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Forage News [1998-09]

University of Kentucky Department of Plant and Soil Sciences

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FORAGE NEWS

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

DOLLARS & CENTS OF STOCKPILING TALL FESCUE

Jim Gerrish and co-workers at the University of Missouri compared feeding round bale tall fescue hay to grazing stockpiled tall fescue. Results from their studies showed that grazing stockpiled tall fescue reduced hay feeding from 120 days to 60 days. Cost per cow day was 74 cents for hay feeding and 19 cents for grazing stockpiled tall fescue. Wintering cost per cow was reduced by \$48 by grazing stockpiled tall fescue.

KFGC AWARD NOMINATIONS DUE OCTOBER 9

The annual KFGC Awards will be presented at the Forage Conference in Lexington, October 27 and Princeton October 28. Awards will be presented in four categories (Producer, Public Service County, Public Service State and Industry). Send nominations to Mr. Ball Talley, Chairman Awards Committee, 9 Canary Drive, Eddyville, KY 42038.

KENTUCKY GRAZING SCHOOL

There are a few vacancies for the Kentucky Grazing School to be held at the University of Kentucky Research & Education Center in Princeton October 13-15. Since space is limited, please respond quickly to reserve your spot in the Grazing School. For more information or to register, contact: Mr. Ken Johnson, 1410 N. Main, Tompkinsville, KY 42167 (502-487-6589).

KFGC FALL FORAGE CONFERENCE

Mark your calendar for the fall forage conference to be held in Lexington on October 27 and Princeton on October 28. The program committee is hard at work putting together a very practical program. More details on topics and speakers in the next issue of Forage News.

ALFALFA CONFERENCE MARCH 4

The 19th Kentucky Alfalfa Conference has been set for March 4, 1999 at the Cave City Convention Center. The program committee is putting together a very practical program that will feature grazing, marketing, quality, establishment and management. We expect our exhibit space to be full again this year as it has been each of the last several years at the Cave City Convention Center.

FORAGES AT THE STATE FAIR

It was good to visit with so many of you at the State Fair. We appreciate those of you who stopped by the Forage Booth. Our thanks to KFGC President Larry Jeffries for manning the exhibit on Thursday. We also extend a special thanks to Mr. Allen Johnson for all he did to make our first "Quality Hay Seminar" a reality.

MAXIMIZE GRAZING - MINIMIZE STORED FEED

Pasture represents the cheapest source of nutrients for ruminant animals. Extra pasture during fall and winter can be worth a lot of money to Kentucky cattlemen. Any feed you can get from grazing during this time of the year saves on stored feed and, of course, has no cutting, raking, baling and storing cost. There are several possible sources of grazing during fall and winter including both warm and cool season plants and crop residues. Since the warm season plants deteriorate rapidly after frost these plants should be utilized between now and frost. Included in this group are: sudangrass, millets, sorghum-sudan hybrids, bermudagrass, grass-lespedeza, and those pastures infested with crabgrass or similar type plants. Materials that may be grazed after a killing frost include: alfalfa, alfalfa-grass, clover-grass, cool season grasses, cover crops, and crop residues.

WARM SEASON GRASS FIELD DAY

Sixty-five people from Kentucky and several

surrounding states participated in a “Native Warm Season Grasses for Forage and Wildlife” field day in Logan County on August 4. Fields of big bluestem, eastern gamagrass and switchgrass were observed under grazing and hay management. Speakers from Extension, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Department of Fish and Wildlife and Murray State University discussed how native grasses can benefit both livestock and wildlife. The field day was a cooperative effort of the Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council, UK Cooperative Extension Service, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife and USDA NRCS. (*Monroe Rasnake*)

KENTUCKY PASTURE & HAY CONDITIONS

Pastures continue in mostly good condition, and were rated 2 percent very poor, 5 percent poor, 30 percent fair, 50 percent good, and 13 percent excellent. Pasture condition deteriorated slightly in areas that haven’t had rain for several weeks. Some eastern pastures benefitted from last weeks showers. Hay harvest continues briskly due to hot, dry weather. Condition of the crop was reported as 7 percent poor, 28 percent fair, 50 percent good, 15 percent excellent. Some hay fields were suffering from lack of moisture. (*SOURCE: Kentucky Agricultural Statistical Service KBM 22-98, August 24, 1998*)

FORAGES AT KCA

Again in 1999 we will kick off the Kentucky Cattlemen’s Convention with a Forage Program. The committee has chosen “Getting More Value From Forage Legumes” as the theme. The program will begin at 9:30 on January 8 at the Executive Inn West in Louisville. Topics will include: Role and Importance of Forage Legumes in Kentucky Pasture & Hay Fields; Establishing Legumes for Pastures and/or Hay; Bloat: What is it? What Causes it? How Do I Reduce the Risk; and, Getting the Most Out of Your Legume-based Pastures.

HAY QUALITY STANDARDS

It was approximately twenty years ago that the American Forage & Grassland Council appointed a Hay Quality Committee. This committee has grown, changed, expanded over the years to the National Alfalfa Quality Committee. This task force of growers, dealers, scientists have worked hard to come up with hay standards that could be used nationally. The task force has proposed the following based on both visual and chemical designations:

Alfalfa/Mix Hay Testing Guidelines			
Quality Designations	RFV	ADF	CP (%)
Supreme	Over 180	Under 27	Over 23
Premium	155-180	27-29	21-23
Good	130-155	29-32	18-21
Fair	105-130	32-37	15-18
Low	Under 105	Over 37	Under 15

Quantitative factors are approximate, and many factors can affect feeding value. Figures are based on 100% dry matter.

- **Supreme:** Very early maturity, prebloom, soft, fine-stemmed, extra leafy – factors indicative of very high nutritive content. Hay is excellent in color and free of damage.
- **Premium:** Early maturity, prebloom, fine-stemmed, extra leafy – factors indicative of a high nutritive content. Hay is green and free of damage.
- **Good:** Early to average maturity, i.e., early to mid-bloom. Leafy, fine- to medium-stemmed, free of damage other than slight discoloration.
- **Fair:** Late maturity, mid- to late-bloom. Moderate or below leaf content and generally coarse-stemmed. Hay may show slight damage.
- **Low:** Hay in very late maturity with mature seed pods. Very coarse-stemmed. Could include hay discounted due to excessive damage and heavy weed content or mold.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- OCT 13-15 Kentucky Grazing School, UKREC, Princeton
- OCT 18-22 American Society of Agronomy, Baltimore, Maryland
- OCT 27-28 KFGC Conference, Lexington-Princeton
- NOV 10-12 Alfalfa Intensive Training Seminar, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- 1999**
- JAN 8-9 Kentucky Cattlemen’s Convention, Louisville
- MAR 4 19th KY Alfalfa Conference, Cave City
- APR 28-30 Kentucky Grazing School, Eden Shale

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 Extension Forage Specialists Forage News, September 1998