

# Madison County Agriculture Newsletter

# Plowing Ahead

**UK**  
UNIVERSITY OF  
**KENTUCKY**  
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Cooperative  
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AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

February, 2012

## Pesticide Certification Meetings Set

I have planned four meetings to certify or re-certify those farmers that need **Private Farm Pesticide Applicator Certification (PATIM)**. If you are spraying restricted use pesticides on your farm you need this certification. (If you charge a fee to someone else for these services, you will need to obtain a Commercial Applicator License through KDA. The private pesticide applicator training does not pertain to the Commercial Applicator License Certification.)

The private pesticide applicator sessions will be held at the Madison County Extension Center on Duncannon Lane on the following dates. **You need to attend only one session.**

- Monday, February 20 at 12 noon
- Monday, February 20 at 6:00 p.m.
- Monday, February 27 at 12 noon
- Monday, February 27 at 6:00 p.m.

You may attend any one session to be certified to use restricted-use pesticides on your farm. There is no cost for this certification.

**IMPORTANT!** If you are not using your present card, and will not be using restricted-use pesticides in the future, you do not need to re-certify. Call to let us know, and we can take your name off our list. If you have questions, please call me, 859-623-4072.

Sincerely,

Brandon Sears

County Extension Agent for Agriculture & Natural Resources

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<http://ces.ca.uky.edu/madison/anr/>

## NATIONAL FARM MACHINERY SHOW

### A Few Bus Seats are Left!

Reserve your seat for the Bus Trip to the National Farm Machinery Show. The bus leaves Ag Credit at 7:30 a.m. **Thursday, February 16th. There is a 55 person maximum. You must reserve a seat!** Call the Extension Office, 859-623-4072, to make your reservation. Cost per person is \$5 for the trip. (This price includes driver tip.) The bus arrives back in Richmond around 5 p.m. that same day. Special thanks to this year's sponsors: Madison County Farm Bureau, Ag Credit, and Madison County Beef Cattle Association.

## Beef IRM Calendars

The **2012 UK Beef IRM Calendars** are in. Stop by and pick one up at our office. They are an excellent record-keeping resource for your beef herd.



## 2012 Winter Ag Meetings Continue...

**Thursday, February 2nd at 6 pm**

**South Central KY Tobacco Growers Conference at Lincoln County Extension Office, Stanford, KY**

Information provided by University of Kentucky Specialists. **Please call by February 1st to register, 859-623-4072.**

**Thursday, March 1st at 6 pm**

**MAG-60 Program Meeting**

By Mr. Jason Crowe ABS Genetics

**Cow/calf economic update: General market update; Yearly cow costs; Calf backgrounding economics/opportunities; Heifer development opportunities**

By Dr. Kenny Burdine UK Extension Livestock Economist

**A sponsored meal will be provided at these meetings - please call 859-623-4072 to register, so we will have enough food!!**

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# The Use and Renovation of Sacrifice Areas

A sacrifice area is a location strategically used as a holding area to protect the forage stands of other pastures. These areas are commonly used when forages are too thin or short for grazing, to allow other pastures a rest period, during extremely wet or drought conditions, for winter feeding areas, or for calving areas. These areas are negatively affected by the increased traffic which can cause problems such as soil compaction, cover by manure and hay residues, and forage damage from overgrazing and hoof action. Steps should be taken to reduce these negative effects. These areas often become bare and prone to erosion if not renovated.

Sacrifice areas can be rotated to different pastures between years or one site can be used annually. When determining the site of a sacrifice area, it is important to use an area that is not prone to erosion and can be easily renovated. Because the livestock may spend prolonged periods of time in the area, there also needs to be access to water. It is beneficial to renovate these areas in the spring with a vigorous species that will germinate and establish quickly.



*Areas that are not reestablished often become infested with weeds.*

Leaving these areas bare will cause increased erosion and weed problems. Following the basic guidelines for any forage establishment is important. One of the best options is to drill perennial or annual ryegrass into these areas for a quick cover. If livestock can be kept off of these areas for a prolonged period of time, it can be beneficial to plant perennial grasses and legumes like orchardgrass, tall fescue, KY bluegrass, ladino white clover and/or red clover. It is important that these species have time to establish before being grazed or exposed to high traffic. It is also possible to mix these species in with ryegrass, but mixtures should not contain more than 20% ryegrass or it will outcompete the slower growing perennial grasses. In situations where the field will not have an adequate rest period, planting annual ryegrass each year is the best option.

## The Time to Frost Seed Clovers is Now

Right now is an excellent time to frost seed red and white clovers into pastures. From now until early March, you can broadcast apply clover seed overtop of pastures, and achieve successful establishment if the pasture is grazed or clipped low. The freeze-thaw cycle for the next 20-30 days will work the clover seed into the ground so it can germinate and grow with good seed to soil contact. Broadcast red clover at a rate of 5 lbs. per acre and white clover at a rate of 1 lb. per acre into cool season grass pastures. You can spread the seed with some lime to help with distribution since these are low seeding rates. Seedings made by mid-March are usually most successful. Earlier renovation seedings are more successful than later ones. Use fresh, pre-inoculated seed or treat uninoculated seed with the appropriate commercial inoculum. As always purchase certified seed and don't be fooled by looking for just for a blue tag as an indicator. Some companies may market blue tagged as certified when they actually are not.

**Frost seeding grass seed this time of year is generally not recommended** because grass seed tends to not make as good of seed to soil contact with freeze/thaw action as clover seed. This is mainly due to differences in seed shape and density between grass and clover seed. However, some farmers say that they have had good luck with frost seeding grass seed when there is snow cover on the ground, and/or hoof traffic to help get seed in the ground.



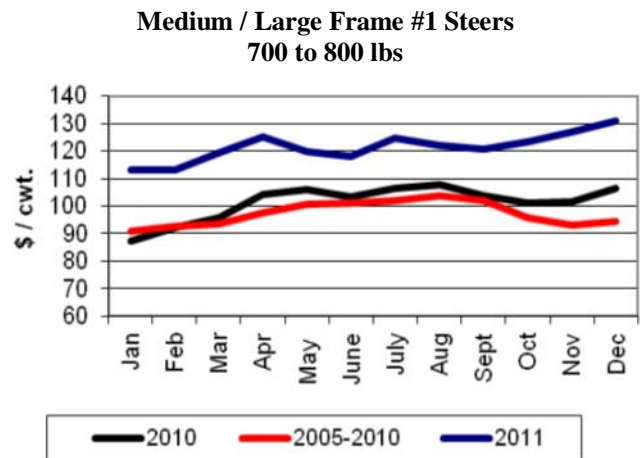
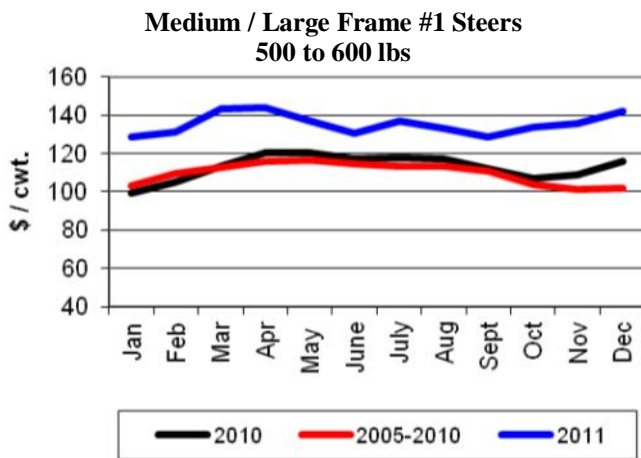
If frost seeding grasses is your only option, your success will depend on several factors such as: existing residue on top of the soil surface, whether you have livestock in the field to be seeded and if you have the ability to pull them off and if your seeding rate and date are appropriate. Plan on seeding at a higher rate if you are going to establish grasses using the frost seeding method. Do not wait past mid-March to frost seed! For more information call me at 859-623-4072.

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

Kentucky feeder cattle markets improved for the 3<sup>rd</sup> straight month in December. Both charts that below show a counter seasonal upward movement since September. Some of the price improvement in calves during the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter came from improved grazing conditions in the plains, but a great deal can also be attributed to improving fundamentals. Spring feeder cattle futures have continued to rise, increasing the breakeven bid price for calves placed into backgrounding programs.

The increasing price of calves has impacted the buy sell margins for winter backgrounding. At times in the fall, gross margins between current calf prices and futures based feeder cattle price forecasts were around \$400. More recently, the margin has seemed to be in the \$300 to \$350 range. Still, depending on feed cost and availability, this is likely to look attractive to some. Plus, many may be placing calves now, with the intent to move them to pasture in the spring.

January is also a crucial month in the cattle markets as it brings the annual cattle inventory report. This year will be especially important as we will have a better picture of how the massive drought of 2011 impacted cattle numbers. The question is not if cow numbers will be down, it's how much. According to NASS estimates, databased by the Livestock Marketing Information Center (LMIC), cow slaughter was up by about 4.5% through November. However, heifer slaughter is actually down by 2.4%. I would expect that beef cow numbers have decreased by at least 2% during 2011. If the actual number comes in above 2%, this suggests a very small 2012 calf crop and further fuel calf markets.



## Get to Know Your Feeds

**Dr. Jeff Lehmkuhler, Extension Beef Cattle Specialist, University of Kentucky**

Today the beef industry has access to many sources of coproducts. These feedstuffs have found their way into beef diets for a variety of reasons. The nutrient profile and cost are often the driving factors for why these various feedstuffs work into the ration. Regional availability also plays a major role as it impacts prices paid for these feedstuffs. With current fuel costs increasing transportation expenses, this has a larger impact today than in the past. As a beef producer that may be feeding coproduct feeds, it is worth your time to learn about the nutrient quality of various feedstuffs to assure you are still receiving quality feed.

The coproduct feedstuff prices move closely with the price of grains. This price movement can result in slight to significant formulation changes of supplements and feeds as nutritionists attempt to balance the diet or supplement for nutrient content and minimize costs. Due to the potential swapping of feeds in and out, many purchased dry feeds and supplements may not list actual ingredients, but rather use collective terms. Collective terms include things like roughage products, processed grain coproducts, and plant protein products.

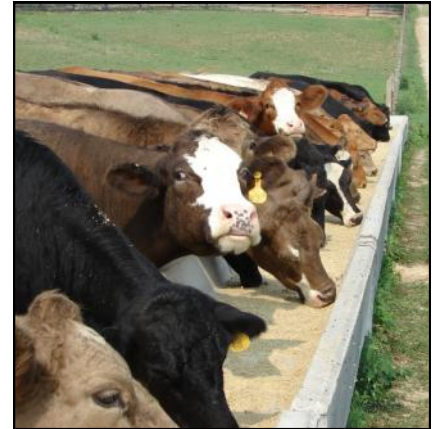
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Though most feed companies or feed sales representatives won't tell you what the exact mixture is for a given feed, you should be able to find out what is in the feed for main ingredients. Recently, peanut products made their way into central Kentucky. These feedstuffs were less costly at the time and used in an effort to keep feed costs down for beef producers.

What do you know about peanut products? The primary peanut coproducts being used this year are peanut skins and hulls. Dr. Gary Hill in 2002 reviewed peanut byproducts and their utilization for beef cattle diets. Peanut skins contain a high amount of fat, near 20-25%, which can limit their inclusion rate in forage-based rations. They also contain moderate amounts of crude protein at approximately 17% and lower levels of acid detergent fiber (<25%). These unique factors make them attractive as a feedstuff.

Peanut skins, however, also contains a significant amount of tannins. As the level of peanut skins increased to 20% of the diet on a dry matter basis, diet dry matter and protein digestibility were found to be reduced. This is a result of the high tannin content binding up degradable protein leading to a rumen protein deficiency for finishing-type diets. Peanut skins were fed as a replacement to soybean hulls in diets that contained 10.5% or 15.5% crude protein. On the low protein diet, replacing soyhulls with peanut skins resulted in a linear reduction in daily gains. However, on the high protein diet, daily gains increased linearly as peanut skins replaced soyhulls up to 15%. Peanut skins can be used as component in supplements offered to cattle grazing forages high in crude protein (>16%). Since fescue crude protein content declines rapidly as the plant matures and easily falls below this level as the grass begins flowering and developing seed, this is not an ideal feed for this situation. Because of concerns of limited degradable protein for much of the tall fescue hay fed to cows during winter, peanut skins would not be an ideal supplement without additional crude protein offered along with it.



Peanut hulls differ dramatically in nutrient content to that of skins. They are low in protein and fat while being high in fiber. These properties make this feedstuff a roughage source. With in-vitro dry matter digestibility in the 24% range contrasted to that of 55% for tall fescue, it is not a great source of digestible fiber and will not yield much energy. For those needing a roughage product for self-fed supplements that doesn't bridge up in a self-feeder, it works well at low-moderate rates. However, as the inclusion rate in the diet increases, the energy density is reduced and performance will decline. Peanut hulls should not be finely ground and fed to beef cattle as forage replacement as the effective fiber content is reduced by this processing which may result in greater risk to ruminal acidosis.

As you begin looking for less expensive feeds, be sure to think about how these feeds can be produced for less money. Read the feed tag ingredients and if there is not adequate information listed ask the feed salesman specifically what is in the feed. Learning more about various coproducts will allow you to have better performance when feeding these feedstuffs. For additional assistance contact the Madison County Extension Office at 859-623-4072.

## Free Soil Testing at the Extension Office

Madison County Cooperative Extension Service continues to offer free soil testing year round. Soil testing is very important whether you have a garden, work in your landscape, or if you own a farm. It allows the homeowner or producer to know exactly what amendments such as fertilizer and lime are needed. Remember, we need at least two cups of dry soil to run a test.

Agricultural and horticultural samples **from Madison County residents** will be accepted. **There is a 10 sample limit per farm or home per calendar year!** (Please note: Commercial lawn care companies submitting samples do not qualify for free soil testing; call 859-623-4075 for pricing.)

**Special thanks to these sponsors for making this possible:**

**Madison County Extension Service District Board  
Madison County Conservation District**