



FORAGE NEWS

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

December 2014

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

KENTUCKIANS AT AFGC



The American Forage & Grassland national conference will be held in St. Louis, Missouri January 11-14. Many from Kentucky will attend and are involved in the program. Our own Dr. Ray Smith is President, the Executive Director, Mrs. Tina Bowling is from Berea, we also have board and committee members from the Commonwealth. In addition, several from Kentucky will speak or present posters. We will have contestants in the Forage Spokesman, Young Scientist, Forage Bowl and Photo Contest. It's not too late for you to participate. If interested in attending, contact AFGC at: 800-944-2342, info@afgc.org or on the web at www.afgc.org.

FORAGES AT KCA



The KCA Annual Convention will be in Owensboro January 16-17 at the new Convention Center. This will be our 20th Anniversary Forages at KCA and we are featuring FARMERS. You won't want to miss this program beginning at 2:00 on Saturday January 17.

Theme - Forage Improvement Practices that WORK

2:00 Welcome, Introduction & Overview - Garry Lacefield
My Top 5 Forage Improvements/Practices
2:15 Commercial Hay - Clayton Gerald
2:30 Dairy - Bill Payne
2:45 Goats and Sheep - Jason Tower
3:00 Cow-Calf - Chris Pantle
3:15 Stocker - Russell Hackley
3:30 Top TEN Forage Improvements: The BIG Picture - Garry Lacefield
3:45 Panel Discussion
4:30 Adjourn

SELECT FORAGE VARIETIES WISELY



Selecting the best grass and legume varieties for new plantings is a critical agronomic and economic decision. Kentucky farmers are fortunate to have many varieties of most all species to select from. I admit it is a challenge as we think of all the advertisements, radio and T.V. spots and trade shows that have a lot of information on forage varieties. In Kentucky, unlike most other states, we have our excellent forage variety testing program under the direction of Mr. Gene Olsen. Gene seeds, manages, harvests and analyzes the data each year and makes it available through all avenues of our U.K. Extension Service. Many of you will be making decisions on which red clover, alfalfa, ladino clover and grass to purchase for late winter – early spring seedings over the next few weeks. Let me encourage you to study our Forage Variety Test results. Stop by your County Extension Office or visit our Forage Website <http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage/ForageVarietyTrials2.htm> for the latest variety reports.

HOW GOOD IS YOUR HAY?



I asked this question a couple months ago but the cold weather today and knowing hay feeding is at hand, I want to ask again. Experienced cattlemen can tell a lot about their hay by looking, smelling, feeling, etc. but even the most experienced cannot do what modern technology can do through scientific testing. To get a trained technician from the Kentucky Department of Agriculture Hay & Haylage Testing program to visit your farm and take a sample of your hay, call toll free 1-800-248-4628.

35TH KENTUCKY ALFALFA CONFERENCE



Our 35th Anniversary Kentucky Alfalfa Conference will be at the Cave City Convention Center February 26, 2015. We have an outstanding program planned that will feature leading alfalfa enthusiasts from the producer, university and industry sectors. We have two keynote speakers, one from Auburn, Alabama and one from Tangent, Oregon. In addition we will conclude with a Blue Ribbon Producer Panel discussing "What Hay Quality Means to Me". At lunch we will give our 2014 Alfalfa & Alfalfa-Grass Awards and our Alfalfa Awards.

For details on the program, see our website <http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage/35th%20Kentucky%20Alfalfa%20Conference%20program%20in%20columns.pdf>

Do not hesitate to contact Christi 270-365-7541, Ext. 221 or me 270-365-7541, Ext. 202 if you have any questions.

Vegetative Identification of Small Grains

Identification of the vegetative growth of small grains can be difficult, but the leaf collar of most varieties of a given species exhibits unique characteristics. Triticales tend to be more variable than the other small grains.



Barley
Barley has large auricles which tend to clasp or overlap.



Wheat
Wheat has small or medium-sized auricles which are hairy. The leaf sheath is not hairy.



Rye
Rye has small or medium-sized auricles which are not hairy. Leaf sheaths usually are hairy. Leaf color is more blue-green and leaves are less erect than other small grains. Rye seedlings sometimes are red tinted if stressed.



Oats
Oats have no auricles. Leaves of most varieties are wider than those of other small grains.

(SOURCE: *Southern Forages, Chapter 6, Cool Season Grasses.*)



2014 UK ROBINSON CENTER MOUNTAIN AG WEEK A SUCCESS

The UK Robinson Center for Appalachian Resource Sustainability (RCARS), located in historic Quicksand, Kentucky in Breathitt County reported a crowd of approximately 3,000 participants during its biennial "Mountain Ag Week" event September 23-27, 2014.

The week started with two days of hands-on education for pre-school through first grade students designed to teach them where their food comes from. Each activity had a pumpkin theme and every child had the opportunity to pick their own pumpkin in the pumpkin patch at the end of the day. The next day focused on natural resource and environmental sciences education for elementary and high school students. Elementary school students participated in environmental education at the RCARS center in Jackson, while the high school students spent the day at the UK Robinson Forest engaged in learning about our Appalachian forest and wildlife resources.

The week's capstone event was the Ag Field Day held at the RCARS center. This year's theme was "Appalachian Proud" which focused on the unique social and agricultural culture of the region along with promising economic opportunities shared in the form of local crafts, mountain cuisine and educational farm tours. Participants had the opportunity to visit with UK Extension Specialists, County Extension Agents, faculty and staff from Kentucky State University, Berea College and Eastern Kentucky University to learn more about the latest research in the areas of livestock forages, sweet sorghum production, horticulture crops, high tunnel production, forest hydrology, beekeeping and farm pond management.

Plans are being made for the next Mountain Ag Week, to be held in the fall of 2016. Until then folks are encouraged to attend each monthly Robinson Center "Mountain Monday" program and the many other educational activities scheduled at the Robinson Center throughout the year. For more information about upcoming programs, please check out the RCARS website at <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/rcars/> or follow them on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/ukrobinsoncenter>. Cooperative Extension Service - <http://extension.ca.uky.edu/> CAFÉ - <http://www.ca.uky.edu/> (SOURCE: David Ditsch, Director, RCARS)



TRANSGENIC REDUCED-LIGNIN ALFALFA GAINS DEREGULATION FGI BRAND MOVES CLOSER TOWARD COMMERCIAL SALE

A genetically modified low- or reduced-lignin alfalfa has been given the go-ahead toward commercial sale by USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS).

Monsanto Company and Forage Genetics International (FGI) this week gained USDA deregulation status of its recently branded [HarvXtra](#) alfalfa, which contains 12-18% less lignin than that in conventional alfalfa, company tests show. Its seed could be commercially available in 2016 pending regulatory approvals in key export markets, according to *Hay & Forage Grower's* November issue story, "[Low-Lignin Alfalfas Move Toward The Market.](#)"

Low-lignin alfalfas are supposed to be more digestible than traditional varieties and could allow growers a wider harvest window to get quality and quantity, experts point out. Lignin is the cell-wall component that helps hold plants upright but also can keep valuable nutrients from being utilized by livestock.

APHIS conducted an environmental assessment of the alfalfa compliant with National Environmental Policy Act requirements. Its findings "indicate that there will not be a significant impact, individually or cumulatively, on the quality of the human environment as a result of this proposed action," and that an environmental impact statement (EIS) was not necessary.

Low-lignin alfalfa's journey to deregulation was less bumpy than that of the first biotech alfalfa – Roundup Ready alfalfa. That alfalfa's legalization was slowed by a court battle determining that

the crop move back into regulation until an EIS was completed and the legume determined safe (see "[Roundup Ready Alfalfa Returns To Center Stage](#)").

FGI has developed the first genetically modified low-lignin alfalfa using gene suppression technology; when commercially available, it will be sold as a stacked trait with Genuity Roundup Ready alfalfa. In October, Alforex Seeds announced two conventionally bred low-lignin varieties – [Hi-Gest 360](#) and [Hi-Gest 660](#). Its varieties produce 7-10% less lignin than the 6-8% of lignin that conventional alfalfas contain.

The deregulation ruling was based on data submitted by Monsanto and FGI, an analysis of available scientific data and "comments received from the public in response to our previous notices announcing the availability of the petition for non-regulated status and its associated environmental assessment and plant pest risk assessment," the environmental assessment states. (SOURCE: *eHay Weekly*, Nov 11, 2014)

THANKSGIVING REFLECTIONS

*"IF YOU HAVE FOOD IN YOUR FRIDGE,
CLOTHES ON YOUR BACK, A ROOF OVER
YOUR HEAD AND A PLACE TO SLEEP YOU ARE
RICHER THAN 75% OF THE WORLD.*

*IF YOU HAVE MONEY IN THE BANK, YOUR
WALLET, AND SOME SPARE CHANGE YOU
ARE AMONG THE TOP 8% OF THE WORLD'S
WEALTHY.*

*IF YOU WOKE UP THIS MORNING WITH MORE
HEALTH THAN ILLNESS YOU ARE MORE
BLESSED THAN THE MILLION PEOPLE WHO
WILL NOT SURVIVE THIS WEEK.*

*IF YOU HAVE NEVER EXPERIENCED THE
DANGER OF BATTLE, THE AGONY OF
IMPRISONMENT OR TORTURE, OR THE
HORRIBLE PANGS OF STARVATION YOU ARE
LUCKIER THAN 500 MILLION PEOPLE ALIVE
AND SUFFERING.*

*IF YOU CAN READ THIS MESSAGE YOU ARE
MORE FORTUNATE THAN 3 BILLION PEOPLE
IN THE WORLD WHO CANNOT READ IT AT
ALL."*

(Source: <http://iheartinspiration.com>)

UPCOMING EVENTS

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| JAN 11-13 | American Forage & Grassland Council Conference, St. Louis, MO |
| JAN 16-17 | 20 th Forages at KCA, KCA Convention, Owensboro |
| FEB 26 | 35 th "Anniversary" Kentucky Alfalfa Conference, Cave City Convention Center, Cave City, KY |



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