

AGRICULTURE NEWS *February 2013*



Cooperative Extension Service

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AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Campbell County Farmers,

I'm running later than I would like with this first newsletter of the new year but I would like to begin this newsletter as I have done in the past. "Another year has begun and, believe it or not, I've been your Extension agent for agriculture for 23 years. Where has the time gone? I consider myself extremely fortunate to live and work in such a great community. Thanks to each of you for your continued support of our Extension Service agriculture programs. My work as an agriculture agent will always be rewarding because of the strong leadership of this county. Special thanks to the County Ag Council, Beef Association and Cattle Association Board of Directors and the Northern KY Horse Network Directors, and many other individuals who continue to provide tremendous leadership and support to Extension Service programs."

In early January, I had the opportunity to attend the American Forage and Grassland Conference in Covington. One speaker made a comment that "People need to be **reminded** more than they need to be instructed." (quote by Dr. Samuel Johnson, 1709-1784). For the past several days, that quote has stuck in my mind. I will do my best in 2013 to **remind** you and not **instruct** you to do things. After 23 years of listening to me, most of you have the instruction down pat anyway.

As usual, the first newsletter of the New Year will focus on upcoming educational programs. Many of these educational programs will

address specific issues that were identified during the fall ag issues planning meetings. Please take this opportunity to review the list of educational programs and mark your personal calendar with the date, time and location for programs that are of interest to you. Don't forget to take the comprehensive list of programs and attach it to a prominent place (usually the refrigerator) as a **reminder** of upcoming meetings. By attending these educational programs, hopefully you will become better informed and better prepared to make any decisions that could make your farming operation more productive and profitable in 2013. Additional programs, field days and tours will be developed throughout the year.

Please pay close attention to the meeting locations for all agriculture programs. A large percentage of them will be at the Campbell County Environmental Education Center off of Race Track Road.

If there are any additional issues that you would like the Extension office to address or if I can be of any assistance to you, just give me a call at 572-2600, 694-1878 (home) or 250-6665 (cell). Thanks and best wishes to you and your family for a productive and profitable 2013.

Don Sorrell
Campbell County Extension Agent for
Agriculture and Natural Resources

Reproductive Efficiency

Improving the **Reproductive Efficiency of the Beef Herd** kick-off programs were a big success with approximately 90 producers attending the two programs. The producer surveys have been summarized and in the next couple of weeks I will be meeting with UK beef specialists, Northern Kentucky agriculture agents and beef producers to develop this multi-year program. I'm looking forward to this program as it will include educational programs, field days, tours and most importantly cooperating farmers to conduct on-farm case studies.

If you missed the kick-off program and want to learn more about being a potential cooperator then please give me a call. Future programs will look closely at the best management practices such as reproduction management, genetics, nutrition, herd health, forages, record keeping, etc. that impacts reproductive efficiency and therefore profitability of beef farms. There will be specific information on upcoming programs/activities of this reproductive efficiency program in the March newsletter.

Tips for a Successful Calving Season

There are many things producers can do to improve your chances of having a successful calving season. Below are a few tips for making your calving season as stress free and problem free as possible.



- **Have a Plan.** Don't wait until you have problems to develop a plan. A little planning now will go a long way in preventing problems before they start.
- **Check the body condition of your cows.** It is important for cows to maintain a body condition score (BCS) between 5 and 5.5 during the final trimester and after calving. A higher body condition score allows for improved calving ease, along with higher quality colostrums. First-calf heifers should have a BCS of 5.5 to 6 before calving.
- **Vaccinations.** Consider vaccinating with a killed-virus vaccine to boost immunity. If you have had scour issues in the past you should consider giving the cow a scour vaccine to build up immunity in the calf.
- **Have a clean calving area.** Clean pasture

is preferred. Avoid muddy pastures and barn lots for calving. A clean area can also include clean calving pens. Check the cows at least four times a day during calving.

- **Prepare and have easy access to a calving kit.** The kit should include: calving chains and handles, lubricant, palpation sleeves, colostrums, towels, calf feeder/bottle, clean bucket, access to warm water, flashlight, and a rope halter and the phone number of a local veterinarian.
- **Know what is a normal and abnormal calving presentation.** The bottom of the hoof should be pointed downward in a normal presentation. If the bottom of the hoof points upward this usually indicates a breech, or backwards presentation. Knowing the normal time associated with labor and delivery is important.
- **Make sure that the calf nurses soon after birth.** The ingestion of colostrums within the first 6 hours of birth is essential in establishing immunity in the calf. It is a good idea to have a collection of frozen colostrums or colostrums substitute on hand. Don't assume the calf has nursed just because it is up and moving around. Cows with muddy or large teats can be a problem for newborn calves.
- **Move cow/calf pairs to a separate pasture when the calf is 2 to 3 days old.**
- **Watch for signs of calf scours.** Be aggressive in treating calf scours.
- **Adjust the feed for nursing cows.** The nutritional level of both heifers and cows increases dramatically after calving. Feeding higher quality hay and/or 2 to 4 pounds of grain a day will usually supply the needed energy and protein.
- **Having a very defined breeding season** regardless of when it occurs, is a great advantage at calving time in that it will define the breeding and end of the calving season.
- **Consider a fall calving season** if you are losing calves in the spring, especially if these losses are weather related.



Forage Use in the Beef Industry

Derrell S. Peel, Oklahoma State University Extension
Livestock Marketing Specialist

Higher grain prices, led by sharply increased demand for corn, have provoked a variety of adjustments in agricultural markets to restore a relative balance in crop and forage prices. Higher prices for all crops are needed to simultaneously ration demand and attract resources to maintain supply in the various markets. The beef industry has considerable flexibility to adjust production systems and substitute forage for grain. These adjustments have several implications for forage use that are already occurring or may occur to a greater or lesser extent.

Use more forage. The beef industry responds initially to high grain prices by increasing feedlot placement weights. This is reflected in feeder markets with less discounts on feeder cattle up to heavier weights. The ability to respond to this incentive has been hampered by limited cattle numbers and the drought which has reduced forage availability and forced early placements of smaller cattle into feedlots the past two years. Over time and with increased feeder supplies, the beef industry may push average feedlot placement weights higher, not only in the range of current feedlot production practices, but potentially to levels that cut days on feed enough to force changes in feedlot production systems to maintain carcass quality.

Use forage more efficiently. Cheap grain kept forage values low for many years. Forage values are now record high, in part due to the drought, but will stay higher along with other crop values. Forage use can and will be better managed with higher value. In a great many situations, grazing management can be improved to increase animal production or extend grazing seasons. Improved hay production, storage and feeding can significantly reduce hay wastage. Low value forage led to rather sloppy forage use for many years and the industry can ill afford such inefficiency in the future.

Produce more forage, more efficiently. In addition to using forage more efficiently, there are increased incentives to manage forage better for increased forage production. For example, higher value forage makes weed and brush control more valuable. Many forested areas can be opened up to allow or increase grazing access. Better grazing management, including use of proper stocking rates and grazing plans can significantly increase forage production over time.

Use different forages. Changes in forage and

input values may change the optimal selection of forages, particularly for introduced forages. In general, when inputs are cheap, technical efficiency tends to equal economic efficiency. However, when inputs are expensive, technical efficiency is often a poor indicator of economic efficiency. Expensive inputs and the desire to extend grazing seasons may also favor use of more mixed forage production and less monoculture production. More diverse pasture mixes including more legumes may be desirable in more production situations.

Use forages differently. The way forages are used could change as well. Currently forage use is almost exclusively for stocker or growing programs with a sharp demarcation between stocker and finishing programs. High grain prices could result in the development of semi-intensive cattle finishing programs that use more forage in the early stages of finishing. A more diverse set of cattle finishing programs may develop that blur the lines between stocker and finishing.

Higher grain prices and changes in relative grain and forage values may result in many changes in forage production and use. The extent and exact nature of these changes is unknown at this time. What is important is that producers be aware of expanded forage potential and be willing to consider and evaluate a much wider range of forage production possibilities in the future.



Another Friendly Reminder



Modified cone feeder with sheeted bottom is more expensive but keeps hay losses/waste to a minimum. Studies show about a 5% hay waste.

Weather Affects Livestock Energy Needs

By Rory Lewandowski, Extension Educator

While we may grumble at times about cold temperatures or a combination of cold with wind, rain or snow, livestock owners need to be aware of the effect environmental conditions can have on livestock nutrient requirements.

Specifically, cold temperatures, cold rains, and muddy conditions can all significantly increase the energy requirement of livestock. All animals have what is termed a thermo neutral zone, that is, a range in temperature over which the animal is most comfortable and is not under any temperature stress. This is the temperature range that is considered optimum for body maintenance, animal performance and health. The lower boundary of this zone is referred to as the lower critical temperature (LCT). Livestock experience cold stress below the LCT. Below the LCT, animal metabolism must increase to provide adequate heat to maintain body temperature.

When the temperature falls below the lower critical level, the animal must increase energy intake to maintain body temperature and basic body maintenance functions. The general rule of thumb is that energy intake must increase by 1% for each degree of cold below the LCT. This is



where the nutritional level of the animal's diet becomes a factor. If average to good quality hay is being fed, the animal might be able to increase intake enough to meet the additional need for energy. If forage quality is low it is unlikely that the animal can increase intake enough to meet increased energy demands. In the short run, if animals are in good body condition they can burn fat reserves to compensate. If poor quality forage is the only forage option or if there is an extended period of very cold weather then some additional energy supplementation will need to be provided to the animals.

The LCT is influenced by such factors as size of the animal, breed, age, housing conditions, hair coat or wool thickness and nutrition. For livestock that live outdoors with little or no access to a barn

during the winter and fall months, the hair coat or wool thickness and nutrition level are the factors we are most concerned with. As hair coat or wool thickness is increased, the LCT decreases. Quite a bit of research and study has been done with beef cattle on this topic and the following chart describes the relationship between hair coat thickness and the LCT.

Lower Critical Temperatures (LCT) for Beef Cattle

Coat Description	Degrees F
Summer (or wet)	59
Fall	45
Winter	32
Heavy Winter	18

The LCT for goats is generally considered as 32 degrees F, and for sheep the LCT is 50 degrees F if freshly shorn or 28 degrees F with 2.5 inches of fleece.

Note that once the coat is wet, regardless of how heavy it is, the lower critical temperature increases to 59 degrees F. This is because hair coats lose their insulating ability when wet. This would apply to cattle, horses and goats, but not sheep, since wool has the ability to shed water and maintain its insulating properties. Due to the effect of moisture on hair coats, dry, cold weather is easier on cattle, horse and goats than cool wet weather.

Wind speed produces wind chill and can further increase energy requirements for livestock when those values are below the LCT. For livestock that are housed in the open, the wind chill factor must be used to calculate additional energy needs. Providing a windbreak is another option that can be explored.

Fall and winter weather can vary considerably and one of those variations is muddy conditions. Mud also reduces the insulating ability of the hair coat, leading to a need for increased energy. The relationship between mud and its effect on energy requirements is not as well defined as the temperature charts, but depending upon the depth of the mud and how much matting of the hair coat it causes, energy requirements could increase 7 to 30% over dry conditions. In addition, there is research that suggests that mud may also be associated with decreased feed intake. Thus the worst situation for livestock is cold stress combined with mud.

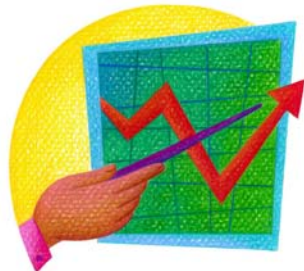
Kentucky Beef Cattle Market Update

Kenny Burdine, Livestock Marketing Specialist,
University of Kentucky



January is always a good time to look back at the previous year and 2012 was quite a ride. Both calf and heavy feeder cattle markets were astounding through spring as tight supplies and an early spring kicked the markets in full gear. Things turned south quickly by mid-summer as dry conditions and shrinking expectations for the corn crop resulted in a considerable drop in feeder cattle prices. Some of that ground was gained back by fall, but prices remained well off their spring highs. However, fall 2012 prices were still \$5-\$10 per cwt over 2011 levels. Improved pasture conditions and hay production in the fall also worked to increase the hay supply and decrease the number of winter feeding days for many producers.

Another point of discussion would be the difference between calf prices in the spring and fall.



During 2012, this differential was between \$20 and \$30 per cwt, or \$100 to \$150 per head, for 5wt calves. Some of this was due to weather challenges and changes in feed prices during the year, but this wider differential is likely

to be more of a trend if corn prices stay high. Kentucky calf markets will be more adversely affected by high corn prices in the fall and winter, when pasture is generally not available. This will tend to put downward pressure on fall calf prices, much more so than spring calf prices. While choice of calving season should be driven by many factors, producers should stay aware of these trends in the market.

Next month, we will discuss the implications of the annual cattle inventory report that will be released later this month. At this point, I would expect cattle inventory to be down from January of 2012, but by a much smaller magnitude than was seen from 2011 to 2012. Heifer development estimates for July 2012 were unchanged from 2011, a year when cattle numbers nationwide decreased by 3%. Secondly, the number of heifers on feed didn't move below 2011 levels until the October report (these estimates come out four times per year). Third, new crop grain prices are likely to continue to pull pasture and hay ground into row crops. The result should be continued tight feeder cattle supplies for the upcoming year.

The Northern Kentucky Horse College will be a series of evening programs developed to address the basic and intermediate knowledge needed by horse owners. Plans are to have the program presenter(s) at the Boone County Extension office on March 2, 14, 21, and 28, starting at 6:30 p.m. The program will be downloaded via the internet at the Campbell County Environmental Education Center. In other words, you can go to Boone County and have a face to face meeting with the presenter or come to the Environmental Center and see the program presented via a computer and projector.

Program topics for this program will include:

- **Nutrition** – feed selection, hay/pasture and feeding management
- **Horse Health** – routine vaccinations, parasite control programs, general health care, first aid
- **Facilities** – This subject will focus on horse facilities for the owners with small numbers of horses and limited acreage. Topics discussed are fences, feeders and watering systems, barns and shelters.
- **Tack and Equipment** – This program will cover equipment used when riding and training your horse. This is a general overview of what is available to horse owners and how it is used.



KENTUCKY EQUINE SURVEY RELEASES INITIAL FINDINGS

By Holly Wiemers, [UK Equine Programs](#)

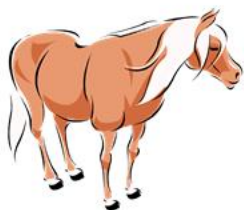
Kentucky is home to 242,400 horses and the total value of the state's equine and equine-related assets is estimated at \$23.4 billion, according to the 2012 Kentucky Equine Survey. The comprehensive statewide survey of all breeds of horses, ponies, donkeys and mules was the first such study since 1977. Conducted between June and October 2012 by the Kentucky field office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, with support and assistance by the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture and the Kentucky Horse Council, the survey's results identified 35,000 equine operations and 1.1 million acres devoted to equine use. The results are a snapshot of the 2011 calendar year.

"The value of Kentucky's equine and equine-related assets, such as land and buildings, is significantly larger than other states for which we have data, and it serves to underscore that Kentucky is the Horse Capital of the World," said Jill Stowe, UK associate professor in agricultural economics and project lead. "Upcoming economic impact analysis results will provide even more details regarding the importance of the industry to the state's economy."

Phase 1 of the study was a statewide survey of equine operations that included an inventory of all breeds of equine, including horses, ponies, donkeys and mules. It included a look at sales, income, expenses and assets of those operations. County-level results from Phase 1 are expected soon. Phase 2 of the project will entail an economic impact analysis of Kentucky's equine industry. Phase 2 information will be available mid-2013.

With regard to the inventory of Kentucky's equine operations, the study determined that 56 percent are farms or ranches and 30 percent are for personal use, while 3 percent are boarding, training or riding facilities. Breeding operations accounted for 2 percent.

The vast majority of horses inventoried were light horses (216,300), followed by donkeys and mules (14,000), ponies (7,000) and draft horses (5,100). Thoroughbreds are the most prevalent breed in the state (54,000), followed by Quarter Horses (42,000), Tennessee Walking Horses (36,000), Saddlebreds (14,000), donkeys, mules and burros, Mountain Horse breeds (12,500) and Standardbreds (9,500).



"The University of Kentucky study objectively and scientifically validates the importance of the horse industry to our state. This may well be the most significant body of work ever undertaken to estimate the economic significance of horses to Kentucky," said Norman K. Luba, executive director of the North American Equine Ranching Information Council. "As horse industry enthusiasts, we are indebted to the University of Kentucky, the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund and the Kentucky Horse Council."

The primary use of the majority of Kentucky's equines is

trail riding/pleasure (79,500), followed by broodmares (38,000), horses currently idle/not working (33,000), competition/show (24,500), horses currently growing, including yearlings, weanlings and foals (23,000), racing (15,000), work/transportation (12,500), breeding stallions (3,900) and other activities (13,000).

"Kentucky's horse industry is important to a diverse set of people across the Commonwealth, from the 9-year-old 4-H member with her pony to the retired school teacher who just took up trail riding," said Anna Zinkhon, Kentucky Horse Council Board president and Campbell County resident. "It is the Kentucky Horse Council's goal to keep this industry alive and growing. The Kentucky Equine Survey provides us with the numbers, so we'll know how to develop programs to emphasize strengths as well as work on improving areas of need. It is an important window into the future."

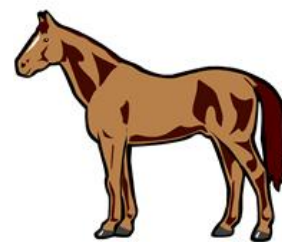
According to the study, the estimated value of the 242,400 equines in Kentucky is about \$6.3 billion. In addition, the estimated value of equine-related assets, including land and buildings, vehicles and equipment, feed and supplies and tack and equestrian clothing, is \$17.1 billion, bringing the total value of Kentucky's equine and equine-related assets to \$23.4 billion.

The total of all equine-related sales and income for equine operations in 2011 was about \$1.1 billion. That total came from sales of all equines, estimated to be \$521.1 million, and \$491 million in income from services provided, including both breeding and non-breeding services such as training, lessons, boarding, farrier, transportation, purses, incentives, etc.

The study found that total equine-related expenditures by equine operations in 2011 totaled about \$1.2 billion. Capital expenditures by equine operations, including the purchase of equines, real estate and improvements and equipment, were estimated to be \$337 million. Operating expenditures, including expenses paid for boarding, feed, bedding, veterinary, supplies, farrier services, breeding, maintenance and repair, insurance premiums, utilities and fuel, taxes, rent and/or lease, fees and payments, shipping and travel, training and other fees, totaled \$839 million. Notably, 77 percent of these operating expenses were spent in Kentucky.

"We are pleased that this Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund investment made by the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board will provide benefits to one of our state's signature industries," said Roger Thomas, executive director of the Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy. "The results of this survey will validate the economic benefits of all breeds of equine to Kentucky's overall economy."


"The College of Agriculture is proud of this project because first and foremost, it represents the best available methods of surveying that universities and government can provide. But the most compelling aspect of this study is that our future policy discussions can be guided by solid numbers. We thank the Kentucky Horse Council and the Governor's Office of Ag Policy as well as our numerous donors, for recognizing how much the Horse Capital of the World needs a sound foundation for policy



decisions,” said Nancy Cox, associate dean for research in UK’s College of Agriculture, Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station director and administrative leader for UK Ag Equine Programs.

Funding for the project was provided by the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund, along with the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, the Kentucky Horse Council and numerous other industry organizations and individuals, a complete listing of which can be found on the project’s website.

More information about the 2012 Kentucky Equine Survey can be found on the UK Ag Equine Programs website at <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/equine/kyequinesurvey> or on Kentucky Horse Council’s website at <http://www.kentuckyhorse.org/>. A copy of the complete Phase 1 results, including county-level breakdowns, will also be posted on both of these websites when they become available.

 
<h2 style="text-align: center;">Sheep and Goat News</h2>
<p>The 2013 KY Small Ruminant (sheep and goats) Grazing Conference will be on Saturday, February 2 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Morehead State University Farm (26 Farm Drive), Morehead, Kentucky. There is a registration fee of \$25 which will include lunch, breaks and materials. Program topics and speakers will include:</p>
<p><u>Economics/Marketing Update -</u> Tess Caudill, Kentucky Department of Agriculture</p>
<p><u>Getting Acquainted with Sericia Lespedeza -</u> Dr. David Kitsch, University of Kentucky</p>
<p><u>Environmental Stewardship for Small Ruminant Production -</u> Dr. Steve Higgins, UK Biosystems and Ag Engineering</p>
<p><u>Reproduction and Causes of Abortion and Infertility -</u> Dr. Seyedmehdi Mobini, DVM, Fort Valley State University</p>
<p><u>Small Ruminant Health and Management -</u> Dr. Seyedmehdi Mobini, Fort Valley State University</p>
<p><u>Producer Panel Discussion</u> Dr. Eden Meyers and Kathy Meyer - Sheep Producers Dr. Beth Johnson and Denise Martin - Goat Producers</p>
<p>3:45 p.m. <u>FAMACHA Training</u> (Optional, Cost \$15.00) Dr. Michelle Arnold, DVM, UK Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory</p>


TIMELY TIPS FOR ESTABLISHING LEGUMES FOR PASTURE OR HAY

Select Appropriate Species—If pastures are to be frequently and closely grazed then white clover would be the best choice for a forage legume. Red clover will yield much more if grazed rotationally and used as a hay crop.

Apply Any Needed Fertilizer Amendments—Forage grasses and legumes have specific soil fertility needs of pH, phosphorous, potash and other nutrients. Make sure that these are present in adequate amounts by soil testing.

Use High Quality Seed of a Certified Variety—The “blue tag” on each bag of certified seed is your assurance that the genetics of the name on the bag are actually in the bag.

Plant Enough Seed at the Right Time—General seeding rates will vary with the species to be seeded, whether the seeding is a complete re-establishment of a field or an addition to an existing pasture, and whether the legume is to be seeded in a new seeding with a grass or into existing grass. Call me for specific rates.

Get Good Seed-To-Seed Contact—This goal actually has three components: seedbed preparation, seed distribution and seed placement.

Control Competition After Emergence—Probably more seedlings fail because of unsuccessful control of weed competition than for any other reason

Maintain Newly Established Stands— Limited, short duration grazing is most acceptable. If weeds are a problem consider a herbicide application.

Seedbed Tips

The seedbed should be firm and fine. It is not desirable to have an overly fluffy seedbed or one that is overly “cloddy.”

Frost Seeding—Frost seedings are usually done in mid February through early March and work best on thin/closely grazed fields.

No-Till Seeding Field— The goal of a no-till seeding is to place the correct amount of seed at the correct depth. The no-till drill can be rented from Southern States.

Fall 2012 Stockpiling Tall Fescue Results

On August 20, 2012 urea (46-0-0) was broadcast on two 5 acre pasture fields, one field at each of



Gene preparing to move the electric fence so cows can access a new section.

the farms of Ron and Anita McCormick and Gene and Marcy Dobbs. The cost of the urea was \$650 dollars per ton. The closely grazed fields were split in half with urea applied at the rate of 175 pounds (80 units of nitrogen) per acre and 125 pounds (58 units of nitrogen) per acre. It is important to note that the two fields were very different. The field at the Dobbs farm is relatively level with good soil depth. The field at the McCormick farm is a narrow ridge top with an estimated 80% of the field having a 15 to 20% slope. This field is more typical of Campbell County's sloping pastures.



Ron showing the height and thickness of his stockpiled fescue

Forage yields were taken on November 7 using 2- 3x3 foot plots from each area. Forage height for the two location averaged 18 to 24 inches. (I would estimate that the fescue continued to grow for another three weeks after the yield data was collected. This could have been another 500 to 800 pounds of additional dry matter yield per acre which is not included in these calculations.) Moisture of the fresh cut stockpiled forage was checked using the microwave method with dry matter being 34% and moisture at 66%.

Forage samples were taken from each of the



McCormick Farm - Notice the slope, tightly grazed pasture in the background and the electric fence which is a must in utilizing stockpiled fescue.

two plots at both locations and sent to Dairy One in New York for a forage analysis. Forage quality did not vary much from the two locations and the two nitrogen application rates. TDN or energy ranged from 60 to 62% and crude protein from 14.5 to 15.9%. Based on these forage analysis the standing fescue had a forage quality equal to or greater than most second cutting alfalfa or alfalfa grass hay. This is typical as the quality of stockpiled fescue goes up as the weather cools off in the fall. This is due to the increased sugar content of the fescue. The forage quality of the fescue would supply the energy and protein needs of a 500 pound steer gaining 2.5 pounds a day and a first calf heifer or cow nursing a calf with no additional



Dobbs Farm - Notice the body condition of these first calf heifers and the difference between the grazed and ungrazed stockpiled fescue.

grain or protein needed.

In early to mid-November, Ron turned out 35 – 500 weight feeder steers/heifers on his five acre stockpiled fescue pasture and Gene turned out 25 first calf heifers (average weight of 1,300 pounds) and one herd bull weighing 2,100 pounds on his pasture. Both

farms used strip grazing to improve the utilization of the forage and reduce field waste. Plans were to get an average daily gains on Ron's feeder calves while grazing the stockpiled fescue. Unfortunately, this was not possible as excessive rain forced the removal of the feeder calves from the pasture to reduce forage waste and damage to the field. Gene did have to pull the heifers from his field but he was able to return to the field and finish grazing once the field firmed up. The 5 acre stockpiled fescue field gave Gene a total of 38 days of grazing for his 26 head of cattle with no additional hay or grain being fed.

My thoughts based on the results of this project:

- ◆ 175 pounds of urea per acre produced the most economic yield per acre
- ◆ Even with the high nitrogen costs, stockpiling fescue is still a viable option to produce high quality/quantity forages especially on your better soils.
- ◆ Fields need to be stripped grazed to improve utilization of the forage.

The following is a more detailed result of the demonstration.

	Dobbs 175 lbs. Urea/Acre	Dobbs 125 lbs. Urea/Acre	McCormick 175 lbs. Urea/Acre	McCormick 125 lbs. Urea/Acre
Units of Nitrogen per Acre	80	58	80	58
Total Dry Matter Yield/lbs. per Acre	5,492	3,758	4,252	3,384
Estimated Yield if No Nitrogen was Applied	2,000*	2,000*	1,700*	1,700*
Dry Matter Yield per Acre Due to Nitrogen Application	3,492	1,758	2,552	1,684
Urea Cost per Acre	\$56.80	\$40.57	\$56.80	\$40.57

One way to look at these results is to consider the

forage yield as a result of the nitrogen application and convert that to round or square bales. For example, for the best field at the Dobbs farm (3,492 pounds): How many additional round bales or square bales did you produce for your \$56.80 investment? Looks like a good investment if you look at it that way and you didn't have to harvest the forage.

*The 2,000 and 1,700 pounds are based on University of Kentucky research trials.

2012 Census of Agriculture

The Census of Agriculture is the leading source of facts and figures about American agriculture. The Census is conducted every five years, and provides a detailed picture of U.S. farms and ranches and the people who operate them. It is the only source of uniform, comprehensive agricultural data for every state and county in the United States. Census forms were mailed in late December 2012 and farmers are asked to respond by mail or online by February 4, 2013. Participation by every farmer, regardless of the size or type of operation, is vitally important. By responding to the Census, producers are helping themselves, their communities and all of U.S. agriculture.



The 2012 Census of Agriculture will collect information concerning all areas of farming and ranching operations, including production expenses, market value of products, and operator characteristics. This information is used by everyone who provides services to farmers and rural communities - including federal, state and local governments, agribusinesses, and many others. Census data is used to make decisions about many things that directly impact farmers, including: community planning, store/company locations, availability of operational loans and other funding, location and staffing of service centers and farm programs and policies.

The Census of Agriculture is your voice, your future and your responsibility! If you have not already done so, fill out your 2012 Census of Agriculture form and mail it in today.