KFGC President’s Corner

The Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council Board of Directors met at Rough River Dam State Resort Park January 20 and 21 to discuss plans for 2000 and beyond. The next educational event coming up is the Alfalfa Conference in Cave City on February 24th. The Grazing Schools this spring are scheduled for April 25, 26 and 27 in Springfield at the Washington County Extension Service Office. You can register for one, two or all three days for $20 per day by contacting Jimmy Henning. Our annual field day will be at the Eden Shale Farm near Owenton the week of June 5-9. The exact time and date have not been set. The Annual Forage Conference will be moved back to a winter setting and will be planned for January, February or early March of 2001.

The Research Committee is working on a list of forage research needs for Kentucky. They will meet again in Lexington on February 1. Anyone who has a suggestion for research in forages can send it to me and I will be sure the committee gets it. In fact, anytime you have suggestions to improve KFGC, feel free to send them in. (Monroe Rasnake)

Nitrogen on Pastures

Kentucky pastures can sometimes benefit from added nitrogen. Ideally, we’d like to have a good stand of clovers to provide the nitrogen our pastures need, but there are times when we don’t. It is often weather related; like the dry summer and fall of 1999, or a dry spring. When this happens, a good shot of nitrogen fertilizer can boost yields and improve the grass stand.

Suppose right now (February) you have a field that has a good grass stand, but very little clover. If you don’t want to renovate with clover this spring, topdressing with up to 100 pounds per acre of nitrogen about mid-February may allow you to start grazing earlier and boost carrying capacity through spring. Urea can be used at this time with little risk of nitrogen loss. Nitrogen can be applied again in early May; however, there is a risk of stimulating summer weeds. Another good time to use nitrogen fertilizer is in early August for stockpiling grass for use in late fall or early winter. There is a risk of significant loss of nitrogen through volatilization if urea is used in early May or August. Rates can be adjusted upward about 20% to compensate for possible nitrogen loss. (Monroe Rasnake)

UK College of Agriculture Wants Your Comments

The University of Kentucky College of Agriculture is undergoing a periodic review, and invites you to be a part of the process. By giving your comments, you can help the college gauge how well it is meeting your needs and what it must do to continue to accomplish the service, research and teaching missions of land-grant universities.

The periodic reviews include all UK colleges and departments over time. In its last review in 1994, the College of Agriculture used a survey to collect information. The college will use a similar survey for this year’s review. The survey will have many of the same questions used in the 1994 review. This process will enable the college to compare how well it has responded to your needs between 1994 and 2000. The new survey also will have some new questions to provide additional information for the review process.

In addition to the surveys, three public meetings will take place in February. These forums will give people the opportunity to share personal experiences on how the College of Agriculture is serving them. Meetings will be February 22 beginning at 10 a.m. at the Robinson Experiment Station in Quicksand; February 28 starting at 1 p.m. at the Research and Education Center in Princeton; and February 29 beginning at 1 p.m. in Seay Auditorium at the Agricultural Sciences Building North on the university campus in Lexington.

The survey is available electronically on the College of
Agriculture Web site at http://www.ca.uky.edu

Results of surveys and meetings will be used by university administrators to determine how the college responds to special initiatives and current concerns in Kentucky. The review also will be used to rate the college’s accomplishments in setting priorities, capitalizing on its strengths, contributing to intellectual and cultural diversity, and helping meet the university’s missions and goals.

**BERMUDAGRASS ESTABLISHMENT: WHAT DOES IT COST?**

Recent questions about bermudagrass varieties have increased after the drought of 1999. The following table is intended to compare the cost of establishing two bermudagrass varieties (see comments in table). Other adapted bermuda varieties include Hardee, Tifton 44, and Midland. A valid question is whether sprigging Quickstand bermudagrass at a higher rate is better than having World Feeder custom planted. Quickstand has been studied in Kentucky for over 20 years. It has excellent winter survivability and is a medium hay producer compared to other forage varieties. Experience with World Feeder in Kentucky is limited and its winter hardiness and yield potential are uncertain.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>World Feeder1 vs. Quickstand2 Bermuda Establishment Comparison</th>
<th>World Feeder</th>
<th>Quickstand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site Preparation</td>
<td>plow/disk</td>
<td>plow/disk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sprigs</td>
<td>$400/ac (20 bu/ac rate)</td>
<td>$60/ac (20 bu/ac rate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sprig Planting (custom)</td>
<td>$40/ac</td>
<td>$4.24/ac</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shipping (No shipping charge for custom sprigging)</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>$180 (or $0.14/bu for &gt;4,000 bu load delivered)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cost (20 bu/ac)</td>
<td>$440/ac</td>
<td>$244.25/ac at 20 bu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Cost estimate from personal communication with Jack Hobbs, Campbellsville, KY.
2Cost estimate from Charles Williams and Associates, Fayetteville, TN.
3Equipment cost estimates from “Kentucky Custom Rates for Farm Machinery”, UK publication AEC-81.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

FEB 22 College Review-Public Forum, Robinson Experiment Station, Quicksand
FEB 24 20th Kentucky Alfalfa Conference, Cave City
FEB 28 College Review-Public Forum, Research & Education Center, Princeton
FEB 29 College Review-Public Forum, Seay Auditorium, UK Campus, Lexington
APR 25-27 Kentucky Grazing School, Springfield
JUL 16-19 AFGC, Madison, WI
JUL 20 U.K. All Commodity Field Day, Princeton

Garry D. Lacefield Jimmy C. Henning
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Extension Forage Specialists
February 2000