:

www.kfgc.org

KFGC has had a web page for almost 6 months, and if you have not visited it lately you might find it useful. Electronic copies of last year's forage proceedings on how to deal with the drought are available on line, as are copies of the monthly forage newsletter 'Forage News.' Check it out and let me know what you think.

NEW SUMMER ANNUAL YIELD TRIAL REPORT AVAILABLE

A new progress report, PR-431 is available which gives the 1999 yield data on summer annual grasses (pearl millets, sudangrasses, sorghum-sudans, forage sorghums and even a soybean mixture). These trial reports are available from your local county agent office or on the web at www.ca.uky.edu (look under Publications, Research Publications, then scroll to the end of the list). These reports also contain some of the first Kentucky data on the yield characteristics of the new Brown Midrib (BMR) varieties of sorghum-sudan and forage sorghum.

SPRING MANAGEMENT OF DROUGHT-DAMAGED PASTURES

Educational programs of the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service serve all people regardless of race, color, age, sex, religion, disability, or national origin.
UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY, KENTUCKY STATE UNIVERSITY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, AND KENTUCKY COUNTIES, COOPERATING

In addition to the loss of clovers in many pastures because of the extreme drought last summer, weed problems this spring are worse than usual. Lots of these pastures have already been renovated by seeding clovers which limits the potential to use herbicides for weed control. In this case, grazing management and mowing to reduce weed competition is about the only option. Herbicides applied to newly seeded pastures can cause significant injury or kill seedling clovers and grasses. Whereas, pastures that have good grass but very few legumes and have not been renovated can be treated with herbicides to control weeds. These pastures could also benefit from nitrogen fertilizer now and are good candidates for stockpiling this fall. Then, they would be ready for renovating with clovers next February or March.

Some pastures don't have good grass or clovers. It is not a good idea to try reseeding these now, especially by just drilling in grass seed. It is better to try to live with them this summer, or seed a summer annual grass and plan to reseed the pasture this fall. A burndown herbicide or tillage is needed to prepare for seeding summer annual grasses. Extension publication AGR-88 "Producing Summer Annual Grasses" is available at County Extension Service offices. (*Monroe Rasnake and J.D. Green*)

KFGC BEEF-FORAGE FIELD DAY SET FOR JUNE 8

The 2000 Beef-Forage field day is set for June 8 at the Eden Shale Research Farm near Owenton in Owen County. The field day will feature the research activities on the farm, which have included forage variety plots, a new economic hay storage facility, and other studies. The field day is set for a 6 PM start, and the first thing is FOOD! Come early, get a good supper, and then catch up on the research at this practical working farm. Thanks to Joe Wyles, Farm Manager, and the Northern Kentucky Extension Agents for helping host this event. Look for more information to follow in Forage News or from your county agent.

LET'S GO TO WISCONSIN

The 2000 AFGC meeting is in Madison, Wisconsin and I am going to drive up. I want some company. I am planning on leaving on Friday July 14 and coming back on Thursday July 20. On the way up, we plan to stop at the new large

dairy in Indiana and visit a good cash alfalfa hay grower in Illinois on the way up. The AFGC conference in Wisconsin always focuses on the latest in applied forage research information. In addition, AFGC is meeting with the North American Alfalfa Improvement Conference, which gives you access to the latest in alfalfa information as well. This conference will include the latest on Roundup Ready Alfalfa. The registration fee is \$120 and the tours are extra. You would be responsible for your meals and lodging during the trip. I guarantee that it will be worth the money. You can check out the whole program at the AFGC web site, www.afgc.org.

KENTUCKY HAY

In 1999, Kentucky farmers harvested hay from over 2 million acres. The drought of 1999 reduced overall yield per acre with our state average of 1.9 Tons/Acre. Alfalfa acreage was down to 250,000 acres as a result of poor seeding conditions during previous springs and fall. Yield per acre for alfalfa and alfalfa-grass mixtures was 2.90 T/A which represents over a half ton reduction in overall yield. (Source: NASS, March 16, 2000)

HIGH YIELD ALFALFA

A recent article in *Better Crops* written by A.E. Ludwick discussed high yield alfalfa. In the article, high yields of 24.1 Tons/Acre for irrigated and 12 T/A for non-irrigated. The record for irrigated yield was from alfalfa trials conducted by the University of Arizona at the Yuma Valley Agricultural Center and the 12 T/A non-irrigated reported by Delaware State College. The record for Kentucky is 10.13 T/A.

HAY GROWER ARRESTED FOR BALING HAY

It was 12:30 a.m. Robert Piester had just finished baling a field at the Smith Ranch, and was leaving for home on a warm June night. Suddenly, bright headlights blocked his exit causing him to lock up his pickup, wary of nighttime trouble. To his surprise, a law officer soon informed him that he just might be the suspect he was looking for.

Robert Piester has farmed in the Nuevo area of Riverside County for nearly 27 years, raising his own hay and custom baling. Alfalfa has been a major part of these southern California ranches for well over 100 years. However, the ever-encroaching city has made farming more interesting, to say the least.

After listening to the complaint by a neighboring lady about 'cutting grass at night', Robert politely suggested that the lady register her complaint by boycotting food. Not amused, the sheriff called two more deputies. Although he was not detained at this time, Robert was not out of hot water yet.

A week later, when baling an adjacent field, he saw the same headlights. He ignored them for awhile, but soon blinking blue lights were blocking his path. The sheriff issued an arrest warrant for 'disturbing the peace' but Robert continued baling, saying that he would gladly stop if the sheriff either "shot him, handcuffed him, or took him to jail."

Although Robert was relieved to have the case dismissed several weeks later, he shortly thereafter received a stern warning from the Deputy D.A., stating that if the night baling continued, he would file charges. It was at this point that the California Alfalfa & Forage Association, Farm Bureau, and several other groups came to his aid. CAFA members wrote 4-5 letters, made phone calls to support Robert's plight. Robert was impressed. "Over 45 farmers from as far away as Brawley came to my defense" he said. When confronted by this support and informed of the 'Right to Farm' laws, the D.A. quickly backed down, and apologized to Robert for the error.

"People think their food comes from a grocery store, not from the field" said neighbor and CAFA board member Don Bean, "It's important that we educate the public about food production, so they don't put us out of business in the future." (SOURCE: CAFA News, December 1999)

AFTERNOON OR MORNING CUT ALFALFA HAY

Editor's note: The following article was written by Dr. Marvin Hall in the *Pennsylvania Forage and Grassland News*, Vol. 10, No. 1, Winter 2000. Conditions in Pennsylvania and Kentucky are similar and our concerns are also the same as Marvin's.

Recent farm magazines have reported research that shows alfalfa hay cut in the afternoon has higher sugar levels and greater palatability than morning cut hay. It is important to note however, that this research was done in Idaho and may not apply to Pennsylvania conditions.

We know that there are daily fluctuations in plant sugar levels, with the highest levels occurring in the afternoon or evening on days when the alfalfa is actively growing. During the night these sugars are moved from the leaves and stems into the root where they are stored until needed to support regrowth after cutting. Consequently the lowest level of herbage sugars occurs just before sunrise.

So mowing in the afternoon captures the maximum amount of sugars in the leaves and stems. However, with the humid and warm nights we have in Pennsylvania, compared with the dry cool night in Idaho, respiration continues to burn up the sugars throughout the night so that by morning we see very little difference between afternoon and morning mowed alfalfa. In addition, mowing in the afternoon adds an extra day to the drying time and increases the chance of rain on the hay.

The one time when afternoon mowing would possibly be beneficial in Pennsylvania would be if the alfalfa could be cut and harvested in the same day as haylage.

UPCOMING EVENTS

APR 25-27	Kentucky Grazing School, Springfield
JUN 8	KFGC Field Day, Eden Shale Farm, Owenton
JUL 16-19	AFGC, Madison, WI
JUL 20	U.K. All Commodity Field Day, Princeton

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