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Forage News

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## Forage News [1999-10]

Department of Plant and Soil Sciences, University of Kentucky

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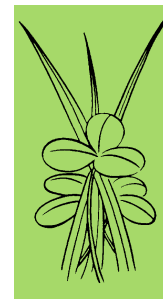
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# FORAGE NEWS



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**October 1999**

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

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## DEALING WITH THE DROUGHT OF '99 Fall Forage Conference is October 5

The KFGC fall forage conference will be held Tuesday, October 5 at the Fayette County Extension Office beginning at 4:30 PM. The program will center on the theme 'Dealing with the Drought of '99. Registration fee is \$10 which covers the meal, breaks, and the proceedings. The Fayette County Extension Office is located off Red Mile Road behind Central Equipment. The program is being co-sponsored by Elanco Animal Health.

#### Program

- 5:00 Is my pasture dead and can it be revived?--Jimmy Henning, UK Extension Forage Specialist
- 5:30 How I use alfalfa for summer pasture--Lowell Clifford, Harrison County Beef Producer
- 6:00 How should I supplement my low quality hay?--John Johns, UK Extension Beef Specialist
- 6:30 Supper - Co-sponsored by Elanco Animal Health
- 7:00 Awards and KFGC Update--Bill Talley, KFGC Vice-President
- 7:15 Making hay go farther with Rumensin--Elvin Thomas, Elanco Animal Health Specialist
- 7:45 Reviving drought damaged pastures with legumes--Garry Lacefield, UK Extension Forage Specialist
- 8:15 Do varieties make a difference? Survival of overgrazed forage varieties after 2 years of summer drought--Jimmy Henning, UK Extension Forage Specialist
- 8:45 Adjourn

## WHAT TO DO WITH THIN, OPEN, CULL COWS HAS ALWAYS BEEN A QUESTION FOR BEEF PRODUCERS

Last fall at Eden Shale, at weaning, 15 thin, open cows were weighed and valued at market price. They were then placed on accumulated fescue pasture and started on a ground ear corn-soybean meal ration. The cows were gradually brought up to full feed and then fed in a self feeder on pasture.

The cows were on feed 66 days and then sold. They gained 234 lbs each with an ADG of 3.5 lbs. They sold for 7

cents more per lb than they were originally valued, at the beginning of the experiment, resulting in a profit after feed cost of \$86.98 per head.

The increase in price per lb was attributed to the increase in market desirability of the cow and selling on a market not over run by cows. (*Joe Wyles*)

## PRINCETON GRAZING SCHOOL SET FOR OCTOBER 12-14

There are still spaces open in the fall grazing school, set for Tuesday Oct 12 to Thursday October 14. The program begins at 8:00 AM on Tuesday at the UK Research and Education Center in Princeton. Registration is \$125, payable to the Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council. Please send your check to Ken Johnson, P.O. Box 700, Tompkinsville, KY 42167 to reserve your space. For more information, feel free to contact Jimmy Henning at 505 257 3144 or [jhenning@ca.uky.edu](mailto:jhenning@ca.uky.edu).

## KENTUCKY FORAGE & GRASSLAND COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

KFGC will host the Fall Forage Conference October 5 starting at 4:30 p.m. in the Fayette County Extension Office in Lexington (see Fall Forage Conference). The conference will focus on dealing with the effects of this summer's drought on Kentucky's forages and livestock. This has been the most severe drought I have seen and its' effects will impact agriculture - especially forage agriculture - for many years to come. This is a chance to learn about some of the options farmers should consider.

A highlight of the conference will be the annual awards program of KFGC. There will be four awards presented - Industry; public service-state; public service-county level and the "Grassroots" producer award. The recipients are people who have made major contributions toward improving the forage industry in Kentucky. (*Monroe Rasnake*)

## EVALUATING HAY QUALITY

Knowing the quality of the hay we are/will feed is important. It is important from an agronomic and economic perspective.

The most practical way to determine the nutrient content of hay is through forage nutritive analysis. Forage nutritional results can be used to assess quality and to determine amount and type of supplementation needed for the desired level of animal production if hay is stored so a representative sample can be taken and the analysis is done by a reputable laboratory. The use of an instrument to obtain a core sample of hay has been one of the most reliable methods of getting a representative sample for nutritional analysis. Matching hay to different classes of livestock based on nutritional content of the forage and the requirements of the animal can lead to a more efficient forage-livestock program.

Kentucky has an excellent hay testing program. It is administered by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture Hay and Grain Division. A quick toll free phone call (1-800-248-4628) is all that is needed to arrange for a trained individual to visit your farm and collect a representative sample of hay. The hay will be tested and the results returned to you in a few days. Cost for the total sample and testing service is \$10.00 per lot of hay.

Visual estimate (judging your own hay)—Although not as reliable as forage testing, a visual estimate can be helpful in determining forage quality. Guidelines for sensory evaluation are given in Table 1. Hay that is early cut, green, leafy, soft, free of foreign material, and has a pleasant odor will be of high quality. However, color and visual appearance are not always good indicators of hay nutritive quality.

Table 1. Score Card for Hay Quality Evaluation.

		Possible Score	Your Score
I. Stage of Harvest	1. Before blossom or heading	26-30	_____
	2. Early blossom or early heading	21-25	_____
	3. Mid- to late-bloom or head	16-20	_____
	4. Seed stage (stemmy)	11-15	_____
II. Leafiness	1. Very leafy	26-30	_____
	2. Leafy	21-25	_____
	3. Slightly stemmy	16-20	_____
	4. Stemmy	0-6	_____
III. Color	1. Natural green color of crop	13-15	_____
	2. Light green	10-12	_____
	3. Yellow to slightly brownish	7-9	_____
	4. Brown or black	0-6	_____
IV. Odor	1. Clean - "crop odor"	13-15	_____
	2. Dusty	10-12	_____
	3. Moldy - mousey or musty	7-9	_____
	4. Burnt	0-6	_____
V. Softness	1. Very soft and pliable	9-10	_____
	2. Soft	7-8	_____
	3. Slightly harsh	5-6	_____
	4. Harsh, brittle	0-4	_____
		<b>Sub-total</b>	_____
VI. Penalties	1. Trash, weeds, dirt, etc.	Subtract 0-35	_____
Scoring: 90 and above—Excellent; 80-89—Good hay; 65-79—Fair hay; Below 65—Poor hay		<b>TOTAL</b>	_____

## UPCOMING EVENTS

OCT 5 KFGC Conference, Fayette County Extension Office, Lexington

OCT 12-14 KY Grazing School, U.K. Research & Education Center, Princeton

OCT 31- NOV 1 American Society of Agronomy, Salt Lake City, Utah

## 2000

JAN 7 Forages at KCA, Executive Inn-West, Louisville

FEB 24 20<sup>th</sup> Kentucky Alfalfa Conference, Cave City

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