Forage News

Keeping Forage-Livestock Producers in Kentucky Informed
Dr. Ray Smith and Krista Lea, editors
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Watch Pastures for True Armyworm

There has been one report of true armyworm damage in pastures, and moth numbers increased dramatically the week before last in Lexington. True armyworm and fall armyworm are two separate insect pests. The true armyworm overwinters in Kentucky and can be a serious early season pest of pastures, small grains, and corn. Cool, wet weather can favor armyworm development, and we have had some of that this year. Armyworm larvae are highly active at night and on cloudy days. With this late occurrence, producers should monitor pastures and late-planted corn for true armyworm activity.

While moth numbers are up, they are a small fraction of the numbers we experienced during the 2008 outbreak year. When larvae are a problem, they damage plants by eating leaf margins of upper leaves, defoliating entire plants, and clipping heads of maturing plants. In pastures, we would suggest treatment when armyworm numbers reach two to three per square foot. ~ Ric Bessin, from KY Pest News

KFGC Annual Field Day August 17th

Lincoln county producer Bill Holtzclaw will be hosting the KFGC Annual Field day. 4610 HWY 590, Stanford KY. The program begins at 4:30 pm and includes Grazing Summer Annuals, Chris Teutsch, Alfalfa Weed Control, JD Green, Establishing Alfalfa, Ray Smith, and Making High Quality Baleage: Summary of Baleage Farm Sampling, Jimmy Henning. Register by calling 606-365-2447, this event will be a CAIP qualified educational meeting. Find more details at forages.ca.uky.edu.

Oregon's Willamette Valley Conditions to impact fall seed availability

Affectionately known as the "The Valley", Willamette Valley is a fertile growing region, where most of the forage type grass seed is produced in the US. Acreage is highly sought after, and every acre counts in the final production yield for all companies that have ownership in the Valley. This year, several challenges are mounting up, and are likely to reduce the overall production of many cool season grass seed crops, including novel endophyte tall fescue.

In the past few years, acreage requirements of other crops have continued to trend upwards. This upward trend has gained the attention of prospective growers, but fortunately, the forage seed production acreage is set.

The Valley is ideal for more than just forage seed production, including an ever-present population of voles. The cyclical nature of The Valley's vole population peaked this last year, resulting in the highest population numbers in the last decade. Voles damage plants, both above and below the ground, resulting in a significant reduction in yield. Plowing out production fields and rotating crops are two of the methods being employed which result in further challenging forage production acreage. In future years, rodent numbers will encounter a decline due to population self-regulation, but the damage for this year is done.

As if the production acreage in the Willamette Valley had not been through enough this growing season, the weather has shown it no favors thus far. Extreme wet conditions late last year and early into this year proved to create difficult management conditions for seed growers. The extremes tilted rapidly as this year played out, resulting in extreme drought conditions for much of the forage seed production regions with 47% less precipitation that historical averages. On a typical year, 3" of rain can be expected in both April and May, but the Valley did not see drought relief until mid-June. This was unfortunately too little, too late for a great deal of the

Forage Timely Tips: August

- ✓ Do NOT graze cool-season pastures closer than 3 to 4 inches. This will help conserve soil moisture and prevent overheating of plant crowns.
- ✓ If drought conditions limit pasture growth, close off pastures and feed hay in a sacrifice area.
- ✓ Graze warm season annuals or perennials to allow cool season grasses to recover and to avoid endophyte-infected fescue.
- ✓ After the first good rain in August, seed winter annuals (such as small grains, ryegrass, crimson clover, and brassicas) for late fall and early spring grazing.
- ✓ Plant alfalfa after first good rain in August to allow sufficient size going into winter and reduce potential for sclerotinia damage.
- ✓ Consider renovation of cool-season grass pastures that have thinned.

producers. Additionally, record high temps, well into the triple digits, took their toll on yield due to early dry down and seed head shattering, leaving a great deal of seed in the field. In all, tall fescue harvest is reduced 40%-50% this year.

The Valley and its growers will keep pushing through and continue to produce the seeded products that we all value across the country and internationally. They will continue doing whatever they can to ensure that high quality seed lands on your operation. If you plan to seed a novel endophyte tall fescue, or any other cool season perennial grass, it is best to reserve your seed early. The arrival time of seed across the country will be in keeping with years past but it will be limited in quantity. Due to quantity limitations among all other input costs being up, the cost of seed might be higher than that of previous years. ~ Drew Denman, from Novel Notes

Pub of the Month: Improving Kentucky Small Ruminant Pastures (AGR-264)

For many small ruminants, quality pasture can provide almost all nutrients needed for maintenance or light work for much of the year. Pasture reduces the cost of keeping livestock while minimizing impacts on the environment. Download this publication at forages.ca.uky.edu/publications or google "UKY AGR-264".

Carl Soren Hoveland, Oct. 25, 1927—July 4, 2021

Internationally respected grassland scientist Dr. Carl Soren Hoveland died in Athens on July 4, 2021. He was born October 25, 1927 on a dairy farm near Sand Creek in northwestern Wisconsin. All four grandparents came from southern Norway as children. Carl grew up with Norwegian as his first language. In winter he skied two miles to a one-room country school. Family frugality and hard work on the dairy farm taught him valuable lessons as they survived the Great Depression. After high school, he entered the University of Wisconsin, working three jobs to support himself. He served in the Marine Corps and then complete his BS and MS degrees in soils. He obtained a PhD in agronomy-ecology and animal nutrition at the University of Florida in 1959. After spending 22 productive years in research and teaching at Auburn University, he joined the Agronomy faculty at the University of Georgia, serving 26 years and becoming Terrel Distinguished Professor, and retiring in 2006.

During his productive research-teaching career he received many awards, among them were Fellows of the American Society of Agronomy, Crop Science Society, American Society for the Advancement of Science, and the Silver Medallion Award of the American Forage and Grassland Council. His exciting career included a great deal of international travel for consulting, lectures, and teaching in many countries around the world in both hemispheres. One of his proudest achievements was co-authoring, with Don Ball and Garry Lacefield, 'Southern Forages'. The book has been translated into Spanish and Chinese and is used as a textbook at 60 universities and colleges.

Dr. Hoveland trained many grassland scientist in his career including UK Forage Specialist Ray Smith. His legacy will continue for many generations through his mentorship of 100's and the students that each of them will teach.

Managing Nutrient Flows in Forage Systems

One of the most beautiful things about well managed grazing systems is the establishment of strong and vigorous nutrient cycles. Nutrients enter this cycle in the form of fertilizer, manure, hay, supplemental feeds, minerals, and nitrogen that is fixed from the air via the symbiosis between rhizobium bacteria and legumes. Somewhere in the range of 80 to 90% of these nutrients are recycled in well managed grazing systems. This recycling occurs through the breakdown of plant residue on the soil surface and below ground roots that have died, and dung and urine that have been deposited by grazing livestock. There are many macro and micro flora and fauna involved in this process including earthworms, insects, fungi, bacteria, and protozoa.

Grazing Redistributes Nutrients

In large continuously stocked pastures, animals will consume nutrients in form of forage and concentrate them around shade and water sources in the form of dung and urine. One way to improve nutrient distribution in pastures is to subdivide and implement rotational grazing.

Hay Removes Large Quantities of Nutrients

Every ton of hay produced removes approximately 40 lb N, 15 lb P2O5, and 50 lb K2O. In a good year, approximately 120 lb N, 45 lb P2O5, and 150 lb K2O could be removed from each acre of hay ground.

Moving Nutrients within Grazing Systems Using Hay

Hay feeding can be used to redistribute nutrients within a forage system. Hay can be produced on paddocks or in fields that contain high levels of nutrients and then fed in areas that are low in fertility.

Take Home Points

Although managing nutrient flows in forage systems can sometimes seem like a daunting task, remembering a few key concepts can help you develop a long-term strategy for nutrient flows in your grazing system.

- Rotational stocking improves nutrient distribution in pastures.
- Hay contains large quantities of nutrients.
- Buying and feeding hay can be used to bring nutrients into grazing systems.
- Hay can be used to move nutrients within forage systems from areas of high concentration to areas of low concentration.
- Spreading out hay feeding points improves nutrient distribution and increases the value of those nutrients.
- Always feed hay on your poorest pastures.

~ Chris Teutsch, for Cow Country News

Upcoming Events (see Forage website for details and to register, click on EVENTS)

Aug 17—KFGC Field Day, Stanford
Sept 21-22 —Fall Grazing School
Sept 28—Equine Expo, Lexington
Oct 26—KY Grazing Conf., Princeton
Oct 27—KY Grazing Conf., Elizabethtown
Oct 28—KY Grazing Conf., Winchester
Feb 24—Kentucky Alfalfa and Stored Forage Conference, Bowling Green

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