Keeping Forage-Livestock Producers in Kentucky Informed
Dr. Ray Smith and Krista Lea, editors

July 2024

Special Tribute to Christi Forsythe-50 Years Supporting UK Forages

In this issue we want to give a special tribute to Christi Forsythe who retired June 30 after supporting the UK Forage Program for 50 years. Christi started working at the UK Princeton Research Station in late May of 1974 (two weeks before Garry Lacefield started). She supported many faculty in her job, but the long-term partnership with Dr. Lacefield was one of the most fruitful forage partnerships in the country. Christi compiled Forage News every month from the mid-1970’s to 2015. She worked with Garry on initiating the annual KY Grazing Conference and the KY Alfalfa Conference and was involved in much of the logistics and the proceedings for these conferences. Now called the Alfalfa and Stored Forage Conference, this event is the longest running meeting of its type in the country (started in 1981). Christi was the first webmaster for the UK Forages Website in the early 2000’s and continued in this role until 4 days ago. For the last 50 years, nearly every forage meeting, field day, extension publication, correspondence with producers and county agents had Christi Forsythe backing it up and doing much of the work. She never sought credit for all she did over the years, but Christi provided an essential foundation for the UK forage program, and if we as faculty are honest, much of the strength of the UK Forage Program is due to her. Thanks Christi. Enjoy retirement. You deserve it.

KFGC Field Day-Makers Mark Farm-August 13

The Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council Field Day will be held Tuesday August 13 at Star Hill Farm from 4:30-7:30EDT in Loretto Kentucky. Participants will see and learn about grazing warm season cover crops, rotational grazing, native warm season grasses and pollinator production as well as sorghum production for syrup and silage. UK Extension Specialists highlight forage production innovations at the farm at multiple tour stops.

Star Hill Farm is the home of Maker’s Mark Distillery. Star Hill consists of approximately 1200 acres near Loretto in Marion County Kentucky. Approximately 300 acres of the farm is utilized to grow wheat and barley for use in Maker’s Mark innovation products. Additionally, the farm is home to production of vegetables, fruit, lamb, Wagyu beef, sorghum, honey, mushrooms and truffles for use at the Distillery’s restaurant.

Makers Mark has a strong commitment to the environment and sustainability. An important part of this is practicing regenerative agriculture to improve and restore soil and capture carbon. The principles of regenerative agriculture includes utilization of no-till planting, planting cover crops on fields after harvest, and grazing the cover crops to cycle nutrients back into the soil. Star Hill Farm has been certified by “Regenified,” an international organization that conducts on-site audits to determine that an entity is meeting all of the standards for Regenerative Agriculture.

Come learn more about grazing strategies and regenerative agriculture! A meal will be provided for participants at the end of the field day. For those interested, an opportunity for a tour of the distillery and

Forage Timely Tips: July

✓ Continue grazing available summer annuals (millets, sorghum/Sudangrass, crabgrass, etc.).
✓ Apply 40-60 lb N/A to stimulate summer annual regrowth.
✓ Clip pastures late June/early July as needed to maintain vegetative growth and to reduce weed seeds, but don’t clip lower than 4”.
✓ Identify fescue pastures for stockpiling. Choose pastures that are well drained, have a strong sod, and have not been overgrazed.
✓ Soil test pastures to determine fertility needs.
✓ Using UK variety trial results, select varieties to plant in the fall and order seed.
✓ Use a designated sacrifice lot to feed livestock hay and supplements as needed if drought sets in and no forage is available for grazing.
bourbon tasting will be available prior to the field day (limited number). Field day cost is $20 per person. To sign-up for the field day go to “UK Forages” under Events (link available soon) or phone the Marion County extension office at 270-692-2421.

**Intermediate Grazing School – Sept 25-26**

The 2024 Fall Kentucky Intermediate Grazing School’s goal is to help livestock producers improve profitability with hands-on and classroom learning. The school is Sept. 25-26 at the Woodford County Extension office in Versailles, KY and at the UK C. Oran Little Research Farm.

“While this school targets those that have been using improved grazing for some time, the topics and discussion will benefit producers along all segments of their grazing journey” says Chris Teutsch, UK Forage Specialist.

The school will begin each morning at 7:30 a.m. EDT with refreshments and ends by 5:00pm. Topics on the first day include introduction to soils, rotational grazing, meeting nutritional needs on pasture, grazing math concepts, travel to a local grazing operation, portable/seasonal water systems, methods to access pasture production and determine stocking rate, hands-on small paddock set-up demonstrations. After lunch at the farm, more topics include electric fencing to control grazing, offsets, soil and hay sampling, forage plant grown and grazing management and choosing forage species for a comprehensive grazing system.

Topics on the second day include fence types and costs, a grazing system design case study and exercise, grazing myths that impact profitability and a discussion on how to reinvigorate a rundown farm. A local producer will discuss how they made grazing work on their farm. The day culminates with a trip back to the research farm to observe and discuss the hands-on grazing exercise from the previous day. Students will also have the opportunity to calibrate a grain drill and try a simple GPS unit that improves the accuracy of frost seeding with an ATV. Sponsors include the UK Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, KY Forage and Grassland Council, KY Master Grazer, KY Beef Network, AgTorch, and KY Agricultural Development Fund.

Registration is $60 per participant and ends September 20. Register soon since spots are limited. To register and pay online go to the UK Forage Website and click under events (link will be online soon) or simply google “Eventbrite KY Intermediate Grazing School 2024.” Or mail $60 to Dr. Ray Smith, 1100 S. Limestone, N222 Agric North, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40546-0091. Make you check to KFGC and specify “2024 Fall Grazing School.”

**Heart of America Grazing Conference Oct 15, 16, 17**

**Regenerative Grazing...Merging Science and Practice**

The University of Kentucky is proud to announce the 2024 Heart of America Grazing Conference in Elizabethtown, Kentucky! Our three day event will take place throughout Central Kentucky and include some dynamic speakers on all things regenerative agriculture. The Heart of America Grazing Conference is an annual conference rotated around the mid-Atlantic and southeast region which focuses on improving regenerative agricultural practices.

On Tuesday, October 15, join us for a pasture ecology workshop at a local regenerative agricultural operation, Glenmar Farms, in Cecelia, Kentucky. We will be doing a deep dive into all things related to ecological systems and welcoming Dr. Matt Poore from North Carolina State University. Also on Tuesday, October 15 we will be having the Heart of America banquet. We look forward to recognizing individuals dedicated to promoting regenerative agriculture and supporting our mission.

On Wednesday, October 16, we will be having the Heart of America Grazing Conference at the Hardin County Extension Office in Elizabethtown. We will hear from many industry experts and speakers, including Ray Archuleta, to discuss all things regenerative agriculture, soil health, and pasture ecology.

On Thursday, October 17, we will be visiting Greg Brann’s Big Springs Farm in Adolphus, Kentucky. Join us to see a well-established multi-species grazing operations with one of the nation’s foremost experts on soil health.

Come to any one or all of these 3 events. Simply google “Eventbrite Heart of America Grazing Conference 2024” and you’ll be taken directly to the registration page.

**UK launches new “Weather Alert” smartphone app**

While designed with farmers in mind, the free app will assist all Kentuckians with real-time weather updates. In a move to boost weather-related awareness and agricultural decision-making, the University of Kentucky Ag Weather Center, in partnership with the UK Department of Biosystems and Ag Engineering, UK Center for Computational Sciences and the Southeastern Center for Agricultural Health and Injury Prevention (SCAHIP), has announced the launch of “Weather Alert.” The smartphone application aims to serve both
Kentucky’s farming community and other residents by providing critical weather updates and forecasts. Although designed for KY producers it works anywhere in the country.

Weather Alert is available at no cost and free from advertisements, ensuring a seamless and efficient user experience. The Weather Alert app has provided real-time weather information for our extension agents, producers, families and communities to make decisions and be proactive with weather-related events.”

To download via iOS, visit https://apple.co/3wN3645
To download via Android, visit https://bit.ly/4dUyxdq

Excerpt from a press released written by UK’s Jordon Strickler.

Progressive Cattle Podcast
If you enjoy podcasts then here’s a new series from the Progressive Cattle magazine. There’s a new one each week. The podcasts from April 26, 2024 focuses on “Forage outlook and monensin for cows and heifers.” Here’s and overview of this segment.

For the first time, we welcome Progressive Forage’s Joy Hendrix to the podcast studio as she visits with Katie Raver from Rock River Laboratory for a regional analysis of forage quality and what to keep in mind for the 2024 growing season. Then Tyrell and Elanco’s Frank White discuss the results of a recent study analyzing the benefits of monensin products in a cow-calf setting.

All the Progressive Cattle podcasts can be found at https://www.agproud.com/topics/780-podcasts or for those who would rather read make sure to sign up for the free online or print magazines Progressive Cattleman and Progressive Forage by going to their website at AgProud.com.

Finding Balance in Farm Management: People, Land, and Fiscal Health
An excellent workshop is being held Aug 23 - 24, 2024 in Cincinnati, Ohio sponsored by the Greenacres Foundation. Discover practical Holistic Management® tools that help land stewards improve soil, increase biodiversity, optimize production, quicken business viability, create long-term farm resilience, and lessen stress. HMI Certified Educators Linda Pechin-Long and Wayne Knight join Michael Cox, Agriculture Director for Greenacres Foundation, in demonstrating adaptive grazing management and case studies on how to start Holistic Planned Grazing.

The workshop topics include:
• On-the-ground, safe-to-fail grazing trials to help better understand ecosystem function.
• Inspiring case studies on farm success with minimal resources.
• A unique method to make better decisions and how to learn from them.
• Guides to help plan for faster financial success, bring stable returns, and enable investment in infrastructure to improve land productivity.
• Steps for monitoring, analyzing data, and learning from the land and livestock.
• Proactive farm management that allows for adaption with less stress.
• The symbiotic relationship between ecosystem, productivity, and economic health and how to find a balance that serves all aspects of farm management.
• How to find balance for improved quality of life.

The cost of the workshop is $50 with lunch, walk-ins will not be accepted. Registration ends Aug 8. Learn more and register here. https://green-acres.org/event/finding-balance-in-farm-management/

How to handle heat stress in beef cattle
Stress in cattle can come from a variety of places. There are stresses that can be limited by management practices, but when it comes to environmental stressors, there may not be much you can do. “Stress can come from excessive heat, natural disasters, snowstorms, hurricanes or anything that is going to create an immediate and abrupt change in the environment,” says Lee Jones, DVM, Boehringer Ingelheim. “Cattle have the ability to adapt, but anything that’s a really abrupt change causes stress, and the more severe the change, the more severe the impact of stress.” Cattle need time to cool down after experiencing hot temperatures, says Eric Moore, DVM, Norbrook. This usually happens at night from 3 p.m. to 3 a.m. However, when it stays above 78ºF, it doesn’t let that heat dissipate in the cooling time. This is what creates heat stress and exhaustion.

“Stress has a physiological impact,” Jones says. “We begin to see signs most of the time when we see cattle don’t have appetites or start to become sick. Cattle may lie around more often and don’t have normal grazing behavior. Anytime that you see a significant behavior change, try to find the cause.”

Excerpt of article by Abigail George, Editor / Progressive Cattle. For the full article go to https://www.agproud.com/ Or go to AgProud.com to sign up for Progressive Cattle, Progressive Forage, Progressive Dairy and other publications.
Upcoming Events (see Forage website for details and to register, click on EVENTS)

July 29—Icelandic Horse Farm Field Day, Shelby County.
Aug. 13—KFGC Field Day, Marion County.
Sept. 25-26—Intermediate Grazing School, Versailles, KY.
Oct. 15—Pasture Ecology Workshop, Elizabethtown, KY.
Oct. 15-16—Heart of America Grazing Conference, Elizabethtown, KY.
Oct. 17—Regenerative Pasture Walk with Greg Brann, Adolphus, KY.
Feb. 25—Alfalfa and Stored Forage Conference, Lexington, KY.

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www.forages.ca.uky.edu.