



NEWSLETTER

Agriculture and Natural Resources

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A Word from the Agent . . .



Happy Holidays! I hope everyone is staying warm out there. We finally experienced some cold weather, so be sure to be prepared for future cold weather with regards to defrosting waters, winterizing equipment, charging equipment batteries, feeding livestock and more. In this newsletter, you will find information on the forage timely tips, weaning stress on beef calves, and more. As always, please contact the Clark County Extension Office if you have questions, and have a great Holiday season!

Levi Berg
Clark County Extension Agent
for Agriculture and Natural
Resources



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FOR YOUR
INFORMATION
December

Forage Management Tips:

- Begin utilizing stockpiled pastures. Graze pastures with orchardgrass and clovers first. Save tall fescue pastures for late winter grazing.
- Using polywire, strip graze stockpiled pastures to improve utilization. Start at the water source and allocate enough forage to for 2-3 days. Back fencing is not necessary.
- Make plans to frost seed red and white clover onto closely grazed tall fescue pastures in February.
- Supplement hay as needed.
- Minimizing waste by utilizing ring feeders.



The Clark County Extension Service will CLOSE for the holidays on December 24, 2022 and will reopen January 3, 2023.

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

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating.
LEXINGTON, KY 40546

2023



Winter School

Our 2023 Winter School is scheduled for **February 16, 21, and 25**. Watch for updates in future newsletters!

mark  your **Calendar**



Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.

Ways to Deter Black Vultures



Source: Matt Springer, Assistant Extension Professor of
Wildlife Management

Black vultures are native to Kentucky. As a result, they are present here year-round, but you may be seeing more of them now for a few reasons. Their overall populations have increased in the state in the past couple of years. They are also a migratory species with a recently expanded range that stretches from Canada to South America, so you will see a lot more birds in Kentucky during the fall and winter as the birds from the northern range migrate south.

While they are usually carrion feeders, black vultures will attack and kill small- to medium-sized animals, including young livestock like calves, piglets, goats and lambs. This is why they are a nemesis to many Kentucky farmers.

Not to mention, black vultures can roost with as many as 100 other vultures, which can make them seem particularly menacing. Their roosting can cause structural damage, because the birds have a bad habit of picking at materials that have a rubbery texture. They have been known to damage pool covers, roof shingles, rubber roof liners, vent seals and window caulking.

Since black vultures are federally protected by the 1918 Migratory Bird Treaty Act, you cannot kill them or destroy their nests or eggs without a federal permit. Even if you do get a permit, these birds are extremely smart and very difficult to kill. However, it is legal to take steps to make the birds uncomfortable by making loud noises or spraying them with a garden hose.

It is also legal to use effigies to deter them from your property. Effigies are perhaps the easiest way to deter black vultures. When properly displayed, these depictions of dead vultures are extremely effective at getting these birds to move on their way. Effigies need to be hung high and upside down by their feet with their wings spread, so the vultures can see them from a distance.

Since many Kentucky livestock producers have animals that give birth during the fall and winter, putting the expectant mothers in one pasture and hanging an effigy in that area is very effective at keeping black vultures away from newborn livestock. For the most success, make sure the effigy can be seen from all angles and any location in a birthing pasture. You may need to hang more than one effigy to accomplish this.

Building your own effigy is easy and inexpensive, as you can reuse many items commonly found around your farm. Matt Springer and Jonathan Matthews from the University of Kentucky Department of Forestry and Natural Resources have developed a pattern and directions to make a black vulture effigy using a rubber stall mat that you can freely access and print online at <http://forestry.ca.uky.edu/files/forfs18-03.pdf>. The entire project costs less than \$30 and takes about two hours to complete.

For information about black vulture control, contact the Clark County office of the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service.



Limiting Weaning Stress for Beef Cattle

Information for this article was obtained from Dr. Jeff Lehmkuhler, UK Beef Cattle Specialist

Over the last few months, I have gotten a few questions from beef producers about weaning calves. Most of the problems such as poor health, poor growth of calves is caused by stress. During weaning, calves experience four types of stress: physical, environmental, nutritional, and social. All of these stresses can be minimized with proper management.

First off, physical stress. Physical stress can be caused from standing long periods in working facilities, being moved, mishandling, castration, and dehorning. You can alleviate most of these of the physical stresses by working calves quickly and calming, castrate and vaccinate at birth, and dehorn earlier in life.



Fenceline weaning on pasture utilizing temporary electric fence. Photo: Jeff Lehmkuhler

Environment stress can be caused by the climate but also by man. The main environmental stress comes when calves are moved to a dry lot from a clean pasture. In the dry lot, the calves are experiencing a different environment than pastures where they were raised. In many cases, weaning the calves into a separate clean pasture instead of a dry lot could be more beneficial to the calf. The dusty area of a dry lot can cause respiratory problems and decrease weight gain. As for rain, ice, snow, and wind, that is out of your control, but try to plan according with the weather when you are weaning calves.

Social stress is caused by removing the calf from its mother. Even though the separate of calf from mother is essential, there are ways to ease the calves into weaning. Try separating the calves and cows by a good fence. The calves and mother can still touch noses, and this will keep the calves calmer.

Nutritional stress happens when calves are transitioned from a milk and pasture diet to a stored forage and grain diet. You should have high-quality pasture available to calves during weaning time in the spring and the fall. It is recommended to turn calves into the pasture when grasses are 8 to 12 inches tall and letting them graze until grasses are 3 to 4 inches tall.

There are many ways to reduce stress on your calves, so take your time to look at your management techniques. Keep in mind, pasture weaning is extremely effective in reducing calf stress as compared to a dry lot weaning programs. Try it and see how you like it. Just remember, anything new to that calf will add stress, and reducing stress can be the difference between a great pay check and a poor pay check.

Did You Know?

It's time for **SOIL** and **FORAGE TESTING**



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.

As we continue to make hay in preparation for the winter feeding season, feel free to stop by the Clark County Cooperative Extension Office and check out a probe for forage testing. **Please call before you come, to be sure a probe is available.** Once you have pulled a forage sample, we can mail it in and receive an accurate measure of the forages nutritional value.



Avoid Tall Fescue Toxicity Next Spring



Tall fescue is grown on an estimated 35 million acres across the United States. In Kentucky, it can make up at least 20% of any given pasture. While most often a safe grass for consumption, it can bring hazards.

Equine fescue toxicosis is caused when pregnant mares eat tall fescue infected with an endophyte fungus, *Epichloë coenophialum*. Consumption of the endophyte-infected fescue can have effects on mares and foals.

“Fescue itself is not a problem for horses,” said Krista Lea, MS, research analyst in the University of Kentucky’s Department of Plant and Soil Sciences and coordinator for the UK Horse Pasture Evaluation Program. “The problem is that most fescue naturally occurring in Kentucky, and throughout the Southeastern United States, is infected with an endophyte which can produce compounds toxic to horses and other livestock. The most common of these is ergovaline.” The grass is a cool-season, perennial bunchgrass brought to North America in the late 1800s from Europe. Since the detection of a field in Eastern Kentucky in 1931, and the ensuing release of the Kentucky-31 variety 12 years later, fescue has become the predominant cool-season perennial grass in the Southeast.

Studies have shown toxicity symptoms appear in pregnant mares at ergovaline levels greater than 300 parts per billion. However, most UK extension publications suggest a more conservative level of 150 to 200 ppb. During the last trimester of pregnancy, researchers generally advise managers remove mares from endophyte-infected pastures to prevent serious difficulties. Fortunately, fescue toxicity in other classes of horses (such as geldings and stallions) has been negligible.

Clinical signs of tall fescue toxicity in pregnant mares include increased gestation length; agalactia (absence of milk production); foal and mare mortality; tough, thickened or retained placentas; weak and immature foals; reduced serum prolactin levels; and reduced progesterone levels. Other signs include abortions, decreased conception, early embryonic mortality and dystocia.

“Getting rid of it on a wide scale is difficult because

it’s so well adapted,” said Lea. “Fescue with the endophyte is much tougher and resistant to grazing, drought and pests. Infected tall fescue is really tough and durable in pastures. The best way is to mitigate it or just remove it from individual pastures one at a time. There are some herbicides you can use which will kill the fescue without killing other grasses.”

Another alternative is to dilute concentrations of toxic tall fescue in pastures by overseeding other grasses and legumes. Since horses do not prefer tall fescue, having other grasses available significantly lowers the chances for toxicity.

Ergovaline concentrations are the highest within the seedheads of the endophyte-infected tall fescue. Strategic mowing of the infected pastures to prevent seed development can lessen the possibility of a spike in toxicity levels. Ergovaline dissipates from the plant after several winter freezes.

Ergovaline levels in endophyte-infected tall fescue are the highest in the spring. As summertime approaches, grasses slow their rate of growth and ergovaline concentration. On Thoroughbred farms, broodmares are usually in their last trimester during the winter months, therefore the risk for toxicity is much lower in early foaling mares.

Lea says that one thing she encourages mare owners to consider is planting novel endophyte tall fescues, such as the Lacefield MaxQ II variety developed by UK College of Agriculture, Food and Environment plant breeder Tim Phillips, PhD, associate professor in Plant and Soil Sciences. Novel endophyte varieties contain special endophytes that enhance persistence, but do not produce or produce lower levels of ergot alkaloids, making them safe for grazing. Endophyte-free varieties are also safe for grazing, but have poor persistence, especially when forage is overgrazed and under drought conditions.

To learn more about the UK Horse Pasture Evaluation Program, visit <https://equine.ca.uky.edu/horsepastures>. To learn more about fescue toxicity in livestock and how to combat it, visit <https://grasslandrenewal.org/workshops/> to participate in several virtual workshops put on by the Alliance for Grassland Renewal.



College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment
Cooperative Extension Service

UK BEEF MANAGEMENT WEBINAR

December 13, 2022

8:00 pm ET / 7:00 pm CT

“Packer and Consumer Trends with Some Holiday Beef Ideas”

Gregg Rentfrow, Extension Professor, University of Kentucky

Alison Smith, Kentucky Beef Council Retail and Foodservice

Registration is necessary, however, if you received this email directly from Darrh Bullock then you are already registered. If you received this from another source, or have not registered previously, then please send an email to dbullock@uky.edu with Beef Webinar in the subject line and your name and county in the message. You will receive the direct link with a password the morning of the meeting. This invitation will directly link you to the site and you will be asked for the password which can be found just below the link. Each session will be recorded and posted for later viewing.

Fescue Foot Can Flare in Cold Weather

The symptoms of a bad case of fescue toxicity are well-documented. One symptom — fescue foot — can become more apparent when temperatures drop during the winter. “As the cold weather moves in, you are likely to notice some cows or yearlings on fescue pastures may be slow-moving early in the day,” notes Eldon Cole, a livestock specialist with the Univ. of Missouri. “This might be an early warning sign of fescue foot,” he adds.

Toxic alkaloids in Kentucky 31 tall fescue cause the restriction of blood vessels. The animals’ extremities are especially susceptible to restricted blood flow such as ears, tails, and feet. Calves can lose the tips of their ears or switches from their tails which lowers market value.

“For affected cows, producers may notice slight swelling in the rear ankles and possible breaks in the skin from the top of the hoof to up above the dew claw,” Cole notes. “Early detection of limping is key. By the time hooves on hind feet show red, gangrene may have set in.” If a limping animal is detected, Cole suggests putting it in a chute and checking its lower leg. “If the animal’s leg feels



cooler than the rest of the leg, move the affected animals from that toxic pasture and dry lot them or at least put them on a different pasture,” Cole recommends. The colder extremity is the result of a lack of blood flow.

Don’t graze toxic fescue pastures too short. Research shows that toxins stay in the lower 2 inches of the fescue plant during the fall. Intensive rotational grazing with frequent movement of cattle will help ensure plants are not grazed too short. Consider feeding stored hay during late fall and early winter cold spells. Toxin levels in stockpiled fescue pastures decline over time. Grazing these pastures in mid- to late winter is rarely a concern.

Cows that develop fescue foot have difficulty walking or grazing, which drastically impacts performance. While there is no cure for the condition, preventative measures such as planting a novel endophyte tall fescue variety can essentially eliminate the problem. Other strategies are also available for mitigating the disease, such as including legumes into a toxic tall fescue pasture. ~ Mike Rankin, Hay and Forage Grower. Subscribe today to receive a free online or print copy of this magazine: <https://hayandforage.com>

USDA Hay Markets—November 29, 2022

Hay prices are at historic highs in many regions. Most producers in KY have said that they are still able to find hay for purchase but the prices are increasing. We expect that as the winter progresses it will be hard to find decent quality hay at a reasonable price. If you think you may need more hay for this winter, then securing that hay now is a good idea. Or at least make sure that the hay you have is stored properly and that you feed with methods that reduce waste. Below are examples of alfalfa and grass prices being paid FOB barn/stack (except for those noted as delivered, which are indicated by a “d” in the table below) for selected states at the end of the day on November 25. Large ranges for a particular grade and state are often indicative of location and/or bale size. Also check the USDA Hay Market Prices for additional locations and more detailed information. Note: there are no prices for KY since we have very few hay auctions in the state.

~Taken from the summary compiled by Hay and Forage Grower. <https://hayandforage.com/>

Grass hay prices reported to USDA from selected states.			
Location	Forage Quality Grade		
	Premium	Good	Fair
-----\$ per ton-----			
Alabama	130-328	76-113	N/A
California	300-350	210-300	N/A
Colorado	N/A	N/A	N/A
Idaho	N/A	N/A	N/A
Iowa	208-240	155-195	150
Kansas	140-225	100-200	150
Minnesota	115-220	90-175	75-155
Missouri	175	125-150	100
Montana	N/A	N/A	N/A
Nebraska	N/A	200-210	125-175
Oklahoma	150-225	125-150	N/A
Oregon	400-425	330	200
Pennsylvania	265-370	190-260	125-190
South Dakota	165-200	150-180	140-150
Texas	240-330	130-275	120-235
Washington	N/A	N/A	175
Wyoming	N/A	N/A	N/A

Alfalfa hay prices reported to USDA from selected states.			
Location	Forage Quality Grade		
	Premium+	Good	Fair
-----\$ per ton-----			
California	315-475(d)	380	235
Colorado	300-325	300	N/A
Idaho	N/A	275-280	N/A
Iowa	210-260	200	N/A
Kansas	228-355(d)	175-320	230(d)-290(d)
Minnesota	180-235	155-235	140-195
Missouri	180-300	150-180	125-150
Montana	250	250	225
Nebraska	270-300	190-230	N/A
Oklahoma	225-280(d)	N/A	N/A
Oregon	350-425	325-350	235
Pennsylvania	350	240-320	250
South Dakota	230-260	220	200
Texas	330(d)-450(d)	280(d)-330(d)	N/A
Washington	360	360	250
Wisconsin	225	130-170	N/A
Wyoming	240-300	210-260	N/A

Slow Cooker BBQ Turkey Legs



Ingredients:

Servings: 6
Serving Size: 6 ounces of meat

- 2 wild turkey legs with thighs
- 1/4 teaspoon ground pepper
- 1/4 cup ketchup
- 1 8-ounce can no-salt-added tomato sauce
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons prepared yellow mustard
- 3 tablespoons vinegar
- 2 teaspoons paprika

Source: Cook Wild Kentucky Project

Directions:

1. Wash hands with warm water and soap, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds, especially after handling raw meat.
2. Season turkey meat with pepper and place in 6-quart slow cooker .
3. To make sauce, combine the remaining ingredients and stir well.
4. Pour sauce over turkey.
5. Cook, covered, in slow cooker on low for 7 hours, or until meat is tender and falls off the bone or has reached an internal temperature of 165 degrees F.

Nutrition facts per serving:

370 calories; 4.5g total fat; 1g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 170mg cholesterol; 470mg sodium; 12g total carbohydrate; 1g dietary fiber; 9g sugars; 7g added sugars; 72g protein; 0% Daily Value of vitamin D; 4% Daily Value of calcium; 15% Daily Value of iron; 15% Daily Value of potassium.



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Find this Cook Wild Kentucky recipe and others for Fish, Venison, Rabbit, Dove, Frog Legs, and more at: <https://planeatmove.com/recipes/>, then browse by Category, and choose Cook Wild Kentucky.