



Forage News

Keeping Forage- Livestock Producers in Kentucky Informed

Dr. Ray Smith and Echo Gotsick, MS editors

September 2025

2025 KY Grazing Conference with Jim Gerrish

Make plans to join us at the KY Grazing Conference Oct 28 or Oct 30 "Grazing for Profit: Optimizing Returns in Grass Based Operations". Our special invited speaker will be Jim Gerrish and we will be holding the conference at two locations for your convenience, Winchester on the 28th and Leitchfield the 30th. Topics include:

- Seven Things That I Have Learned About Profitable Ranching in the Last 45 Years,

Jim Gerrish, American GrazingLands Services

- Nutrient Cycling in Grassland Ecosystems

Dr. Ricardo Riberio, University of Kentucky

- Forage Management and Shifting Weather Patterns

Dr. Chris Teutsch, University of Kentucky

- Breeding a Functional Cow that Works in Your Environment

Cody Rakes, Manager, Loretto Motherhouse Farm

- Forage Spokesperson Contest/Local Producers

- What We Have Learned About Bale Grazing

Dr. Greg Halich, University of Kentucky

- Managing Feed Costs in Ruminant Livestock Production Systems

Jim Gerrish, American GrazingLands Services

We expect a full house at both locations so you are encouraged to register soon. \$60 per participant or \$25 per student. Register at the UK Forage Website under Events or make checks payable to KFGC and mail to: KFGC c/o Caroline Roper, PO Box 469, Princeton, KY 42445. Call if you have questions (270) 704-6618

Intermediate Grazing School Sept. 24th and 25th

Helping livestock producers improve their successful grazing management!

Hosted by the University of Kentucky Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, the 2025 Fall Kentucky Intermediate Grazing School promises an immersive learning experience for livestock producers.

This year's program has undergone significant updates to intensify its focus on the crucial role of soils and hands-on application in successful grazing management.

The event occurs on Wednesday, September 24 and Thursday, September 25 at the Woodford County Extension office in Versailles, Kentucky.

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

Forage Timely Tips: September

- ✓ Make plans to attend upcoming grazing and fencing schools.
- ✓ Do NOT graze cool-season pastures closer than 3 to 4 inches to conserve soil moisture and to prevent overheating of the crowns.
- ✓ If drought conditions limit pasture growth, close off pastures and feed hay in a sacrifice area.
- ✓ Consider renovation of cool-season grass pastures that have thinned.
- ✓ Exclude livestock from pastures to be stockpiled and apply 50 lb N/A and any needed P and K.
- ✓ If not already done, soil sample and apply fertilizer and lime as needed.
- ✓ Plant perennial grasses and legumes in early September.
- ✓ Harvest hay as needed. Do NOT harvest alfalfa between mid-Sept. and early Nov.
- ✓ Scout pastures, identify perennial weeds and woody brush for potential spray treatments.
- ✓ Rest native warm-season grass fields until after frost for better winter survival.

access pasture production and determine stocking rate, hands-on small paddock set-up demonstrations.

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.

The event occurs Sept. 24-25 at the Woodford County Extension Office. Registration costs \$60 per participant and ends Sept. 20. To register and purchase online, visit <https://2025IntermediateGrazing.eventbrite.com> or use the QR code below. For more information contact Caroline Roper at 270-704-6618 or Caroline.Roper@uky.edu



2025 UKY Fall Fencing Schools Sept. 30th and Oct. 2nd

This program is designed for producers and agricultural professionals to learn the newest fencing methods and sound fencing construction through a combination of classroom and hands-on learning. This event includes fencing types and cost, fence construction basics, electric fencing basics, innovations in fencing technologies, Kentucky fencing laws, and hands on fence building! Catered lunch is included, registration costs \$35 per participant. Cost includes a notebook, refreshments, safety glasses, and hearing protection.

September 30th fencing school is located at Hardin County Extension office: 111 Opportunity Way Elizabethtown, KY.

October 2nd fencing school is located at Russell County Extension office: 2688 S. HWY 127 Russell Springs, KY 42642

To register and purchase online visit:

<https://FallFencingElizabethtown.eventbrite.com>

<https://FallFencingRussellSprings.eventbrite.com>

Or use the QR codes below.

For more information contact Caroline Roper at 270-704-6618 or Caroline.Roper@uky.edu

Elizabethtown



Russell Springs



Pub of the Month: Utilizing Drought-Stressed Soybean for Forage

Regrettably, we're repeating this publication from last year based on our dry conditions. We are again getting questions about making hay from soybeans. It's very dicey though to get soybean hay put up without losing leaves. Under perfect conditions and care with raking it can be done. But much safer to make baleage. It's important to cut with a mower conditioner to break the large soybean stems. Farmers should make sure to have their insurance adjuster inspect the field first.

Here are the Key Points in the Publication:

- Consult crop insurance and USDA Farm Service Agency before grazing or harvesting.
- Estimate grain value prior to grazing or harvest.
- Determine harvest restrictions for the herbicides used.
- Harvest before leaves yellow and fall off.
- Mow early in the day to maximize wilting time.
- Use a mower-conditioner adjusted to the widest possible swath to crush stems.

Grazing Considerations

- Never turn hungry animals into soybeans.
- Provide access to a palatable dry hay or silage.
- Use feed additives to reduce chances of bloat.
- Strip graze soybeans to increase utilization rate.

Baleage Considerations (preferred baling option)

- Wilt to 55 to 65 percent moisture.
- Use at least 6 layers of high-quality UV resistant silage film.
- Wrap bales same day as baling.

Dry Hay Considerations

- Do not rake if moisture is below 40 percent.
- Do not ted soybean hay.
- Bale at 16 to 18 percent moisture.
- If hay becomes too dry, wait to bale.
- Store bales under cover.

Feeding Considerations

- Provide access to clean water and free choice mineral.
- Feed in a hay ring to minimize feeding losses.
- Only put out enough baleage for two to three days.
- If high in grain, limit to one-half of dry mate intake.
- Avoid feeding raw soybeans in diets containing urea.

Here's the link to the pub. "Utilizing Drought-stressed Soybeans for Forage" <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/AGR/AGR262/AGR262.pdf>

Consider Triticale as a Winter Cereal

According to Tom Kilcer, planting a winter annual could make up for this lack of forage quality. In a recent issue of Crop Soil News, the owner of Advanced Ag Systems, an agronomy consulting and research business, suggests triticale is a viable winter annual option to seed after corn silage harvest. "We prefer triticale over cereal rye as it stands much better and allows for harvest almost as early," Kilcer writes. He adds that applying nitrogen can significantly boost forage yields. Moreover, when farmers seed triticale after corn silage harvest, their total yield per acre can improve by 35% across both crops even if they have to plant a shorter season corn variety next year.

Triticale also provides cover crop benefits like reduced erosion from ground cover and continuous living roots. Kilcer notes these roots capture soil nutrients that would otherwise run off and cause water pollution. The first step is to select good seed. "Certified seed is carefully handled to maximize germination and carefully scouted to ensure it is disease-free," Kilcer writes. He adds that the optimum seeding rate is 100 pounds per acre — research shows there is no yield advantage to planting at a higher rate.

Next, Kilcer recommends treating seed. "In our replicated trials that were planted on time, the treated seed yielded 15% more," he says. "The lower-yielding, late-planted stands that were treated yielded 28% more than [the late-planted] stands that were untreated." Kilcer adds that farmers can reduce plant populations to offset treated seed costs without major yield drag. "You can drop your seeding rate from 100 pounds per acre to 92 pounds per acre and have the same crop if it is planted on time with the same total costs," he says. However, he contends that buying treated seed and maintaining normal seeding rates has potential to generate the greatest return on investment.

After selecting seed, the biggest yield factor is planting date. In TN and southern KY the first of October is a 'in-the-ground' target. For Central and Northern KY shoot for mid to late September. Kilcer emphasizes that "you are growing winter forage — not a cover crop. Planting date is a key management step." Kilcer encourages

see blue.

farmers to fertilizer triticale. According to his New York research, spring yields improved with up to 60 pounds of nitrogen per acre applied in the fall.

~ Taken from Amber Friedrichsen's recent Hay and Forage Grower article. Go to hayandforage.com for more information. For the entire article go to Tom Kilcer's website: <https://advancedagsys.com/newsletters/>

Hay Probe Options for Sampling Hay

Mary Drewnoski, extension beef specialist with the University of Nebraska, recently developed a comprehensive list of hay probe suppliers. For more extensive information on sampling hay, visit the National Forage Testing website or download the UK publication AGR-257 "Hay Sampling Strategies for Getting a Good Sample" from the UK Forage Website under Hay and Storage.

AMS Hay & Forage Probe

Phone: (800) 635-7330

<https://www.ams-samplers.com/hay-sampling/>

Best Harvest Hay Sampler Probe

Phone: (888) 947-6226

<http://www.bestharveststore.com/Hay-Probe-Samplers-c10>

Colorado Hay Probe

Phone: (970) 482-2060

<http://www.udylene.com/hayprobeinfo.htm>

Oakfield Probe

Phone: (920) 583-4114

<https://www.soilsamplers.com/collections/hay-samplers>

Penn State Hay Probe

Phone: (607) 252-7540

<https://dairylene.com/shop/penn-state-hay-probe-w-drill-adapter/>

Sierra Hay Probe

Phone: (209) 333-3337

<https://www.sierratestingservice.com/hay-probes>

Star Forage Probe

Phone: (403) 471-0097

<https://starqualitysamplers.com/forage-samplers/>

Yankton Hay Probe (Frontier Mills)

Phone (605) 665-2441

<https://frontiermills.com/>

~ excerpted from Mike Rankin's Hayandforage.com article. <https://hayandforage.com/article-5446-Pick-the-right-hay-sampling-tool.html>

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Forage News



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

Sept. 24-25 – Intermediate Grazing School, Versailles, KY

Sept. 30 – KY Fencing School, Elizabethtown, KY

Oct. 2 – KY Fencing School, Russell Springs, KY

Oct. 28 – KY Grazing Conf., Winchester, KY

Oct. 29 – Profitability Workshop, Elizabethtown, KY

Oct. 30 – KY Grazing Conf., Leitchfield, KY

Jan. 11-13, 2026– AFGC Conf., Asheville, NC

Feb. 24 – Alfalfa and Stored Forage Conf., Russellville, KY

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www.forages.ca.uky.edu