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Forage News [1998-07]

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

U.K. ALL COMMODITY FIELD DAY

The University of Kentucky All Commodity Field Day will be held July 16, 1998 at the University of Kentucky Research and Education Center in Princeton. This year's field day offers something for everyone. Over forty educational exhibits under the big tent, youth activities, and home economics taste testing and displays. There will be 18 walking, wagon and bus tours which will run continuously throughout the day.

Three of the tours will feature forages and beef:

Forage Tour

- Red Clover Varieties—*Dr. Norm Taylor*
- Warm Season Perennial Grasses—*Dr. Monroe Rasnake*
- Alfalfa Varieties—*Dr. Jimmy Henning*
- Tall Fescue and Orchardgrass Varieties—*Dr. Tim Phillips*

Beef-Forage Tour

- Kentucky Grazing School—*Ken Johnson*
- Fall-Calving for Kentucky—*Dr. John Johns*
- Common Disease Problems in Kentucky Beef Cattle—*Dr. Patty Scharko*
- Storage Systems to Maintain Hay Quality—*Dr. Mike Collins*

Beef Tour

- Overview of the Beef Program—*Dr. Roy Burris*
- The Brahman Influence for Fescue Endophyte Tolerance—*Dr. Darrh Bullock*
- Effect of Endophyte on Embryo Survival—*Dr. Les Anderson*

FALL GRAZING SCHOOL AT PRINCETON

The fall Grazing School will be held at the University of Kentucky Research and Education Center October 13-15, 1998. Space is limited, so if you are interested, please contact Ken Johnson at 502/487-6589. There is a \$125.00 registration fee which includes all materials, grazing manual, a copy of "Southern Forages", breaks and selected meals.

HAY SEMINAR AT THE STATE FAIR

A new addition to this year's Kentucky State Fair will be a Hay Seminar. The seminar is co-sponsored by the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service, Kentucky Department of Agriculture, Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council and Kentucky Farm Bureau Forage Commodity Committee. The seminar will be at 10:00 on August 20-21. Speakers include Dr. Garry Lacefield, Dr. Jimmy Henning and Mr. Allen Johnson. Topics include: factors affecting quality hay, evaluating hay quality and hay testing. See you at the Fair.

NATIVE WARM SEASON GRASS FIELD DAY

A field day is scheduled for August 4 from 8 a.m. to noon in Logan County. The location is the Jimmy May farm on Hwy. 73 about four miles north of South Union. The farm has 90 acres producing forages for a cow/calf beef operation. About two-thirds of this is in fescue/clover and one-third in native warm season grasses - switchgrass, big bluestem and eastern gamagrass.

The field day is co-sponsored by the KY Forage & Grassland Council, UK Coop. Ext. Serv., KY Dept. of Fish and Wildlife and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Serv. The theme is "Native Warm Season Grasses for Forage and Wildlife". Speakers will discuss establishment and management of these grasses for hay and grazing and their value as wildlife habitat. (*Monroe Rasnake*)

FORAGE COUNCIL GETS GRAZING SCHOOL GRANT FROM DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Billy Ray Smith, Commissioner of Agriculture, presented KFGC with a \$30,000 grant at the June 18 KCA-KFGC field day specifically to support their Kentucky Grazing Schools in 1998 and 1999. These funds are part of an effort by the Department of Agriculture to intensify the marketing of forage in Kentucky. The commissioner commended the council for their leadership in developing these educational

events. Present plans for the funds are to conduct several one day schools at various locations across Kentucky as well as developing some top quality grazing publications that will be especially valuable to Kentucky farmers. This grant represents the largest single grant ever for the forage council. What an exciting time for forages!

JOINT FIELD DAY IS THE CREAM OF THE CROP

About 100 attended the 1998 joint field day of the Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council and the Kentucky Cattleman's Association at the Greg and Joan Ritter farm in Barren County on Thursday, June 18. The field day featured equipment demonstrations, educational displays, and two tours. The program was co-sponsored by the UK College of Agriculture and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The attendees were treated to a steak dinner with homemade ice cream for dessert. The ice cream was a perfect ending to a great afternoon. A special thanks goes to the hosts, Greg and Joan Ritter as well as Gary Tilghman and Doug Hatchett. Ken Johnson, KFGC board member, was the field day chairman from KFGC. Also a special thanks is extended to Mike Venable and KCA for their help with the field day.

PREPARE NOW FOR FALL AND WINTER PASTURES

Early August is the time to begin stockpiling tall fescue or bluegrass for late fall and winter pasture. Remove cattle and apply nitrogen by mid-August. Nitrogen should be applied at the rate of 40-60 pounds of N per acre on bluegrass and 40-80 on tall fescue. Allow growth to accumulate until other pastures are utilized. Research in Missouri showed that stockpiling tall fescue reduced the hay feeding period from 120 to 60 days. Cost per cow per day was 74 cents for hay feeding and 19 cents for grazing stockpiled tall fescue. Wintering cost per cow was reduced \$48 by grazing stockpiled tall fescue. (See AGR-62 "Stockpiling for Fall and Winter Pasture" for more details.)

THE THIRTY YARD JOURNEY

(Editor note: The following excerpt was taken from "Pasture for Horses by Angela Avery, Adelaide, Australia)

Horses have an adaptive digestive system that enables them to utilize a wide variety of feeds. A mouthful of grass is chewed to particles less than 3/4 of an inch in length and is mixed with saliva. Four quarts of saliva is produced for every 25 quarts of feed consumed. Horses grazing pasture rarely develop

sharp edges on their teeth. Upon swallowing, the pasture starts a 30 yard journey that takes approximately three days before it emerges at the other end of the digestive tract.

LEAVES OF GRASS

There is much discussion these days about non-renewable sources of energy from petroleum, natural gas, and coal versus renewable sources such as wind, water, and sun. Obviously, all these sources of energy are of solar origin. Solar panels with photoelectric cells are increasingly being used to collect solar energy and operate small calculators, electric fences, and even for illumination via storage batteries. However, this is puny compared to the massive biological solar collectors livestock producers have in their pastures! In reality, each leaf in a pasture or hayfield is a potential biological solar collector, operating day after day with minimal maintenance.

As leaves emerge and grow, they increase in ability to capture sunlight, peaking at about 15-20 days and then decline slowly until after six weeks or more photosynthesis is minimal. Leaf aging is affected by temperature, with senility occurring more rapidly at higher temperatures. Generally, old leaves in a pasture are contributing little as solar collectors. In addition, these nonproductive leaves continue to respire and utilize sugars. Thus, it is desirable to maintain a high percentage of young leaves in a pasture and avoid accumulation of old non-functioning solar leaf collectors. (*SOURCE: Dr. Carl Hoveland, The Georgia Cattleman, June 1998*)

UPCOMING EVENTS

- JUL 16 U.K. College of Ag. All Commodity Field Day, UKREC, Princeton
- AUG 20-21 Hay Seminar, KY State Fair, Louisville
- OCT 13-15 Kentucky Grazing School, UKREC, Princeton
- OCT 18-22 American Society of Agronomy, Baltimore, Maryland
- OCT 27-28 KFGC Conference Princeton-Lexington
- NOV 10-12 Alfalfa Intensive Training Seminar, Minneapolis, Minnesota

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- MAR 4 19th KY Alfalfa Conference, Cave City
- APR 27-29 Kentucky Grazing School, Eden Shale

Garry D. Lacefield
Extension Forage Specialist

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