

March 2023

# Ag and Natural Resources Newsletter



University of Kentucky  
College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environment  
Cooperative Extension Service

Clark County Extension Service • 1400 Fortune Drive • Winchester, KY 40391 • 859-744-4682 • [clark.ext@uky.edu](mailto:clark.ext@uky.edu) • <http://clark.ca.uky.edu/>



## A Word from the Agent . . .

It seems like spring might show up a little earlier this year, and I'm extremely happy for the warmer weather. Spring has always been my favorite season, and always will. Also the warmer weather means that you should

be making plans start working your fields. Just a reminder, most weeds need to be identified early in order for proper control. The Clark County Extension Office will gladly help in the identification and control options of weeds. Also, be sure to send in your soil tests. A soil test is the only way to really know which nutrients your fields may need. In this issue you will find information about buttercup control, forage timely tips, tractor maintenance tasks, preventing/controlling broomsedge, and upcoming programs. As always, please feel free to contact the Clark County Extension Office with questions and setup farm visits if you may need one. Be safe!

**Levi Berg**

Clark County Extension Agent  
for Agriculture and Natural  
Resources



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ClarkCountyExtension](https://www.facebook.com/ClarkCountyExtension)



FOR YOUR  
INFORMATION

## March

## Forage Management Tips:

- Continue pasture renovation by notilling seeding legumes.
- Place small seed at 1/4 to 1/2 inch deep and check depth several times during planting; slow down for more precise seeding.
- Continue feeding hay until adequate forage exists in the pasture for grazing.
- Spring seeding of grasses should be done in early to mid-March (but fall is preferred).
- Begin smoothing and re-seeding hay feeding and heavy traffic areas.
- Graze pastures overseeded with clover to reduce competition from existing grasses. Pull off before grazing new clover plants.
- Provide free choice high-magnesium mineral to prevent grass tetany on lush spring growth.



Now is the time to prepare for spring planting by getting your soil tested. Nutrient and acidity levels in soil are analyzed so adequate fertilizer and lime recommendations can be made. Your report for a routine soil test will show the amount of Phosphorus, Potassium, Calcium, Magnesium, Zinc, pH and buffer pH.

You may stop by the Extension Office between the hours of 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday thru Friday, to pick up a soil probe and soil bags. There is no charge for testing your soil.

Cooperative Extension Service  
Agriculture and Natural Resources  
Family and Consumer Sciences  
4-H Youth Development  
Community and Economic Development

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LEXINGTON, KY 40546



Disabilities  
accommodated  
with prior notification.



# Buttercups in Grazed Pastures

- *Dr. J.D. Green, UK Extension Weed Scientist*

One of the signs that spring has arrived is when the yellow flowers of buttercup begin to appear, but it's during the winter months that the vegetative growth of buttercup takes place. As a cool season weed, this plant often flourishes in over grazed pasture fields with poor stands of desirable forages. In fact, many fields that have dense buttercup populations are fields heavily grazed by animals during the fall through the early spring months.

Buttercups are sometimes classified as short-lived perennials, but often grow as winter annuals. Plants typically produce five, shiny yellow petals in the early spring. There are four different species of buttercups that may be found in Kentucky: bulbous buttercup (*Ranunculus bulbosus*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), tall buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*), and small flower buttercup (*Ranunculus abortivus*). Although each of these plants may have somewhat similar flower heads, each of these buttercup species differs somewhat in their vegetative leaf characteristics. New seed are produced during the time petals are showy. Waiting until after flowers appear can be too late to implement control tactics. This is one reason buttercups can survive year to year and new plants emerge each year.

Most buttercup plants emerge from seed during the fall or late winter months. Therefore, pasture management practices that improve and promote growth of desirable plants during these months is one of the best methods to help compete against the emergence and growth of this plant. Whereas,

livestock animals allowed to overgraze fields during the fall and winter months is one of the main factors that contribute to buttercup problems. Mowing fields or clipping plants close to the ground in the early spring before buttercup plants can produce flowers may help reduce the amount of new seed produced, but mowing alone will not totally eliminate seed production.

For chemical control, herbicides registered for use on grass pastures that contain 2,4-D will effectively control buttercup. Depending on other weeds present products that contain dicamba+2,4-D (eg. Weedmaster), aminopyralid (eg. ForeFront, Milestone), triclopyr (eg. PastureGard, Crossbow), or metsulfuron (eg. Cimarron) can also be used. However, legumes such as clovers interseeded with grass pastures can be severely injured or killed by these herbicide products. For optimum results apply a herbicide in the early spring (February - March) before flowers are observed, when buttercup plants are still small and actively growing. For best herbicide activity wait until daytime air temperatures is greater than 50 F for two to three consecutive days. Consult the herbicide label for further information on grazing restrictions, precautions, or other possible limitations.

For fields heavily infested with buttercup a variety of control tactics may be needed. Apply a herbicide to help reduce the population of buttercup plants in the spring plus use good pasture management techniques throughout the year to help improve and thicken the stand of desirable forages.



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# FIELD To FORK

HARVEST YOUR OWN LOCAL MEAT



**March 22, 2023**

***TURKEY PROCESSING AND COOKING***

**5:30 PM (ET)**

**Clark County Extension Service**

**TOPICS COVERED**

Hunting Gear & Tactics, Butchering  
Demo, Meat Safety, Cooking Tips,  
and more

**To register, call 859-744-4682  
or email [cynthia.carr@uky.edu](mailto:cynthia.carr@uky.edu)**



# Reclaiming Broomsedge Infested Pastures and Hayfields

- Dr. Chris Teutsch, UK Forage Extension Specialist

Broomsedge (*Andropogon virginicus* L.) is a native warm-season grass that can dominate poorly managed pastures and hayfields. While it has little value as a forage, it does provide good nesting habitat for birds such as turkey and quail. However, as a forage crop it definitely falls short. When it is found in pastures and hayfields it is often an indication that something is not quite right. In most cases it is related to low soil fertility and poor grazing management. Read on to discover some approaches to reduce broomsedge and promote desirable forages.



- **Soil test and adjust fertility.** Many people say that broomsedge infested pastures need lime. This may be true in some cases, but I have found over the years that they are more commonly low in phosphorus. Soil testing is the only way to tell what amendments you need to apply.
- **Manage grazing and clipping to favor desirable forage species.** In many cases, there are desirable forage species in broomsedge infested pastures. By adjusting soil fertility and managing grazing to favor these species we can make them more competitive. Normally these species are cool-season grasses. So not grazing them closely and frequently during the summer months will get them ready to grow in late summer and fall when temperature and moisture conditions are ideal.
- **Clip pastures in late summer or early fall.** Clipping broomsedge in late summer or early fall once just before it produces seed can reduce shading of desirable forage species, making them more competitive in the stand.
- **Apply nitrogen fertilizer in early fall.** After we clip pastures in late summer, applying 60 lb N/A can stimulate desirable cool-season grasses helping to shift the botanical composition away from broomsedge.
- **Feed hay on broomsedge infested pastures.** This is a low input way of increasing soil fertility over time. Each ton of hay contains approximately 50 lb of nitrogen, 15 lbs of phosphorus, and 60 lbs of potassium. It is important to remember that although feeding hay does bring nutrients into a grazing system, it is a much slower way to build fertility than applying commercial fertilizer or broiler litter. Make sure to move feeding points around the pasture to get a more even nutrient distribution.
- **Burn broomsedge infested pastures.** Not the best idea, because native warm-season grasses evolved under burning. This means that burning can actually enhance broomsedge stands.
- **Apply nitrogen in late spring or early summer and graze broomsedge.** The idea is to make the broomsedge more palatable and graze it during the summer months. The problem with this approach is that desirable forage species will tend to be overgrazed during the summer, putting them at a disadvantage. This approach may actually make your broomsedge problem worse over time.
- **Kill the existing pasture with nonselective herbicide and reestablish it.** Although this is a viable approach to controlling broomsedge, without proper soil fertility and grazing management, the broomsedge will come back. In addition, this is by far the most time-consuming and expensive approach.

Controlling broomsedge in pastures and hayfields will require a sustained effort of improving both soil fertility and grazing management. So make a plan, implement it, and over time you will see a reduction in broomsedge as your desirable forage species become more competitive.

To learn more about integrated weed control in pastures, contact the Clark County Extension Service at 859-744-4682 or visit the [UK Weed Science Website](#).

# Top 10 Routine Maintenance Tasks



Tractor maintenance tends to fall by the wayside when you get busy. Don't put these tasks off until spring and summer. Performing a simple front-to-back routine every week can help you remember key maintenance points. The manufacturer will have suggested intervals for most of the maintenance tasks, so you won't have to do everything every week. But the routine will prompt you to ask if it is time to do specific tasks.

Be ready for the growing season before it starts with these 10 routine maintenance tasks.

- 1** **Inspect the front axles and steering.** Is it time to grease the bearings and steering components? Make sure nothing is loose.
- 2** **Check the coolant system.** Make sure the coolant levels are adequate. Ensure the radiator is not plugged up with debris.
- 3** **Look at those belts.** Check to see they have the right tension and that they are not cracked. This will prompt you to have a spare on hand.
- 4** **The air filter is next.** Make sure it is not clogged and robbing power from your engine by not allowing air to get through.
- 5** **Check engine oil.** You should check this daily, but if you haven't, a good time to do it is during your weekly inspection. Also, check the fluid itself to ensure it doesn't have any contaminants or water in it.
- 6** **Pay attention to the battery.** If your battery is not a maintenance-free battery, check the liquid levels. Examine the cables for corrosion and make sure they aren't rubbing against the frame components.
- 7** **Check clutch and brake linkages.** With everyday use, you may not notice linkage getting out of adjustment. Specifically check for free play and other linkage adjustments.
- 8** **Look at the hydraulic reservoir.** Make sure the fluid is at the correct level and change the fluid when needed. The system provides fluids for remote cylinders, and it is the critical lubricating force in your tractor's transmission.
- 9** **Test those tires.** Make sure they are properly inflated.
- 10** **Check the back of the tractor.** Is it clean? Make sure the hydraulic hose connections are clean to keep dirt out of the system.

These simple procedures can extend the life of your tractors and protect your critical investment.

For more information on equipment maintenance, contact the Clark County Cooperative Extension Service at 859-744-4682.

## Dollars and Sense Volunteers Needed!

**March 29th and 30th  
Baker Intermediate School**

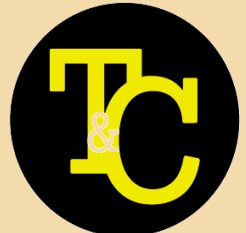
Volunteers work at a booth and interact with youth to assist in making the best financial decisions.

If you are interested in helping, or for more information, email  
4-H Agent Maddie Hale at  
[madalyn.hale@uky.edu](mailto:madalyn.hale@uky.edu)




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 4-H Youth Development

## Volunteers Needed!



**Friday, March 24  
GRC High School**

Truth and Consequences  
The Choice is Yours

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Shonda Johnston, Clark County Extension FCS Agent, by email at [shonda.johnston@uky.edu](mailto:shonda.johnston@uky.edu) or call the Extension Office at 859-744-4682.



College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environment

# 2023 Drone Sprayer Workshop

*This program is designed for agricultural professionals and producers to learn the newest way to dispense chemicals with drone sprayers and will be a combination of classroom and hands-on learning.*

**Wednesday, March 29**

**8:15 am — 3:30 pm**  
(sign-in begins at 8:00 am)

**Fayette County Extension Office**  
(1140 Harry Sykes Way; Lexington, KY)



Register at this link:

<https://ukdronesprayerlexington2023.eventbrite.com>

Registrations are limited and will close on March 22, 2023  
\$105 fee includes workshop material, refreshments and lunch

**If you have questions, please contact:**

**JOSH JACKSON**

([joshjackson@uky.edu](mailto:joshjackson@uky.edu) 859-218-4339)  
OR

**LORI ROGERS**

([lori.rogers@uky.edu](mailto:lori.rogers@uky.edu) 270-625-2143-ext 21317)

## BEEF QUALITY CARE ASSURANCE TRAINING

**Wednesday, March 8**

6:00 pm

Clark County Extension Service



To register, call the Clark County Extension Service at 859-744-4682 or email [cynthia.carr@uky.edu](mailto:cynthia.carr@uky.edu) (**Note:** There is a \$5 fee to take this class. Checks made payable to KBN)

**DID YOU  
KNOW ?**

The Clark County Conservation District currently has two seed drills (*Haybuster 10' wide and Great Plains 7' wide*) that are available for rent at a rate of \$55 per day or \$5.50 per acre.

For more information about availability contact, Angie Embry at (859) 744-2322.



## Cheesy Broccoli Potatoes

5 slices turkey bacon	Salt and pepper to taste
1 tablespoon olive oil	4 large potatoes, cubed
1 clove garlic, minced	2 cups fresh broccoli florets
2 tablespoons chopped chives	1 cup fat-free, shredded cheese

**Preheat** oven to 425° F. **Cook** bacon until crispy, crumble and set aside. **Spray** 9x13-inch baking dish with non-stick cooking spray. In a small bowl, **combine** olive oil, garlic, chives, salt and pepper; **stir** to blend. In a large bowl, **toss** together potatoes and broccoli. **Pour** olive oil blend over potato mixture; **stir** to coat. **Pour** into baking dish and **cover** with foil. **Bake** for 35 minutes or until potatoes are tender; **remove** from oven. **Sprinkle** cheese and bacon on top and place back in oven until cheese melts.

**Yield:** 8, ½ cup servings.

**Nutritional Analysis:** 140 calories, 5 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 20 mg cholesterol, 470 mg sodium, 15 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 2 g sugar, 10 g protein.



Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers' market, or roadside stand.