KFGC FORAGE FIELD DAY – SEPTEMBER 8
The Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council will hold their annual field day at the C. Oran Little Research Center (formerly U.K. Woodford County Animal Research Facility) in Woodford County in September. The program committee is hard at work and details will be forthcoming. Mark your calendars and plan to attend on September 8.

KENTUCKY TO HOST NATIONAL FORAGE MEETING
The American Forage & Grassland Annual Conference will be held January 9-11, 2012 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Louisville, Kentucky. Mark your calendars and hold the dates. More details will be available soon.

DR. DOUGHERTY RETIRES
Dr. Chuck Dougherty, Professor of Plant and Soil Sciences with teaching-research emphasis in Grazing Management and Utilization retired at the end of June following thirty-three years at U.K. Dr. Dougherty has maintained a busy teaching schedule and hundreds of students complete the class over his long tenure. A native of New Zealand, he brought a new through process to Grazing Management and Utilization. We wish Chuck the very best as he embarks on this new, exciting phase of his life.

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

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For more information, contact Christi Forsythe, Secretary.
ARKANSAS 300-DAY GRAZING PROGRAM - WHOLE FARM PROJECTS

Abstract - Increased cost of feed, fuel, and fertilizer make it difficult for livestock producers to stay in business. In Arkansas, like many states, livestock producers rely heavily on hay and stored feed during winter and struggle during summer drought to provide enough forage for their herds. In 2008, University of Arkansas Animal Science Extension specialists along with a county agent advisory committee developed the 300 Day Grazing Program to show producers how to extend the grazing season with improved grazing and forage management practices. Farms in Lawrence, Van Buren, and Randolph counties were selected to serve as “whole farm” demonstrations to include as many forage management practices as possible during the grazing season of 300 days or more. A primary emphasis was to improve management of the existing forages on each farm and add complementary forages only when necessary. Each farm had spring-calving herds and backgrounded calves with stocking rates ranging from 1.1 to 2.1 acres per AU (animal unit). A fourth whole farm demonstration was set up on the University of Arkansas Livestock and Forestry Branch Station near Batesville where Animal Science Extension specialists implemented the same practices in a controlled setting. That system was a fall-calving herd with a stocking rate of 2.7 acres/AU. Record keeping notebooks with recommendations for each demonstration were provided to both the producer and county agent. An animal science program associate worked closely with county agents to improve success of each demonstration. For 2009, the Lawrence, Van Buren, and Randolph county farms achieved grazing seasons of 335, 312, and 310 days, respectively, which were 80-100 days more than typical farms across the state. Over three years at the Livestock and Forestry Branch Station, grazing seasons were 347, 311, and 330 days. (SOURCE: K. J. Simon, J. A. Jennings, T. R. Troxel, B. L. Barham, M. S. Gadberry, and S. M. Jones, Univ. of Arkansas IN Proceedings AFGC Annual Conference June 12-15, 2011, French Lick, IN)

BEF COW REPRODUCTIVE PERFORMANCE IS NEGATIVELY IMPACTED BY THE GRAZING OF TOXIC TALL FESCUE

Abstract - The impact of toxic tall fescue (F) on beef cattle reproductive performance has been sporadically addressed, and few studies examine the effect that exposure timing has on conception rates. In addition, the literature is unclear as to whether F impacts gamete development or affects reproductive performance post-ovulation. The objective of this study was to determine if grazing negatively impacts reproduction pre- or post-ovulation. To determine if F altered reproduction during gamete development or by altering uterine environment, cattle were exposed to F prior to or immediately following insemination. Two and 3 yr old beef cows (99 hd total) were blocked by breed, body condition score (BCS) and age; and allotted to groups (n = 50) grazing F (>92% wild-type infected) or alternate forages (O; common bermudagrass and annual ryegrass) for 210 d prior to timed insemination. All cows were subjected to estrous synchronization and artificial insemination (AI) occurred 210 d after the animals were on study. Eight days prior to timed insemination, all animals received CIDRs and maintained for 5 d. The CIDRs were removed, followed by 2 injections of PGF2α 8 h apart, and AI was performed 72 ± 2 h post-CIDR removal. Immediately following insemination, 25 cows from each group were switched to the alternate grazing treatment for the remainder of the trial (130 d), consisting of a 2 x 2 factorial arrangement of the following treatment combinations: fescue-fescue, fescue-other, other-fescue, and other-other. Following timed AI, cows were visually checked for estrus behavior from d0 to d10 after which bulls were placed with cows for 60 d. Blood was collected on d-18 and d-8 for P4 analysis to assess cyclicity. Blood was also collected on d-18 and d10 for prolactin (PRL) concentrations. Pregnancy was determined using trans-rectal ultrasonography at d130 and verified with calving records. Fescue treatment was effective at inducing toxicosis as cattle grazing tall fescue on d-18 had lower serum PRL levels than cattle grazing O. There was a forage type interaction for serum PRL on d10. Prolactin concentrations of FF and OF did not differ and were lower than both OO and FO groups. Prolactin level of FO was higher than OO at d10. Grazing F post-AI lowered final pregnancy rates compared to O treatment. (SOURCE: M. G. Burns, J. G. Andrae, S. L. Pratt, W. C. Bridges, and F.N. Schrick, Univ. of Tennessee IN Proceedings AFGC Annual Conference June 12-15, 2011, French Lick, IN)

PRODUCER ATTITUDES TOWARD RENOVATING TOXIC FESCUE WITH NOVEL ENDOPHYTE FESCUE

Abstract - Tall fescue is the most widespread perennial cool season grass in Arkansas. Fescue toxicosis is a widespread problem with livestock production, but producers are reluctant to convert toxic fescue in many areas. Recent research has shown the benefit of using limited acreage of novel endophyte fescue at key periods of the cattle production cycle to reduce impact of fescue toxicity. A survey was conducted to determine producers’ knowledge about managing fescue toxicity and to determine their interest in converting toxic fescue pastures as forage into a novel endophyte fescue. The survey was taken by 456 producers by three methods including mail-in, online, or audience response at producer conferences. Most respondents were cow/calf producers (65%) and most considered themselves as part-time producers with off-farm income (74%). Fescue was more commonly used grazing than for hay. About 64% of respondents used rotational grazing, but rotation frequency ranged from daily to 2 weeks or more. About 45% utilized a grazing alternative forages and adding legumes to pastures were the most common methods for reducing fescue toxicosis. Approximately 65% of respondents indicated they would be interested in planting a novel-endophyte fescue based on information they received through Extension educational programs, but most did not have a definite timeframe for adding it to their forage system. Less than 5% of respondents indicated that they had already planted novel-endophyte fescue. The most common drawback to planting novel-endophyte fescue was the perception that it would not provide enough benefit to farm profitability. About half of respondents were using stockpiled forages being nearly evenly split between stockpiled bermudagrass and stockpiled fescue. In the past five years, forage management practices with the highest adoption rate were grazing stockpiled forages, planting legumes, and rotational grazing. (SOURCE: K. J. Simon, J. A. Jennings, K. P. Coffey, B. L. Barham, R. Poling, J. Gunsaulus, and D. Henderson, Univ. of Arkansas IN Proceedings AFGC Annual Conference June 12-15, 2011, French Lick, IN)

UPCOMING EVENTS

JUL 21 UK All Commodity Field Day, Princeton
AUG 15-16 Kentucky Grazing School, Woodford County
OCT 13 Kentucky Grazing Conference, Western Kentucky University Expo Center
2012 JAN 9-11 American Forage & Grassland Council Annual Conference, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Louisville
FEB 23 32nd Kentucky Alfalfa Conference, Cave City Convention Center, Cave City

Garry D. Lacefield
Extension Forage Specialist
July 2011