The Mid-South Stocker Conference will be held February 21-22 at the Holiday Inn University Plaza and Sloan Convention Center in Bowling Green, Kentucky.

For details concerning program and registration, please call Roy Burris, 270-365-7541 (208), Jeff Lehmkuhler, 859-257-2853 or Jim Neel, 865-974-7294 or visit http://www.midsouthstocker.org.

KENTUCKY’S AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY

2010 Review: U.S. agriculture rebounded quickly from the effects of the commodity market ‘crash’ in 2008 and the serious global recession in 2009. USDA is projecting U.S. net farm income to be up 24% this year. Most of the increase in farm income is coming from improved market conditions for beef cattle, dairy, poultry, and recent surges in corn and soybean prices. The balance sheet for ag is strong, despite the weak macroeconomy.

The most important factor behind the improved economics for agriculture is the revival of ag export markets. After plunging from a record high of $115 billion in 2008 down to $96 billion last year, ag exports have rebounded to a projected $113 billion for 2010. Larger volumes of grain exports at higher prices, as well as improved horticulture and meat exports, are behind the reversal. After a short dip in 2009, food imports are forecast to be another record-high next year.

As a result of these market forces, Kentucky’s farm economy had a better year in 2010. Total cash receipts are estimated to be $4.4 to $4.7 billion, up at least $400-300 million over 2009 and well above the 10-year average of $4 billion. Net farm income this year (excluding government payments) will be $1.3 billion – just below the state’s 10-year average. With ag exports booming and the economy in slow recovery, both cash receipts and net farm income for 2010 should be significantly higher, with a positive outlook for 2011.

Poultry is now solidly the #1 source of cash receipts in the state as growth in that sector continues. Equine receipts showed slight improvement from 2009, but will remain a distant second. Improving corn prices worked to offset disappointing yields to round out the top three cash generators for Kentucky agriculture. Had weather been more favorable in the state, grain receipts could have been significantly higher. (SOURCE: Craig Infanger & Kenny Burdine, UK Agricultural Economists)

FORAGERS AT KCA

Our Foragers at KCA program will be on Friday, January 14, 2011 in Heritage Ballrooms 2 and 3 of the Lexington Convention Center. The program will begin at 1:00. Speakers and topics include:

Forages Back to Basics - Dr. Garry Lacefield
Hay for Horses: Needs and Wants - Dr. Laurie Lawrence
Strategies to Reduce Animal Losses from: Bloat-Nitrates-Prussic Acid - Dr. Jeff Lehmkuhler
Endophyte in Tall Fescue: Impact on Horses and Cattle - Dr. Ray Smith
Controlling Weeds in Horse/Cattle Pastures - Dr. Byron Sleugh
Putting the Pieces Together - Dr. Garry Lacefield

A proceedings, along with other publications, will be available.

SMALL RUMINANT GRAZING CONFERENCE

The 2011 Kentucky Small Ruminant Grazing Conference will be held in Elizabethtown at the Hardin County Extension Office January 15, 2011. See UK Forage Website http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage/Small%20Ruminant%20Grazing%20Conference%202011.pdf for program, registration information and directions.

MID-SOUTH STOCKER CONFERENCE

The Mid-South Stocker Conference will be held February 21-22 at the Holiday Inn University Plaza and Sloan Convention Center in Bowling Green, Kentucky.

For details concerning program and registration, please call Roy Burris, 270-365-7541 (208), Jeff Lehmkuhler, 859-257-2853 or Jim Neel, 865-974-7294 or visit http://www.midsouthstocker.org.

FORAGE VARIETY TEST RESULTS

Thanks to the hard work of Gene Olsen, we now have 8 Variety Test Reports available on our website at http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage/ForageVarietyTrials2.htm

REGIONAL GRAZING CONFERENCE COMING TO LOUISVILLE – REGISTER NOW!

The 10th Annual Heart of America Grazing Conference is returning to Kentucky. It will be held January 25 & 26 at the Holiday Inn Hurstbourne in Louisville. The Conference rotates among five states (Illinois, Missouri, Indiana, Ohio and Kentucky).

The program will feature leading speakers from all five states concerning topics of interest to all producers interested in grazing. In addition to informative presentations, a silent auction and trade show will be featured. The program gets underway January 25 at 2:00 p.m. EST with exhibit set-up. Registration begins at 3:00 p.m. Program includes:

January 25, 2011
2:00 p.m. Exhibit Set-up
3:00 p.m. Registration, Exhibits and Silent Auction
5:30 Welcome, Invocation & Dinner
– Dr. Garry Lacefield, University of Kentucky
Kentucky Agriculture
– Dr. Jimmy Henning, University of Kentucky
Forages Around the World: Observations & Reflections
– Dr. Garry Lacefield

January 26, 2011
7:00 a.m. Registration, Exhibits, Silent Auction
8:15 Welcome – Dr. Garry Lacefield
8:30 From Confinement to Grazing
– Mr. Bill Payne, Producer, Lincoln Co. KY

The program includes:

8:30 From Confinement to Grazing
– Mr. Bill Payne, Producer, Lincoln Co. KY

For more forage information, visit our UK Forage Extension Website at: http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage
**Alfalfa – Tall Fescue Row Orientation / Compatibility Comparisons on Establishment and Persistence Under Grazing**

Abstract - In ideal forage production environments, mixtures of perennial grasses and perennial legumes in pastures are successfully used in grazing systems. However, due to limiting environmental resources in the southern Great Plains of U.S., it has been nearly impossible to grow mixtures of warm-season and cool-season crops together, because one species usually dominates. A RCBD experiment was initiated in Vernon, TX (Wichita clay loam), Vashit, TX, (Anocon loam) and Ardmore, OK (Heiden clay) during the fall of 2008 in an attempt to minimize preferential grazing while maintaining adequate stand density and persistence of both alfalfa and tall fescue by evaluating three row orientations. The row orientation treatments included perpendicular rows, alternating drill rows, and a combination of both alternating and perpendicular drill row orientations. Both alfalfa (*Medicago sativa*) L 'Bulldog 505' planted 0.25 in depth at 12 lb PLS/acre and tall fescue (*Lolium arundinaceum*) (Schreb.) S.J. Darbyshire = *Festuca arundinacea* Schreb. ‘Flecha MaxQ’ planted 0.25-0.5 in depth at 15 PLS/A were planted utilizing a Great Plains no-till drill with 7.5" row spacing. The perpendicular drill row orientation was achieved by planting tall fescue followed by alfalfa, making two separate passes, with each planted on 7.5" in spacing. Alternating drill rows were achieved by utilizing the grain box to plant the fescue on 15 inch spacing and the legume box to plant the alfalfa in the adjacent rows, also on 15 inch spacing. The combination of alternating and perpendicular orientation was achieved by utilizing both boxes as before, but at half the seeding rate and planting in two separate passes. Initial seedling counts 30 days after emergence (DAE) were recorded and percent composition was recorded 6, 12, and 18 months after planting (MAP). Initial stand counts indicated adequate plant numbers of both species to consider establishment successful in all three row orientations at all locations. Botanical composition estimates 6 MAP generally resulted in greater compositions of alfalfa, especially in the perpendicular row orientation. At the Vernon location, tall fescue did not persist through the summer in any of three row orientations. By 18 MAP, the perpendicular 7.5" treatment resulted in low percentages of tall fescue (19-23%) compared to alfalfa (66-76%), at the Ardmore and Vashit locations. Both alternating drill row and combination alternating and perpendicular row orientation treatments resulted in adequate persistence (51-64% alfalfa; 35-40% tall fescue) 18 MAP. The alternating and perpendicular planting orientation consistently creates a ‘checkerboard’ matrix of established plants and offers potential to minimize preferential grazing while maintaining adequate stand density and persistence of both alfalfa and tall fescue. (SOURCE: Jimmy D. Stein, Twain J. Butler, and Dariusz Malinowski IN AFGC Proceedings, Springfield, MO, June 2010)