

Of Cows & Plows



March 2008

BACKYARD POULTRY 101

Rescheduled

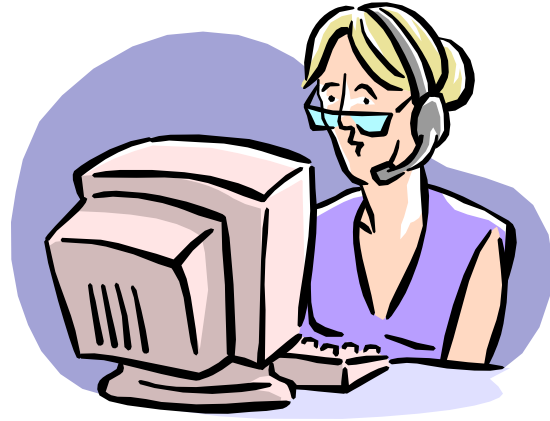
due to the ice storm

Tuesday, March 25th 7:00-9:00 p.m.

This two-hour course will provide a wealth of information for you to begin your own home flock of laying hens or broilers. If you have contemplated starting a small poultry flock but have put it off because you did not know how to begin, or know a little about chickens but want to learn more, then this is the class for you. Learn what types of breeds to select for eggs or meat, learn how to grade and sort eggs for quality and safe consumption, and explore different types of production facilities, water and feed alternatives, and housing options.

The class will look at different breed qualities, judge used hens for future production, and compare farm eggs to store bought eggs. Other topics to be discussed include pasture poultry, free-range chickens, and cage free eggs offered in the supermarket. We will explore some common urban legends such as why some think a brown egg taste better than a white egg, why some think home grown eggs are better than store bought eggs, why the yolk is yellow, what it means to “candle” an egg and, do you really need a rooster. We will also briefly talk about hatching your own chicks at home and butchering broilers.

Learn the ins and outs of successful egg production year round in Kentucky. This informative hands-on seminar will be presented by a local farmer who has raised poultry for show, competition, and hobby for over 30 years.



Welcome Wanda!

Wanda Ellis has recently joined the office as Staff Assistant. Please be sure to stop by and introduce yourself to her!



Ben Lyle, Forester and Luke Saunier, Forest Ranger Technician with Division of Forestry visit with Joe Roe at his Switzer farm after the tornado to discuss options with his downed & damaged trees.

Metal Recycling

In conjunction with Commonwealth Cleanup Week, the Franklin County Conservation District is once again holding their Scrap Metal and Appliance Recycling Drive. This has proven to be very popular and productive (almost 2,000 tons to date!).

Starting the 22th and running through the following Saturday the 29th, you are encouraged to drop off metal items and appliances for reprocessing. Old fencing, sheet metal, farm equipment, etc can be disposed of by hauling it to Lakeview Park during daylight hours. From US 460 (Georgetown Road), turn off onto Steadmantown Lane and then take the park entrance, which will be the first one on your left. The Conservation District has arranged for a licensed freon removal service, so they can accept old metal appliances at this location. They still will not be able to accept tires, batteries, paint, etc though. For more details, contact them directly at 695-5203 x 3. Conservation District members will be on site daily.

On Saturday the 29th, county dump trucks will be located at the local fire stations. They will be accepting household trash destined for the landfill and metal for recycling until 3:00.

Remember that any profits from metal recycling that the FCCD receives go back into their programs, especially their scholarships!

DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Any person who believes they have been discriminated against in any Cooperative Extension sponsored program or activity may file a complaint with the Secretary of Agriculture by writing to:

USDA, Director
Office of Civil Rights
Room 326-W, Whitten Bldg.
14th & Independence Ave SW
Washington, DC 20250-9410

A complaint must be filed no later than 180 days from the date of the alleged discrimination.

Forage Crop Planting Guide (AGR-18)

Crop	lbs/a*	depth	Seeding date
Alfalfa	12-20	¼-1/2"	3/1-4-15
Bluegrass	10	¼-1/2"	2/1-4/1
Alsike Clover	4-6	¼"	2/1-4/1
Red	8-12	¼"	2/1-4/1
Ladino	1-3	¼"	2/1-4/15
Fescue	10-15	¼-1/2"	2/1-4/15
Orchardgrass	10-15	¼-1/2"	2/1-4/15

*When seeding in mixtures, reduce each by 1/3-2/3

Tire Amnesty

Take advantage of the spring clean up to start collecting your old tires. According to the State Department of Environmental Protection, we will have another tire drop off in Franklin County this Fall. Stay tuned for more details as they unfold.



Nutrients Removed by Hay Crop

---- Approximate lbs per Acre Removed ----

Crop	Yield/A (T)	N	P2O5	K2O
Alfalfa	5	255	68	245

Red Clover & Orchardgrass	4	136	47	204
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Tall Fescue, Orchardgrass & Timothy	3	87	29	144
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SOURCE: K.L. Wells and W.O. Thom, 1994. Estimated nutrient and uptake by Kentucky's Crops. Soil Science News and Views Vol. 15, No. 4. (AGR-62)

UK Beef IRM Committee to Conduct Cow College Again This Year

*Dr. Les Anderson, Beef Extension Specialist,
University of Kentucky*

The UK Beef IRM Committee is offering Cow College again this year. Cow College is a 10 day educational program that covers all aspects of beef production and management. Cow College begins with a 2-day training session in Lexington on Beef Cattle Economics and Marketing. In this session, participants are not only taught advanced livestock marketing and economics subject matter but they are also taught how to use beef record keeping systems, how to make production decisions using partial budgets, and how to use the market system to their advantage. Students are lead through case studies to help demonstrate how to use the class room material on their operation. The second 2-day session is held in Lexington on beef cattle nutrition. Students are taught the principles of beef cattle nutrition and are exposed to “next level” information. Participants bring in their hay analysis and are taught how to balance rations using the UK Ration Balancer Program. The third session is held in Princeton and provides 2 full days of instruction on herd health and beef cattle facilities. Students are taught the principles of immunity, and how to build and administer a herd health program. Hands-on sessions include how-to instruction in castration, implants, BQA certification, and dehorning. Reproduction and Genetics are the subjects in the fourth 2-day session. Participants are not only taught the principles of these subjects but how to implement breeding systems. Hands-on sessions include breeding stock selection, pregnancy palpation, pelvic area measurements, artificial insemination, and breeding soundness examinations. The final session includes two full days of instruction on the end product. Participants are taught how to grade carcasses and how to break down a carcass into individual cuts of meat. Management factors that impact meat quality are also discussed. Students participate in a taste panel to determine if their palate can determine the difference between high quality and lower quality cuts. Past students have rated Cow College a 9.2 out of 10.

Cow College is the most in-depth instruction in beef production and management available in the United States. For more information, please contact Mr. Land Dale or Mr. Jay Busby at 859-278-0899.

Kentucky Beef Cattle Market Update

*Kenny Burdine, Livestock Marketing Specialist,
University of Kentucky*

January saw weaker cattle prices than December, largely due to the increase in grain prices mid-month. The major market mover was an increase in projected feed and residual corn use that left projected corn ending stocks more than 350 million bushels below the December estimate. Prices of corn and soybeans rose rapidly, pushing feeder cattle prices down during the week following the report. Towards the end of January, cattle prices had rallied back to early January levels.

With the 2007 crop estimates final, the grain markets will largely focus on usage and planting prospects for direction. Feeder cattle prices will remain on edge as we move into planting season. Outside of grain impacts, spring prices should be aided by grazing demand and stronger 4th quarter live cattle futures.

USDA also released their inventory estimates for January 1, 2008. As expected, the cattle cycle is stalled, largely due to weather challenges over the last couple of years. Total cattle and calf inventory was down slightly and beef cow numbers were down 1%. The table below reports US beef inventory estimates from USDA that were just released.

Here at home, Kentucky will start 2008 with 4% fewer beef cows in production according to USDA. Total cattle and calf numbers were down by less than beef cow numbers in the state. Given the impacts of rising feed, fuel, and fertilizer prices, profitability will really come under pressure. It's not clear how rising input prices will affect beef producers decisions about re-building numbers if weather does permit this year.

ROUNDUP READY ALFALFA UPDATE

From February Forage News by Garry D. Lacefield and S. Ray Smith, UK Extension Forage Specialists

The USDA just recently published an "Administrative Order" that more easily outlines farmer's responsibilities when producing Roundup Ready Alfalfa. Below are some of the topics addressed in the Order.

Equipment Cleaning Procedures.

- Option 1. Dedicated Equipment
 - Option 2. Cleaning Equipment.
- A. Forage Harvesting and Processing.
 - B. Seed Harvesting Equipment.
 - C. Transportation.

Identification of Roundup Ready Alfalfa Hay and Seed.

- A. Commingling of Hay – For use on farms on which the hay is produced and/or for use by end-users.
- B. Commingling of Hay – Commingling of Roundup Ready alfalfa hay with non-Roundup Ready alfalfa hay by businesses that sell or resell the product.
- C. Segregation and identification of hay and seed by all persons and businesses that sell or re-sell Roundup Ready alfalfa.
- D. Seed.

The entire Administrative Order can be found on our Forage Web site at www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage. If you have grown Roundup Ready Alfalfa in the past or may consider growing it once the product is reintroduced to the marketplace, it would be advantageous to read the entire Order.

(SOURCE: Tom Keene, UK Extension Hay Marketing Specialist)

Need A Vet?

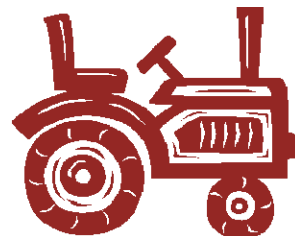
Shelby Vet Clinic has been recommended for those needing assistance with large animals.

Contact Dr. Lipps at 502 633-3231 for assistance.

CAN YOU ESTABLISH CLOVER AND SUPPRESS WINTER ANNUAL WEEDS?

We have been asked by agents and producers from across the state what they should do about the profusion of weeds growing in pastures this year. There are many herbicide choices available to kill broadleaf weeds and these are described in detail in AGR-172 "Weed Management in Grass Pastures, Hayfields, and Fencerows." The difficulty is that all broadleaf weed herbicides will also kill clover and many of the new herbicides also have a long residual period before reseeding clovers. There is one option for controlling winter annual weeds and not killing clover as highlighted in AGR-172 under sod suppression. One low rate application of Gramoxone (1 pt/acre) in the early spring will burn back all top growth. Therefore, winter annual weeds are killed or at least suppressed and this type of application rarely kills existing clovers and grasses. Important things to remember:

- 1) Spray Gramoxone when temperature is above 40 degrees.
- 2) Remove animals before spraying.
- 3) Keep animals off pasture until grass has regrown and recovered.
- 4) Clover can be no-till or frost seeded immediately after spraying (frost seed when 4 to 6 weeks of potential frosts remain - mid-Feb).



Business Highlight:

Spring Farm Filter Sale

Jim, your friendly NAPA manager, announces their annual Spring Filter Sale. Filters will be up to 75% off during the sale from the 10th to the 16th.

Timely Tips

Dr. Roy Burris, UK Beef Specialist

Spring-calving Herd

- Overall condition of the cow herd should be evaluated. Cows losing weight now are most likely to have weak or dead calves. These cows will likely be a poor source of colostrum milk for the newborn calf. Feed cows, if necessary to keep them in good body condition.
- Replacement heifers should be gaining adequately to reach target breeding weights by May 1. Be sure that their feeding program is adequate for early breeding.
- Have calving equipment, supplies and labor ready for the spring calving season. Some supplies which may be needed are: eartags and applicator (put numbers on eartags now), tattoo pliers and ink, record book, scales for calf weights, iodine for calves' navels and colostrum supplement. Calving equipment puller and chains, etc.) and facilities should be ready and clean.
- Heifers should begin head-start calving in early February. Move them to a clean, accessible pasture, away from cow herd and near facilities so that calving assistance can be given. Cows may start calving later this month. Signs of calving are relaxation of pelvic ligaments, enlargement and swelling of the vulva, and enlargement of the udder. Expect calving difficulty if (1) calf's head and two feet are not visible, (2) only the calf's tail is visible, and (3) the cow has been in labor for 1½ hours. Be sure calf is being presented normally before using calf puller. Recognize situations that are beyond your capability and seek professional help as early as possible. Calves that aren't breathing should receive assistance. Try sticking a straw in nostril to stimulate a reflex or try alternate pressure and release on rib cage. Commercial respirators are also available. Calves should consume colostrum within 30 minutes of birth to achieve good immunity.

- Record birth date, cow I.D., and birth weight immediately (use your Beef IRM calendar). Identify calf with ear tag and/or tattoo. Registered calves should be weighed in the first 24 hours. Male calves in commercial herds should be castrated and implanted as soon as possible.
- Separate cows that calve away from dry cows and increase their feed. Avoid muddy feeding areas so that cows' udders won't become contaminated and spread scours. Don't confine cows to muddy lots.
- Increase feed after calving to 25-27 pounds of high quality hay. Concentrate (3-4 lb. for mature cows and about 8 lb. for first-calf heifers) may be needed if you are feeding lower quality hay. Supplementation may have a beneficial effect on date and rate of conception. The most important time to feed a beef cow is after calving. Thin cows don't come into heat very soon after calving. We must have cows in good condition, if we plan to breed them early in the season for best pregnancy rates, especially on high-endophyte fescue pastures.
- Sub-zero weather can mean death for newborn calves. During extremely cold spells, bring the cow(s) into a sheltered area as calving approaches to protect the calf. Be prepared to warm-up and feed newborn, chilled calves. Calving in mud can also cause problems.
- Watch for scours in newborn calves. Consult your veterinarian for diagnosis, cause, and treatment. Obtain fecal samples and submit to diagnostic lab, if scouring begins.

Fall-calving Herd

- Breeding season should end this month. Remove bulls and confine them so that they regain condition.
- **Important!** Consider creep feed or creep grazing (wheat, etc.) to supply extra nutrition to fall-born calves which may have to depend solely on their dam's milk supply for growth. They are not getting much except their dam's milk now (i.e. there is nothing to graze). February/March is the worst time of the year

for fall-born calves.

- Provide windbreaks or clean shelter for calves.

General

- You should be feeding a mineral supplement with adequate magnesium to prevent grass tetany (~ 15% Mg) now. The Hi-mag UK Beef IRM mineral can be used now.
- Provide shelter or increase feed as temperature drops. When temperature falls below 15 degrees, cattle need access to windbreaks. For each 10 degree drop below 15 degrees, add three pounds of hay, two pounds of corn, or six pounds of silage to their rations.
- Provide water at all times. Watch for frozen pond hazards.
- Control lice. Watch for signs such as rubbing.
- Continue looking for herd sire replacements, if needed.
- Begin pasture renovation. You can overseed clover on frozen or snow-covered pastures.

Goat Calendar for March

Weaning

☞ Wean December Kids in March:

☞ Weaning is the time to watch for coccidiosis. Chances are greater for picking up coccidian from contaminated feed. Declining maternal antibodies increase the chance for respiratory diseases, Enterotoxaemia (over-eating disease) and aciditosis. These threats increase with progressive concentrate feeding.

☞ If kids are allowed to graze short, (2-4 inch) pastures contaminated with gastrointestinal parasites, significant intestinal parasitism will occur.

Begin Spring Grazing

☞ Construct temporary electric fencing for grazing cool season annuals and fescue.

☞ Plan for water, mineral and creep feed needs.



☞ Place does with kids on clean parasite free pasture. (Parasite free is pasture not grazed for 6 months or annual pastures having soil disturbance during planting).

☞ Introduce new pasture gradually over a 4-week period. Increase grazing time until the desired amount is reached by the fourth week.

Monitor Grazing Kids

☞ Monitor kids for respiratory diseases and diseases related to over consumption of feed such as bloat, aciditosis and thiamine deficiency.

☞ Handle growing kids to determine amount of muscle development which could affect marketability. Large numbers of poorly muscled kids could indicate a problem with nutrition or management.

Marketing Considerations

☞ Market prices for slaughter goats are still typically strong in March and April as supply is low.

☞ A peak in demand may occur prior to the Easter holiday.

☞ Closely monitor weights of fall and winter born kids to market at the optimum market weight of 50 to 70 pounds.

☞ Utilize graded sales or Tel-O-Auctions to market 40-80 pound slaughter kids.

☞ Always observe proper withdrawal times on de-wormers, antibiotics, and other drugs before sending any animal to slaughter.

April Breeding for September Kids

☞ Preparing Buck for Breeding:

☞ Feed 2-4 lb grain/day and high quality hay or pasture (feed 30 days before and during breeding).

☞ Trim feet, de-worm.

☞ Keep buck cool, group by aggressiveness and age to avoid injury from fighting.

☞ Preparing Does for Breeding:

☞ Does with BCS of 2.0 –3.0, flushed with ½ -1 lb of corn daily.

☞ Trim feet, de-worm.

☞ Examine feet, legs and udders.

☞ Isolate females from the buck for two weeks prior to breeding.

Note: All off label drug use must be prescribed and overseen by a licensed vet.

Note: Follow label directions and withdraw times for all vaccines, medications and feed additives.

Note: Management tips include throughout the calendar may not coordinate with the calendar page on which they appear.

Goat Producer's Newsletter

Provided the following two articles, stop by the office for a complete copy.

Bottle Feeding Kids

Terry K. Hutchens, Extension Goat Specialist, UK

1. Newborn kids needs to receive 10 percent-20 percent of its body weight in colostrum, preferably within 3-12 hours after birth.
2. After the initial amount of colostrum is fed, additional feeding should be withheld from newborns that are to be bottle-raised for as long as 5 hours.
3. Bottle feeding: feed 10-20percent of their body weight in the form of good-quality milk replacer divided into 4 equal feedings.
4. By the third week of life switch to twice daily feeding.
5. Creep feeding: Kids should have access to an extremely palatable dry feed. A mixture of corn, oats, alfalfa pellets, molasses and soybean meal that provides 14 percent-16 percent CP works well. Topdressing the feed with dry milk replacer may stimulate intake. Other palatable ingredients suitable for young ruminants are soybean hulls and various sources of bran, including wheat bran.

Composition of goat milk replacer on DM bases should be: Protein 25 percent, Carbohydrate 31percent, Fat 34 percent, Total solids as fed 13 percent

Planning Goat Forages for 2008

Shaun Jackson, Extension Associate for Goat Forages
Last year (2007) was a poor year for forages. The late frost combined with the extreme drought across Kentucky hindered forage production to say the least.

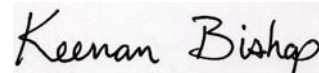
Many producers resorted to feeding their already short hay supplies during the drought to provide for their goat's needs. Let's make this year a little better by planning our forages in 2008.

The first step in planning forages for goats is to take an inventory of plants in your goat paddocks and pastures. Walk your fields and determine what type and species of plants are present. Your county agricultural extension agent can help you identify unfamiliar plants. Remember goats can utilize plants that are sometimes considered to be weeds. Next, visit your county extension and local NRCS offices and obtain a copy of the soil survey of your property. The soil survey will provide information on soil types and will tell you which plants are suited to grow on your land. You can then match the types of plants that will grow well on your pastures to the types of plants that goats prefer.

Be aware of plants that goats prefer to graze and browse. Goats utilize plants that other livestock species will not eat. Some examples include multiflora rose, iron weed, red root pigweed, honeysuckle, and various other "weed" species. Goats will also eat traditional forage crops. UK Robinson Station is conducting grazing preference studies using traditional forage crops. The preliminary results indicate that our UK goats prefer sorghum sudan grass, legumes (white and red clover, alfalfa, sericea lespedeza), forage chicory, forage turnips, reed canary grass, tall oatgrass, orchardgrass, and various warm season grasses. Although not preferred, goats will eat fescue and other traditional forage grasses.

It is also important to understand the different classifications of plants including annual, perennial, warm season and cool season. Annuals are plants that must be planted every year. Examples of annuals that goats will eat are annual ryegrass, oats, sorghum sudan grass, red root pigweed, lambsquarter, and ragweed. Perennials are plants that will grow back without having to be re-planted every year. Examples include alfalfa, red clover, white clover, orchardgrass, tall fescue, kudzu, and sericea lespedeza. Warm season plants grow the most during midsummer and produce little or no forage in spring and fall.

Cool season plants grow best during spring and fall. Figure 1 shows the growth curves of warm and cool season plants. It is best to have both warm and cool season forages to compliment each other at different times of the year. For further information on specific forage crops and how to establish them visit your local UK Cooperative Extension Office.



Keenan Bishop
County Extension Agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources

Farm/City Banquet



The 50th annual Whitaker Bank Farm / City Banquet is coming up Thursday April 24th. As always, there will be good food and fellowship! Details to follow.

National Agriculture Day



National Agriculture Day will be celebrated on March 20, 2008 - the first day of spring, in conjunction with National Agriculture Week, March 16-22, 2008. It's a day to recognize and celebrate the abundance provided by agriculture. Every year, producers, agricultural associations, corporations, universities, government agencies and countless other across America join together to recognize the contributions of agriculture.