

# FORAGE NEWS

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

**JULY 2007**

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

## FORAGES LOSSES EXCEED \$40 MILLION

Our best "conservative" estimates on hay losses is approximately \$45 million resulting from the April freeze and below normal rainfall. Reports of yield reductions of 30-60% are very common across the state.

## FORAGE & BEEF TOURS AT UKREC FIELD DAY

The University of Kentucky Field Day will be held July 26. Forages and Beef will be two of eleven tours running continuously throughout the day. The Forage tour will feature four stops.

### FORAGES

Making Quality Hay and Reducing Storage Losses – *Tom Keene*  
Teff and Other Summer Grasses – *Tim Phillips*  
Roundup Ready Alfalfa – What Does the Future Hold? – *Ray Smith*  
How Do New Forage Varieties Perform in Kentucky? – *Gene Olson*

The Beef tour will also offer four stops.

### BEEF

Research Using the Calan Gate Feeding System – *Roy Burris, James Boling*  
Regulation of Protein Metabolism in Cattle – *James Matthews, Kelly Brown*  
Forage Systems Research – *James Randolph, Kevin Laurent*  
Estrus Synchronization Systems for Timed AI – *Les Anderson*  
For more information on the other tours and activities, see the Field Day Website at:  
<http://www.ca.uky.edu/wkrec/Field%20Day%20Button%20Pg.htm>

## GRAZING CONFERENCE DATE CHANGE

Due to circumstances beyond our control, we are changing our 8<sup>th</sup> Kentucky Grazing Conference from October 25 to **October 30**. We apologize for this inconvenience, but are pleased we were able to work this out with our host "Western Kentucky University Expo Center" and our speakers.

Please make this change on your calendars and we look forward to seeing you **Tuesday, October 30** at the WKU Expo Center.

## FORAGE SPOKESMAN NOMINATIONS

Forage Spokesman Nominations are now being accepted. To nominate a producer to compete in the KFGC Forage Spokesman contest, send name, address, and a 100 word or less description of their forage-livestock operation to Dr. Ray Smith, Plant and Soil Science Dept., 105 Plant Science Bldg., 1405 Veterans Road, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40546-0312 or e-mail [raysmith1@uky.edu](mailto:raysmith1@uky.edu). Any Kentucky forage producer is eligible to compete. Only five producers will be selected to compete in the contest to be held at the Kentucky Grazing Conference at the WKU Expo Center in Bowling Green October 30. Contestants will be given 12 minutes to tell their forage story with 3 minutes for introduction and questions. The winner will represent Kentucky at the AFGC National competition.

## KFGC AWARDS

Award nominations are now being accepted for KFGC Producer, Industry, Public Service-State, and Public Service-County Awards. To nominate a deserving individual, send a one-page nomination to Dr. Garry Lacefield, P.O. Box 469, Princeton, KY 42445, FAX: 270-365-2667 or e-mail: [glacefie@uky.edu](mailto:glacefie@uky.edu). Awards will be presented at the 8<sup>th</sup> Kentucky Grazing Conference October 30 at the WKU Expo Center in Bowling Green. For a history of KFGC Award recipients, see our website at:  
<http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage/KFGC%20Award%20Winners%20History.pdf>

## AFGC REPORT FROM PENNSYLVANIA

The recent AFGC meeting (June 24-26) in Pennsylvania was a tremendous success. Producers, Industry, Researchers, Extension Specialists, and Agents gathered to exchange ideas and tell what is working for them in their state. Kentucky was well represented with over 20 participants, 2nd in number only to the host state.

We are proud to announce that Todd Clark, producer in Fayette County, was selected 2nd best in the nation in the Forage Spokesperson contest. Congratulations Todd!!! Kentucky also had the most participants of any state in the Young Scientists Competition. Kudos to Linda McClanahan, Jesse Morrison, and Adam Probst for their hard work.

Garry Lacefield was recognized with the AFGC Presidential Citation.

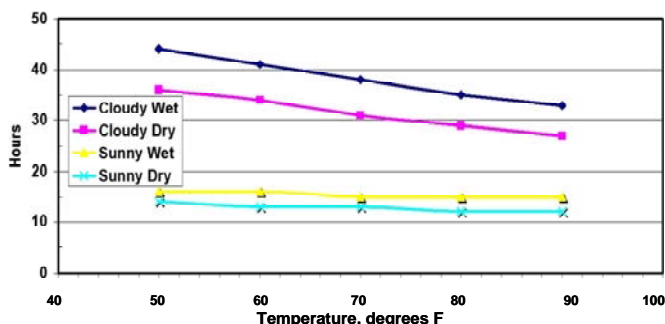
Kentucky continued to be well represented at the AFGC board meeting held during the conference with President Bill Talley, past-President Ken Johnson, secretary Ray Smith, and board members Phil Howell, and Russell Hackley.

We look forward to seeing everyone reading this newsletter at the next AFGC meeting January 26-31 where we will be meeting jointly with the Society of Range Management in Louisville, KY.

## TOP 14 INVASIVE SPECIES IN KENTUCKY

Bush honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*)  
Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*)  
Wintercreeper (*Euonymus fortunei*)  
Tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*)  
Multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*)  
Kudzu (*Peuraria lobata*)  
Musk-thistle (*Carduus nutans*)  
Poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*)  
Sudden oak death (*Pytophthora ramorum*)  
Hemlock wooly adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*)  
Johnsongrass (*Sorghum halepense*)  
Gypsy moth (*Lymantria dispar* L.)  
Fire ant (*Solenopsis invicta*)  
Emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*)  
(SOURCE: UK's Invasive Species Working Group IN The Magazine, Summer 2007)

## Hours to dry alfalfa from 80% to 20% moisture



Source: Rotz and Chien (1985)

## SWITCHGRASS INCENTIVES MAY BE IN FARM BILL

The House and Senate Ag Committees are considering adding incentives to the energy and conservations portions of the 2007 farm bill that have to do with cellulosic-based feedstocks for ethanol, says Sen. Saxby Chambliss (R-GA), as quoted in *Delta Farm Press*.

"There are a lot of ideas that are being thrown around on the table, and I have no idea at this point where we will wind up," he says. "But ... we want to give some incentives out there for that additional stream of income from a cellulosic-based ethanol and biofuels standpoint." Two bills recently introduced include the Farm-to-Fuel Investment Act and the Biofuels Innovation Program Act (BIP).

The Farm-to-Fuel Investment Act aims to reduce U.S. dependence on foreign oil by encouraging American farmers to produce cellulosic energy crops. Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Kent Conrad (D-ND) drafted the bill. It would provide transition assistance for farmers to grow dedicated energy crops like switchgrass in an area 50 miles around biorefineries that will produce fuels like cellulosic ethanol. To participate, farmers would have to agree to adopt conservation practices for soil and water quality and wildlife habitat. This legislation also allows for an additional incentive to farmers who produce native perennial energy crops, such as prairie grass mixtures, because of the conservation benefits those crops provide.

The Biofuels Innovation Program Act, unveiled by senators John Thune (R-SD) and Ben Nelson (D-NE), would also help farmers and ranchers transition to biofuels production. It allows for feasibility studies to evaluate the likelihood of building a future biorefinery; the local potential for production of biomass resources, such as switchgrass and fast-growing trees; the number of interested producers; and the economic impact a future biorefinery would have on the local community.

Once a BIP proposal is approved by USDA, participating producers could enroll eligible land in the BIP program. They would receive a cost share for planting energy-dedicated crops and a per-acre rental payment. Once the biorefinery is operational, the rental payment would end and the producer would receive a matching payment up to \$45/ton of biomass delivered to the biorefinery for up to two years. This legislation also authorizes matching payments on a per-ton basis to producers anywhere in the U.S. who sell crop byproducts and residues such as corn stover and straw to biofuels facilities for ethanol or other alternative energy production. These matching payments may be made for up to two years and are also capped at \$45/ton.

"If cellulosic ethanol is to achieve its potential," says Thune, "it is critical that Congress help this industry overcome initial market barriers." The legislation would spur the construction of biorefineries across the country and provide incentives to farmers in surrounding areas to grow energy-dedicated crops, he adds. (SOURCE: *e-Hay Weekly*, June 5, 2007)

## DOUBLE WHAMMY.....

Hay producers in Kentucky have been hit with 2 major setbacks during the early part of the 2007 hay making season.

First, there were the freezing temperatures that first week in April right before Easter. Temperatures dipped to the upper teens around the state on two separate nights freezing back new plant growth that had occurred during a record warm March. Frozen plant material losses of between ½ a ton and 1½ tons per acre seemed to be the norm. Several cool, cloudy, damp days followed the freeze holding back plant growth even more.

Once the growth did start to come back it did make a decent recovery (although alfalfa struggled to out compete the weevils). However, that's when mother nature decided to turn off the water and

that brings us to our second setback....extremely dry months of May and June.

It appears that yields on all first cutting hay crops this year are averaging about 50% of normal. That means that cattle farmers in Kentucky are going to have to be much better managers of their forage crops in order to get through the upcoming summer and the winter of '07-'08.

On the hay side, storing hay properly to reduce storage losses is a must. Having quality forage analysis performed on the hay will insure that ration balancing is accurate and once again help eliminate any waste. (SOURCE: Tom Keene, UK Hay Marketing Specialist)

## EASTERN GAMAGRASS MEETING & TOUR

Anderson County will host a meeting on August 1, 2007 devoted to Eastern Gamagrass. The morning program will be at the Anderson County Extension Office. Following lunch, participants will visit farms where Eastern Gamagrass is being grown. In order for our host to plan for food, please R.S.V.P. to 502-839-7271 or 502-839-6806 by July 23.

- 9:00-9:45 "Eastern Gamagrass Growth and Development" - Dr. Tim Springer, Research Agronomist, USDA – Agricultural Research Service Southern Plains Range Research Service, Woodward, Oklahoma
- 9:45-10:15 "Seeding and Establishment in Kentucky"- Ken Johnson, Monroe County District Conservationist, NRCS
- 10:15-10:45 "Grazing Management of Eastern Gamagrass in Oklahoma" - Dr. Phillip Sims, Rangeland Scientist and Research Leader USDA – Agricultural Research Service Southern Plains Range Research Service, Woodward, Oklahoma
- 10:45-11:15 "How I Made Eastern Gamagrass Work in My Grazing System" - Dave Burton, Farmer, Pulaski County
- 11:15-11:45 "Eastern Gamagrass in a Forage System with Tall Fescue and Variety Trial Data" - Dr. Glen Aiken, Research Animal Scientist, USDA – Agricultural Research Service Mid South Area Forage – Animal Production Research Unit
- 11:45-12:00 "Cost Share Options" - Ken Johnson, Monroe County District Conservationist, NRCS
- Lunch will be \$10/person served by Anderson County Cattlemen's Association.**

### Field Visits

- 1:00-1:15 "Newly Seeded Eastern Gamagrass Field with Field Corn" (Travel South 127 to first stop, Nevins Station Road, Dave Burge Farm)
- 1:15 – 2:30 Travel South 127 to Mercer County, ForeverLand Farm, 1471 Dry Branch Road, Travis Wheeler farm. (Travel 127S to W68. Turn right onto W68. Travel W68, turn left onto 1915. Watch for signs.)
- 2:30-3:30 "Hay production and Grazing"- Travis Wheeler, Mercer County Farmer (View 56 acres of Eastern Gamagrass established in 1997. This field is utilized for hay then grazing.)
- Use two UK vans to transport participants from Anderson County Extension Office to field stops and back to Anderson County Extension Office at conclusion of field stops.
- Again, please **R.S.V.P.** to Anderson County Extension Office at 502-839-7271 or 502-839-6806 **by July 23.**

## KFGC FIELD DAY

Monroe County rolled out the red carpet for the 2007 KFGC Field Day. In spite of very dry conditions statewide, over 150 farmers attended and participated in the field day. Ten different speakers from U.K., NRCS, KSU, and Kentucky Fish & Wildlife discussed a wide range of forage-related topics. Participants were treated to a delicious ribeye dinner with all of the trimmings prepared by the Monroe County Cattlemen's Association. Our thanks to our host Mr. John Hagan and to field day organizers, Mr. Kevin Lyons and Mr. Ken Johnson along with their committee and all the sponsors.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- JUL 26 UK All Commodity Field Day, UKREC, Princeton
- OCT 30 8<sup>th</sup> Kentucky Grazing Conference, WKU Expo Center, Bowling Green

### 2008

- JAN 7-8 Heart of America Grazing Conference, Columbia, MO
- JAN 26-FEB 1 SRM/AFGC Forage Conference, Louisville
- FEB 21 28<sup>th</sup> Kentucky Alfalfa Conference, Cave City

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