

FORAGE NEWS

For more forage information, visit our UK Forage Extension Website at: <http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage>

FEBRUARY 2005

Garry D. Lacefield and S. Ray Smith, Extension Forage Specialists • Christi Forsythe, Secretary

25TH KENTUCKY ALFALFA CONFERENCE SET FOR FEBRUARY 24

The 25th Kentucky Alfalfa Conference is set for the Cave City Convention Center on February 24, 2005. This year's program will bring together leading authorities on many aspects of alfalfa production. The program will begin at 8:00 a.m. Central Time with registration. Registration is \$15.00 and covers meal, refreshments, proceedings and other educational materials. No preregistration is necessary – just pay at the registration desk.

We will have a full set of exhibitors ready to discuss all aspects of alfalfa along with our largest group of silent auction items.

- 8:00 Registration, Visit Exhibits, Silent Auction
- 8:40 Welcome
- 8:50 Kentucky Alfalfa Conference: 25th Anniversary – Garry Lacefield
- 9:10 Impact of Alfalfa in Lincoln County – Mr. Dan Grigson
- 9:30 Advances in Alfalfa Seed Coating – Mr. Bill Talley
- 9:50 Alfalfa Hay for Horses – Dr. Laurie Lawrence
- 10:10 Break, Visit Exhibits, Silent Auction
- 10:40 Progress Toward Sclerotinia-Resistant Varieties – Dr. Paul Vincelli
- 11:00 Growing Alfalfa for Wildlife – Dr. Don Ball
- 11:30 Alfalfa in our Dairy Operation – Mr. Lee Robey
- 12:00 Lunch, Visit Exhibits, Silent Auction, Awards
- 1:00 Roundup Ready Alfalfa: From Pipe Dream to Reality – Dr. Mark McCaslin
- 1:30 Alfalfa: Crop for the Future – Dr. Neal Martin
- 2:00 Alfalfa – Queen of the Forage Crops: It Don't Get Any Better – Mr. Warren Thompson
- 2:30 Discussion and Adjourn

If you have questions, contact Garry Lacefield 270-365-7541, Ext. 202 glacefie@uky.edu or Christi Forsythe 270-365-7541 Ext. 221 cforsyth@uky.edu.

See you in Cave City.

ALFALFA AND SOYBEAN RUST: IS THERE A CONCERN?

There has been one unconfirmed report from Argentina that alfalfa is a host for the soybean rust pathogen, *Phakopsora pachyrhizi*. This may well be true, but if it is a host, it is a very poor one. For example, Brazil grows quite a lot of alfalfa and 99% of soybean acres in that country were impacted by soybean rust last season; however, I

have not heard a single comment, or read any reports from anyone in Brazil which indicate that alfalfa is being impacted at any level by soybean rust. Unless something is radically different in the U.S., I do not anticipate alfalfa to be impacted by the developing soybean rust problem in the U.S. (SOURCE: Don Hershman, UK Extension Plant Pathologist)

DR. RAY SMITH CONTACT INFORMATION

Dr. Ray Smith has been very busy since accepting the Extension Forage position January 1. His contact information is:

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SELECTING VARIETIES FOR KENTUCKY

The 2004 forage variety reports will be available on the University of Kentucky Forage website in early February (www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage). If you do not have access to the web then contact your local county agent for a hard copy of any report listed below. Kentucky is fortunate to have one of the most extensive variety testing programs in the country. If you are trying to decide the best variety for your farm or are making recommendations to others check out these updated reports first. We are currently conducting two types of variety tests: forage yield and tolerance to grazing. Yield reports are available for the following species: Alfalfa, Orchardgrass, Red clover, White clover, Timothy, Tall fescue, Annual ryegrass, and Perennial ryegrass. The Kentucky grazing tolerance reports continue to provide essential information to Kentucky farmers. Kentucky tests more varieties under grazing than any other state in the nation. Grazing tolerance tests include: Alfalfa, Red and White clover, Cool-season grasses, and Cool-season grass tolerance to horse grazing. Remember that our grazing tests are designed to sort out the "survivors." We graze these tests HARD so that you will know what varieties fall out first under a worst case scenario. Under recommended rotational grazing most varieties will survive from 1 to 3

years longer than our tests indicate. Look in these reports for the best variety in your region before contacting your local seed supplier. Locations include Lexington, Princeton, Bowling Green, and Quicksand. You may want to look at variety information from surrounding states. Go to www.naaic.org and click on "Alfalfa variety trial yield results on the web." This not only directs you to alfalfa yield information, but includes all other forage crops as well.

AFGC CONFERENCE SET FOR JUNE 11-15 IN BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS

The American Forage and Grassland Council annual conference will be held this summer from June 11-15 in Bloomington, Illinois. Make your plans now to attend. It will be "THE" Forage Conference in the United States in 2005. Kentucky had more people at last years conference than any other state except the host state of Virginia. Kentuckians know that forages form the backbone of the state's agricultural economy and want to stay up-to-date on the latest developments. Make sure you plan to join Kentucky forage producers, county agents, forage researchers and extension specialists that will be traveling to Illinois. This years conference is being held in conjunction with the Illinois Forage Expo being held Monday June 13. The Expo is a popular event held each year with equipment manufacturers and other exhibitors from across the region. One of the events that will be held Expo Day is the popular National Hay Show. Winners receive national recognition, a plaque, and a healthy cash prize. If you have some good lots of hay, plan to enter and submit a sample in one or more categories. You do not have to attend the conference to win. See the website listed below for hay show details (just click under "Contests" for entry rules and regulations). Full details and online registration is available at www.afgc.org or call 1-800-944-AFGC(2342).

KENTUCKY TO HOST GRAZING CONFERENCE

Kentucky will host the Heart of America Grazing Conference in 2006. The HOAGC began in 2002 when representatives from Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Missouri, and Kentucky put together the first conference in Illinois. Since that time, conferences have been held in Missouri, Indiana, and Ohio. We are excited about this conference and look forward to having grazing enthusiast from all five states there in 2006. Tentative dates are January 25 and 26, 2006. The conference will be held at the Cave City Convention Center.

HOW "GOOD" IS YOUR HAY AND/OR HAYLAGE?

Spring of 2004 was very challenging for many in our attempts to make quality hay. If you want to know the quality of your hay or haylage, you can do it very efficiently by having it tested. The Kentucky Department of Agriculture operates the Hay Testing Program for Kentucky. To get your hay or haylage tested, simply call the KDA toll free number 1-800-248-4628 and they will arrange for a representative to visit your farm and sample your hay or haylage. The cost of the sample and test is only \$10.00 per lot of hay or haylage tested. For more information, call 1-800-248-4628 or visit them on the web at www.kyagr.com.

ALFALFA: THE HIGH QUALITY HAY FOR HORSES

A new 12-page practical, high quality, four color brochure "Alfalfa: The High Quality Hay for Horses", was released last week. The publication was written by Glenn Shewmaker, Dan Undersander, Laurie Lawrence and Garry Lacefield. You can access this publication at:

<http://www.alfalfa.org/cascpub.html>

GETTING READY FOR THE GRAZING SEASON

We are often asked about paddock number and size. There is no "right" answer to exactly how many and what size you should have. As a start in the thought process, consider the following formulas with regard to your grazing program.

$$\text{Number of Paddocks} = \frac{\text{Days of rest}}{\text{Days of grazing}} + 1$$

$$\text{Example: Rest 28 days, Graze 4 days} \quad \frac{28}{4} + 1 = 8$$

Acres Required per Paddock =

Avg. wt. of animals to be grazed	X	Dry matter consumed ¹ per animal as % of body weight	X	Number of animals	X	Days on the pasture
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Dry matter available in the area to be grazed ²	X	% of the dry matter utilized by grazing ³
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Example: Forty 600 lb steers consuming 3% body weight for 4 days. Twelve inches growth, thick stand (12 X 225 lb/inch) utilizing approximately 60%.

$$\frac{600 \times .03 \times 40 \times 4}{(12 \times 225) \times .60} = \frac{2,880}{1,620} = 1.8$$

Total Acres Required = Number of paddocks X acres required per paddock

$$\text{Example: } 8 \times 1.8 = 14.4$$

$$\text{Stocking Rate} = \frac{\text{No. animals to be grazed}}{\text{Total acres grazed}} \quad \text{Example: } \frac{40}{14.4} = 2.8$$

$$\text{Stocking Density} = \frac{\text{No. of animals grazing}}{\text{Paddock size (acres)}} \quad \text{Example: } \frac{40}{1.8} = 22$$

¹Grazing animals will normally consume from 2 to over 3 percent of their body weight in dry matter each day. Intake varies with pasture quality and quantity and animal class. Dry beef cows will normally consume around 2 percent per day, growing steers and lactating dairy cows will normally consume around 3 percent.

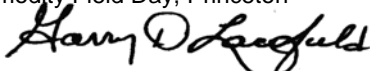
²Dry matter available depends on species, growing conditions and density. Although considerable variation will occur, a range of 150 to 300 pounds of dry matter for each inch of usable pasture growth is often used.

³Amount of dry matter utilized will depend on grazing method and grazing time. A range of 40 to 70 percent pasture utilization is common. Utilization in the upper portion of this range may occur with higher stocking rates and shorter grazing times. By comparison, forage utilization by other means might be assumed to be as follows: hay, 70 to 80 percent; strip grazing, 75 to 80 percent; silage or greenchop, 85 to 95 percent.

(SOURCE: *Southern Forages 3rd Edition*)

UPCOMING EVENTS

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| FEB 24 | 25 th Kentucky Alfalfa Conference, Cave City Convention Center |
| JUN 11-15 | American Forage & Grassland Conference, Bloomington, IL |
| JUN 26-JUL 1 | 20 th International Grassland Congress, Dublin, Ireland |
| JUL 28 | UK All Commodity Field Day, Princeton |



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