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

KFGC FIELD DAY

Breckinridge County will host the 2014 Kentucky Forage & Grassland Council Field Day on July 17. Carol Hinton, Calvin Bohannon and their committee are working on the details for the event. More details and program information will be available later. Mark your calendars and plan to attend the KFGC Field Day July 17 in Breckinridge County.

KFGC AWARD NOMINATIONS

The Awards Committee of the Kentucky Forage & Grassland Council are now accepting nominations for the 2014 Forage Awards. The Awards will be presented at the Kentucky Grazing Conference on October 23 at the WKU Expo Center in Bowling Green. Annual Awards are given in four categories: Public (County), Public (State), Industry and Producer. To nominate a deserving individual, send a one-page nomination to Garry Lacefield, KFGC Awards Chairman, UK Research & Education Center, P.O. Box 469, Princeton, KY 42445 or e-mail at glacefield@uky.edu. For a list of previous award winners see our website http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage/ProceedingsPage.htm.

BEEF BASH – HOLD THE DATE

The University of Kentucky and the Kentucky Cattlemen’s Association will host Beef Bash 2014 on September 25 at the Research and Education Center in Princeton.

This is the fourth Beef Bash with the others being held in 2008, 2010, and 2012 and over 400 people attending each time. There will also be about 30 commercial exhibitors in attendance.

The program which is being planned will include the latest information on beef cattle and forages along with hands-on activities and exhibits. A noon program will include keynote speakers.

Please mark this date on your calendar and join us and other Kentucky cattlemen for a day out with the cows. (Roy Burris)

U.K. FORAGE WORKERS TOUR

Each year for the past 35 years the U.K. forage workers have toured forage-livestock farms throughout Kentucky rotating from West to East. This year’s tour began in Bowling Green May 14 with stops at the WKU farm and on to the U.K. Research & Education Center in Princeton. From there participants toured the grasses and legumes at the Elk & Bison Prairie in the Land Between the Lakes. The tour concluded on May 15 at Russell Hackley’s farm in Grayson County. In spite of rain and cool temperatures, the group enjoyed seeing different operations with many forage species used for horses, cattle, elk and bison as well as research and demonstration plots at both WKU and UK. Photo highlights of the tour will be available on our website at www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage soon.

KENTUCKY GRAZING SCHOOL

The Kentucky Grazing School was held in Woodford County May 21-22. Forty-five students participated in the two-day school which offered both classroom and field activities including fence and water installation on grazing paddocks. The next Grazing School will be in the fall. Dates and location will be forthcoming.

IMPACT OF FORAGE SPECIES (QUALITY) ON STOCKER AVERAGE DAILY GAINS.

(SOURCE: Auburn University, Alabama, www.aces.edu)

SOUTHERN FORAGES: AN INFORMATION TRANSFER “SUCCESS STORY”

Knowledge of forage-livestock production concepts and a way to locate practical forage information are needed by producers of grazing animals. Discussions that began in 1985 concerning the need for a comprehensive, practically oriented forage reference book led the authors to write the book Southern Forage, which was eventually published in 1991 by the Potash and Phosphate Institute (now the International Plant Nutrition Institute). The book provides information about establishment, management, and utilization of forage species commonly grown in the Southeast as well as animal related aspects of forage-livestock production. A comprehensive appendix and a thorough index were added to facilitate location of information on specific topics. The response to the book was gratifying, leading to the publication of second, third, and fourth editions of the book in 1996, 2002, and 2007, respectively. Subsequently developed items based on the book have included a publication titled Forage Crop Pocket Guide (of which over 95,000 copies have been printed), posters on Forage Grasses and Forage Legumes that describe and contain color pictures of various species discussed in the Southern Forages book, and a summary of concepts from the book (Keys to Forage Profitability) published in a document form and also used in a DVD. Seminars based on principles in the book have been presented in numerous states within the USA and in several other countries. The popularity and wide use of this book and related materials suggest that the forage-livestock principles covered in Southern Forages have no geographic boundaries. It also provides evidence that meeting a major educational need may have more dramatic results than initially expected. (SOURCE: Garry Lacefield, Don Ball, Carl Hoveland and Christi Forsythe IN Proceedings 68th Southern Pastures and Forage Crop Improvement Conference, Biloxi, MS, April 2014)
Understanding the economic implications of forage production is critical to evaluating forage options and formulating management recommendations for producers. During 2009 – 2013, a team of researchers at the University of Tennessee (UT) conducted several studies evaluating native grass forages by themselves and as a component of integrated forage-biomass systems. Using standard UT production budgets and the results of these studies, we performed economic evaluations of the various forages tested. The first of these studies, an evaluation of two native forages with and without legumes that would persist over a ten-year period, met or exceeded actual costs for 37.4% of producers; professionals tended to overestimate this willingness to spend. Using willingness to “move cattle among your pastures 2 – 3 times per month” as a surrogate for willingness to incur greater management intensity to achieve specific outcomes, producers indicated (on a 5-point scale) that a three-fold increase in summer gains (3.90), a two-fold increase in summer gains (3.81), qualifying for a 50% cost-share (3.78), improved drought tolerance (3.44), and eliminating summer hay feeding (3.43) would motivate their adoption of NWSG. Professionals’ considered issues related to establishment to be the most important barrier to adoption of NWSG and that reduced fertilizer costs and improved gain and production were most likely to motivate adoption by producers. These results suggest that few producers currently use NWSG forages, most are not familiar with them, and their potential is somewhat underestimated among those who report being familiar with NWSG. They also suggest that based on interest in improving summer forage, willingness to spend to establish summer forages, and willingness to increase management intensity, there is a prospective role for NWSG on many Tennessee beef farms. Professionals have a sound foundation for improving producer knowledge regarding native forages. (SOURCE: P. Keyser, S. Schexnayder, A. Wilcox, G. Bates, and J. Waller IN Proceedings 68th Southern Pastures and Forage Crop Improvement Conference, April 2014)