



Forage News

Heart of America Grazing Conference - Oct. 15-17 Regenerate Grazing... Merging Science and Practice

Dr. Ray Smith, Echo Gotsick and Krista Lea, editors

October 2024

Heart of America Grazing Conference Oct. 15-17th

Make sure you register for one or more days of the 2024 Heart of America Grazing Conference. The main day of the conference is Wednesday the 16th in Elizabethtown. If you can only come for one day, then this is the day. The keynote speaker is well known soil scientist and conservationist Ray Archuleta. Other speakers include Dr. Alan Franzluebbers, Dr. Matt Poore, Dr. Greg Halich, Dr. Chris Teutsch and others. This regional conference rotates annually among Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, Illinois and Missouri so it won't be in Kentucky for another 5 years.

During the three-day conference, participants will learn about regenerative agricultural practices including pasture ecology, soil health, hay and storage feed, forage research, bale grazing, extended grazing systems, and more. "This event will illustrate emerging science and research practice by bringing abstract concepts to life," said Chris Teutsch, forage specialist and extension associate professor at Martin-Gatton CAFE. "Kentucky has some of the best grass in the country. Producers will have a great opportunity to learn more regenerative agricultural and grazing practices on beautiful farms and facilities in Kentucky."

This year's conference invites a dynamic speaker lineup of UK specialists, industry representatives and producers. The first day of the conference is the Pasture Ecology Workshop on Tuesday October 15. This workshop offers an immersive experience to learn more about ecological systems at a local regenerative agricultural operation at Glenmar Farms, a regenerative cow-calf operation owned by the Pyles family in Cecelia, Kentucky. Extension leader and professor Matt Poore from North Carolina State University will lead this tour. The Heart of America Banquet will occur that evening at the Hardin County Extension Office. Dr. Jimmy Henning, forage extension specialist at UK, will speak about capturing the beauty of forages through photography. Individuals will also be recognized at the banquet for their dedication to promoting regenerative agriculture. The ecology workshop is \$100 and the banquet is \$50.

The main day for the Heart of America Grazing Conference is Wednesday October 16 at the Hardin County Extension Office. The keynote speaker is soil scientist and conservationist Ray Archuleta, who will discuss regenerative agriculture best practices. Kentucky regenerative rancher and grassland expert Greg Brann will present on multi-species grazing. Additional UK faculty and guest speakers will talk about soil health and

Forage Timely Tips: October

- ✓ Feed hay to allow cool-season pastures to accumulate forage growth for winter grazing.
- ✓ Do NOT harvest or graze alfalfa fields until after killing frost or early November.
- ✓ Inventory and test each hay lot for nutritive value and consult a nutritionist to design a supplementation program as needed.
- ✓ Remove ruminants from pastures that contain sorghum species (forage sorghums, sorghum-sudangrass hybrids, sudangrass, and johnsongrass) when frost is expected. Even small patches of johnsongrass that have been frost can cause prussic acid (cyanide) poisoning.
- ✓ Begin strip grazing early planted small grain and brassicas (turnips and rape) mixes by the end of this month.
- ✓ Late October/early November is a good time to control weeds like poison hemlock, plantain (broadleaf or buckhorn), and biennial thistles (bull, musk, plumeless).

pasture ecology. The Heart of America Grazing Conference is \$75 and includes a light breakfast and catered lunch.

The Pasture Walk at Greg Brann's Big Springs Farm is Thursday October 17. The farm is in Adolphus, KY and will offer participants a chance to see an established, multi-species grazing operation with two of the nation's foremost experts on soil health, Greg and Debbie Brann. The Brann's manage more than 13 species of livestock in a pasture-based system, selling meat, dairy, produce, wool and other farm products direct-to-consumer. Participants will see their working dairy, silvopasture establishment and discuss warm and cool season grass management. The pasture walk is \$45. Lunch is included and will be catered by River Cottage Farm Catering, featuring protein, dairy and vegetables from the farm.

Come to any one or all of these 3 events. Go to the UK Forage Website and click under Events or To register by mail, send the phone number and payment to KFGC at the following address: Caroline Roper, UKREC, PO Box 469, Princeton, KY 42445. Please specify "Heart of America Grazing Conference" in the check memo line.

Fall Armyworms Still Causing Damage

In certain regions of Kentucky (mostly Southcentral counties) fall armyworms are still causing damage so keep a close eye on your pastures and hayfields until frost. Spraying may be needed to arrest damage. We have had reports of entire alfalfa hayfields being decimated.

Intermediate Grazing School was a Huge Success—Sept. 25-36

The 2024 Fall Kentucky Intermediate Grazing School's goal was Sept. 25-26 at the Woodford County Extension office in Versailles, KY and at the UK C. Oran Little Research Farm. This was the first time we have held an Intermediate School designed for producers that have attended a beginning grazing school or similar events in the past. Attendance for the two-day hands-on workshop was 60 and included KY cattle and sheep producers, NRCS and UK employees and students, and the entire Forages class from Eastern KY University. One person who has attended several KY grazing schools said that this one was the best ever, and we have been holding grazing schools in KY for 29 years. Also noteworthy was that this grazing school was dedicated to Dr. Jimmy Henning who helped start the first grazing school in 1996. Thanks Jimmy. Recordings of the Grazing School presentations should be on our KYForages YouTube channel by the time you receive this newsletter. You can get to our YouTube channel through the UK Forage Website or simply google "KYForages YouTube."

Why So Much Red Clover This Year (when I didn't plant it)

A number of you have asked me the following question in recent months, "Why do I have so much red clover this summer when I haven't planted it for years." Here's the answer that I've been giving all summer. There obviously had to be hard/dormant seed in the ground and the conditions just happened to be right late last fall or early this spring for it to germinate. But my explanation always seemed a little speculative to me so I sent an email to long time UK professor and internationally recognized seed biologist Dr. Carol Baskin.

Here's what Dr. Baskin said, "The red clover 'appearance' is very interesting. I suspect that the seeds have been in the soil for a long time. For many seeds with a water-impermeable seed coat (meaning hard seed), two events must happen before the water gap on the seed can open. (1) Some event, e.g. very hot, very dry, very cold, cause the seed to become sensitive to dormancy-break – but the seed is still water-impermeable. (2) After seeds become sensitive, another event (e.g. big rain, big daily fluctuation in temperature) causes the water gap to open. After a period of time if the second event does not occur, then the seed become insensitive to dormancy-break again."

I followed up with Carol with my thoughts. Based on the size of volunteer plants this spring I would suspect they mainly germinated in the fall. It was very dry last Sept and Oct which would correspond to a 1st event. Then in Nov. there was a sudden cold snap which could correspond to the 2nd event. And

then the weather was very mild through Nov and Dec potentially allowing the seedlings to survive the colder temps in January. Are they may have germinated in the late winter.

Though we all know about the dry fall last year, I was basing the November cold snap on memory. Therefore, I contacted UK Ag. Meteorologist Matt Dixon to see if we could verify two extreme weather events last fall and winter. Here's the follow-up information that Matt sent back. Last fall makes sense for the 1st event. September 2023 was the 19th driest September on record. The state average was 1.79 inches. October 2023 was the 51st driest October with a state average of 2.33 inches. November 2023 was the 12 driest November with an average of 1.55 inches. Overall, it was the 9th driest fall ever recorded with a state average of 5.67 inches. Putting into perspective, records go back 130 years nowadays. Then at the end of a mild November, temperatures dropped to 19 and 16 the nights of November 28 and 29. Maybe this was the second extreme event.

So we don't know for sure why there was so much red clover this year, but the weather events that happened last fall and maybe into the winter are likely the explanation. We just don't know the exact weather events and how to predict them for the future, but it definitely has me thinking about future research. One thing that I know for sure. The only way to guarantee that you will have red clover on a consistent basis is to drill or frost seed some every 2-3 years. Commercial clover seed has to have low levels of hard seed (<20%) so the majority will germinate soon after planting. It is nice though when we are surprised with a good volunteer crop of red clover every so often.

November KY Fencing School — November 14, 2024

This November the KY Fencing schools is being held in southern Ohio as part of a collaboration with the Greenacres Foundation. The location is the GREENACRES Lewis Township Farm in Felicity, Ohio. "Fencing is vitally important on the farm," said Chris Teutsch, associate professor for the Department of Plant and Soil Sciences, stationed in the UK Research and Education Center at Princeton. "Good fences keep our livestock safe and animals from getting out. Understanding the ins and outs of proper fencing is important for anyone installing fencing on their property, including residential homeowners."

The school begins at 7:30 a.m. local time. The morning session addresses fencing types and costs, construction basics, electric fencing, innovations in technologies and an overview of Kentucky fence laws. The afternoon session is a hands-on fence-building session where participants put their knowledge and skills to work. The demonstration includes:

- Safety, layout and a post-driving demonstration
- H-brace construction
- Knot tying, splices and insulator installation
- Installing Stay-Tuff fixed-knot fencing
- Installing high-electrified tensile fencing

Events conclude with questions and a survey at 4:30 p.m. Participants should pre-register at least one week prior to the event. Advance

see blue.

registration is \$35 per person and includes a notebook, safety glasses, hearing protection, refreshments and a catered lunch. Use the following to register: <https://2024FallFencingSchool.eventbrite.com> Register by Email: caroline.roper@uky.edu or by mail: Caroline Roper, PO Box 469, Princeton, KY 42445. Make Checks payable to KFGC. For more information, contact Caroline Roper, Master Grazer Coordinator, at 270-704-2254 or caroline.roper@uky.edu.

Dr. Craig Carter Named Recipient of 2024 AVMA Meritorious Service Award

Dr. Craig Carter honored for decades of distinguished service to the veterinary profession, including serving as the director of the University of Kentucky Veterinary Diagnostic Lab (VDL) for 15 years (2007 to 2022). During his time at VDL Dr. Carter oversaw the expansion and modernization of the lab. UK VDL is now one of the top veterinary diagnostic labs in the country.

Not only did Dr. Carter make major improvements at UK VDL and in various organizations he was involved with in his professional career, but he served for than 40 years in the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Army in both active and reserve duty, including deployments in Vietnam, Operation Desert Shield, Afghanistan and Iraq. He retired in 2009 from the U.S. Army Reserves as a full bird Colonel. I want to thank you Craig, on behalf of all of our readers, for serving our country.

In his acceptance speech for the award Dr. Carter said, "It is humbling beyond belief to receive this honor as a member of our diverse profession which makes so



many contributions to advance animal health and human health, in the spirit of One Health, every day. I proudly accept this on behalf of the outstanding AVMA leadership and my many remarkable mentors, co-workers and brilliant students who will help build a promising future." ~excerpt of article by Grace Sowards

Success Stories are Written by UK Specialist each year. Here are two of them from 2023/2024

KY Alfalfa and Stored Forage Conference

In 2024, the 43th annual Kentucky Alfalfa and Stored Forage Conference was held in Bowling Green KY on Feb. 8, 2024 with over 120 people attending. This conference was a joint effort of the Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension, the UK Master Grazer program, and the UK Quality Hay for Horses program. The theme was "Getting Into the Hay Business".

Topics and speakers included: Operating a Major Hay and Straw Farm in Ohio – John Russell; Teaching Hay Buyers What Their Horses Really Need – Dr. Laurie Lawrence; How to Find and Evaluate Used Equipment - Dennis Wright; Establishing Markets for Your Hay and Straw—Ellis Deweese and Jeff Stephens; 50 Years of Alfalfa Production in Kentucky: Observations, Reflections and Opportunities – Dr. Garry Lacefield; Basics of Fertilizing for Successful Hay Production – Dr. Edwin Ritchey; How I Got Started in the Hay Business: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly – Producer Panel.

The YouTube Videos published since the meeting of the presentation have already been viewed over 3700 (go to KYForages YouTube). Written copies of each presentation were also collated into a Proceedings volume which was distributed to participants and is available for download through the UK Forage Website.

UK Forage Specialists involved: S. Ray Smith, Chris Teutsch and Jimmy Henning

Forage News

University of Kentucky forage specialists have been distributing a monthly forage newsletter called Forage News for almost 50 years. This publication highlights applied research findings from the UK forage group and the USDA-ARS forage animal production research unit located on UK's campus and specialists in other states. It is also a very useful publication to advertise our upcoming events. The focus of the publication is to provide useful information that can be applied "on-farm" by Kentucky farmers. It is distributed to over 2400 people each month through a combination of emails and the US postal service. Forage News is also sent to all of KY's ANR agents and they regularly use these articles in their monthly newsletters making the true readership each month likely over 40,000. In 2023/2024 the newsletter was regularly read by more than 45% of those on the distribution list. Many newsletters in KY and surrounding states are no longer sent as hard copies by mail, but we have found that this is a very useful service for our many Amish and Old Order Mennonite farmers and older producers without consistent internet access. Specialists involved: S. Ray Smith, Jimmy Henning, Chris Teutsch, and Krista Lea

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Forage News



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

- 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.
- Nov. 14 – **KY/OH Fencing School**, Felicity, OH.
- Jan. 17 – **Forages at KCA**, Owensboro, KY
- Feb. 25 - **Alfalfa and Stored Forage Conference**, Lexington, KY.

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