

# FORAGE NEWS

**November 2016**

*S. Ray Smith, Extension Forage Specialist and Krista Lea, MS*

## The New Face of Forage News

In the near future, Forage News will be transitioning from its current PDF version to a new online HTML version. This will allow us to reach more producers and deliver text, photos, videos and links in a more user-friendly format. If you currently receive Forage news via email, you do not need to do anything. Your email address will continue to receive the newsletter, just in a new format. If you receive via US mail, be on the lookout a post-card to update your contact information. Questions can be directed Krista Lea at [ukforageextension@uky.edu](mailto:ukforageextension@uky.edu).

## Changes to FSA Acreage Reporting Dates for 2017

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced that producers who file accurate and timely reports for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent the potential loss of FSA program benefits. The acreage reporting deadline has changed, and 2017 crop reports for hay and pasture must be done this fall. See deadlines below:

November 15, 2016: perennial forage including alfalfa, grass, mixed forage, clover

December 15, 2016: fall seeded small grains including barley, oats, rye, wheat

January 2, 2017: honey

January 15, 2017: peaches, canola

July 15, 2017: all other crops and CRP

The following exceptions apply:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.
- If a perennial forage crop is reported with the intended use of "cover only," "green manure," "left standing," or "seed" then the acreage must be reported by July 15th.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins. For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, contact your local FSA office.

## Heart of America Grazing Conference to be held in Quincy, IL January 18-19

Make plans today to attend the January 2017 Heart of America Grazing Conference. The event is scheduled January 18-19, 2017 at the Quincy, Illinois Holiday Inn. "If you are a

grazier in the Midwest and you want to stay on top of the latest issues and research, I encourage you to consider attending this event," says Ivan Dozier, State Conservationist for USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Topics of discussion include:

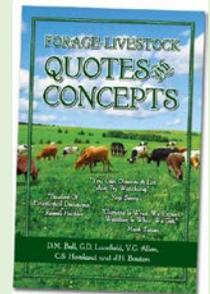
- Soil Health & Grazing, Ray Archuleta
- Adaptive high stock density grazing, Dr. Allen Williams
- Tall Fescue research & management
- Genetic tests for tall fescue toxicosis
- Nutrient Management
- Cover crops & grazing

Visit <http://illinoisbeef.com> and look for the online registration. ~ Paige Buck.

### *Forage News Quote of the Month* **"Wasted Hay Means Wasted Money"**

Hay feeding losses can exceed 50% in some cases. Techniques for reducing losses include minimizing the amount of hay animals can access at one time and by putting a barrier between animals and the hay such as placing hay in a trough or inside a hay rack. When hay is fed outside, a well-drained site should be selected. Prioritizing the feeding of hay helps minimize losses; for example, hay stored outside should be fed before hay stored inside; coarse, porous hay stored outside should be fed before fine-stemmed, densely baled hay; high value hay stored outside should be fed before low value hay stored outside. Hay quality should be matched to animal nutritional needs.

To purchase the Forage-Livestock Quotes and Concepts book, contact KFGC at [ukforageextension@uky.edu](mailto:ukforageextension@uky.edu). Books are \$5 each.



## Overseeding Small Grains into Pastures or Hayfields

Reports are coming in that farmers are still overseeding forages into their hayfields or pastures to thicken up thin stands. The problem is that we are way past the time that perennials should be established. Recommendations are to plant alfalfa at least 8-10 weeks before the first killing frost, and perennial grasses 6-8 weeks before a killing frost.

In KY, we are 1 to 1½ months late to establish perennial forages. An interesting alternative at this time is to plant a winter-small grain into a thin perennial pasture or hayfield. At this time it is still possible to plant cereal rye, wheat, and triticale. It is too late to plant winter oats or annual ryegrass. Although perennial vegetation is about to go dormant for the year, winter-hardy cereals like rye, triticale or wheat can still take advantage of the rest of the fall to get established.

Field selection and basic management requirements have to be taken care of first – make sure that pH and fertility is adequate, and that the field does not suffer from poor drainage. If a pasture is overgrazed, overseeding a winter cereal to provide winter cover and spring grazing or haylage production can help boost overall production.

Up to 30 pounds of nitrogen and all of the phosphorus and potassium may be broadcast prior to planting the winter cereal. Topdress nitrogen (50-60 lbs/A) at green-up in late winter or early spring. No nitrogen has to be applied if overseeding into alfalfa. Make sure you use a no-till drill that places the seed at the 1-1.5” depth and closes the seed slot, and plant at 2 bushels/A.

The field can be grazed in the spring or harvested for silage. You may continue to keep the pasture or hayfield next year or it can be terminated to allow for establishment of a new stand of forage. Many producers plant a warm-season annual such as sorghum x sudangrass next spring and then reestablish a new perennial stand next August/September, since late summer is a good time to establish perennials.

The limitation to overseeding thinning stands with cereals is that competition may reduce the perennial stand even further next spring. This article is modified from the October Penn State Field Crop News.~ Sjoerd Willem Duiker.

### AFGC Annual Meeting – January 22-24, 2017

Mark your calendars for the American Forage and Grassland Council Annual meeting Jan 22-24, 2017 in Roanoke, VA. The theme is “Turning Grass into CASH: Opportunities in Grassland Agriculture.” This will be one of the largest and most informative forage meetings of the year. Go to [www.afgc.org](http://www.afgc.org) for full program details and to register for the conference.

### Somerset KY Hosts Successful Kentucky Grazing Conference

The 16<sup>th</sup> Kentucky Grazing Conference was held at the Center for Rural Development in Somerset, KY on October 19<sup>th</sup>. One hundred attendees enjoyed vendors, a silent auction, informative presentations from across the country and the annual forage spokesperson contest. Contestants included Billy Glenn Turpin, Madison Co.; Debby Dulworth, Ballard



Left to Right: Anne Bays, David Whitley, Billy Glenn and Debby Dulworth. Photo credit: Jacob Brandenburg

Co.; Anne Bays, Whitley Co; and contest winner David Whitley of Scott county. KFGC awards were also handed out to Brandon Sears (Public Service County), Tom Keene (Public Service State), Bret Reese (Industry) and Mike Wilson (Grassroots).

### Featured Publication: Taking Soil Test Samples AGR-16

The most important part of making fertilizer recommendations is collecting a good, representative soil sample. Soil test results and fertilizer recommendations are based solely on the few ounces of soil submitted to the laboratory for analysis. These few ounces can represent several million pounds of soil in the field. If this sample does not reflect actual soil conditions, the results can be misleading and lead to costly over- or under-fertilization. It is necessary to make sure that the soil sample sent to the laboratory accurately represents the area sampled. Go to the UK Forage Website for this and over 200 other publications.

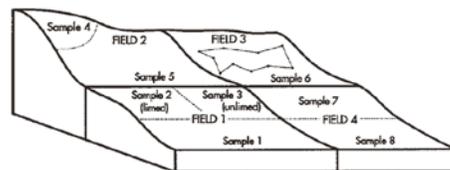


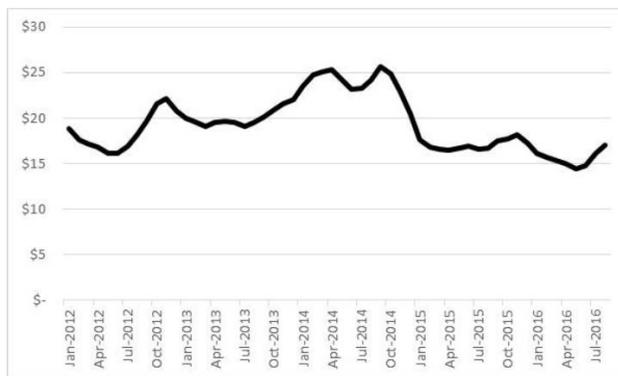
Figure 2. This shows how four fields might require the analysis of one to three composite samples for determining fertility needs. Each composite must contain 10 or more cores, as shown for Sample 6 in Field 3.

make sure that the soil sample sent to the laboratory accurately represents the area sampled. Go to the UK Forage Website for this and over 200 other publications.

### Dairy Market Continues to Struggle

Like many agricultural sectors, 2016 has not been kind to dairy producers. The decrease in farm-level milk prices over the last 24 months has rivaled that of any two-year period in recent history. All the usual suspects have contributed to the decline including increased production, decreased export levels, and weaker markets for most dairy products. Figure 1 shows US All Milk price from 2012 to 2016. Note the sharp drop starting in the fall of 2014 and the steady decline from fall 2015 through this summer. Dairy producers should pay close attention to forage management to make sure they have a cost-efficient forage production system.

Figure 1: US All Milk Price Jan 2012 to Aug 2016 (\$ per cwt)



Source: Understanding Dairy Markets and Author Calculations

~ Kenny Burdine and Tyler Mark, Printed in the Economic and Policy Update, October 28, 2016.

### Upcoming Events ([www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage](http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage))

- DEC 1 KY Farm Bureau Forage Session, Louisville, KY
- JAN 18-19 Heart of America Grazing Conference, Quincy, IL
- JAN 20 Forages at KCA, Lexington, KY
- JAN 22-24 AFGC Annual Meeting, Roanoke, VA
- JAN 30 Pasture’s Please Horse Conf. Lexington, KY
- FEB 18 Small Ruminant Conf. Elizabethtown, KY
- FEB 21 36<sup>th</sup> Annual KY Alfalfa and Stored Forage Conference, Cave City, KY
- MAR 9 Fescue Renovation Workshop. Lexington, KY