Master Grazer Educational Program
2015 2nd Quarterly Report
(April 1st - June 30th, 2015)

Grazing News Newsletter
- Two issues (Late Spring and Summer) of the UK Grazing News were published. Each 4-page issue of UK Grazing News contained 3 to 4 newly written articles on timely forage and animal topics important in managing a grazing system. Topics included (1) seeding and managing grazing of warm-season annuals, (2) grazing green corn, (3) aerating pastures, and (4) timely tips for grazing during each time frame.
- Each issue of the newsletter was sent electronically to all 120 UK agriculture and natural resource extension agents who use these articles in their county newsletters and newspapers, which greatly expands the readership of these educational resources. In addition, 295 electronic subscribers received these issues along with 180 households receiving printed copies.

Master Grazer Website (www2.ca.uky.edu/grazer)
- New material was added to the UK Master Grazer Website. The home page contains the current and previous articles found in UK Grazing News Newsletter, electronic subscription to our newsletter, informational video clips, upcoming events and programs, reports and accomplishments, links to other useful websites, and important contacts.

Spring KY Grazing School- 2 day, intensive and hands-on educational program for farmers and allied industry personnel on how to design and implement a rotational grazing system
- Held May 20-21, 2015 at the Woodford County Extension Office and the C. Oran Little Research Center.
- Attended by 35 farmers representing over 8374 acres of farm land and 1759 animals. An additional 5 participants representing agricultural industries impact over 900 thousand livestock animals in KY.
- Participants represented 25 KY counties and 3 participants from Tennessee.
- All participants planned to make changes to their grazing systems as a result of attending the grazing school. Participants got experience with temporary fencing systems during the grazing school’s hands on portion of the program. 70% or more participants plan to make the following changes: use rotational grazing instead of continuous grazing, decrease hay feeding by extending the grazing season using corn or stockpiled fescue, seed some warm season grasses for summer grazing, design a watering system to provide ready access to any grazing paddock, and develop more water sites for grazing cattle.
- One producer who attended wrote a letter to his NRCS agent who had informed the producer about the grazing school. The producer wrote “I will and have implemented some practices they discussed. Rotational grazing is becoming a big part of our farm and we feel with the proper management of our grasses we can minimize hay needs for winter and turn grass into pounds. One of the big impacts I see from rotational grazing is the benefit you get from a conservation standpoint. You don't get the compaction and erosion from cattle being in one field all the time. I didn't realize the value grazing alfalfa could bring until the grazing school. Will be grazing alfalfa next year along with warm season grasses. We have already started stockpiling fescue for this fall.
and first part of winter. The sessions on laying out fences and waterers were very informative and will help with future projects. In order to properly manage grass you have to set your fences and waterers up effectively and efficiently, the grazing offered ideas and knowledge to do so.”

**Eastern KY University-Berea Grazing School** - 2 day program designed to teach undergraduate students how to design and implement a rotational grazing system, and introduce them to various methods of extending the grazing season.

- Held on April 7-8, 2015 at the EKU Meadowbrook farm in Richmond, KY.
- This event was attended by 21 undergraduate students representing EKU and Berea College.
- All students found the program to be very educational, and those who owned cattle said they would take what they learned and implement in their personal operation. Several students indicated they would like careers in disciplines related to forage management.

**“Grazing for Cash” Demonstrations and Educational Program**

- These demonstrations continue to illustrate and collect data regarding decreasing the reliance on stored forages by grazing livestock and/or improving the management of forages grazed or fed to increase the profitability of livestock enterprises.
- Protocols were developed to implement and collect data from on-farm demonstrations on extending the grazing season which illustrate (1) incorporating winter and spring annual forages, (2) incorporating summer annual forages, (3) use of stockpiled fescue, and (4) improved pastures with clover. Some of the demonstration farms have been selected. We are working with ANR Agents to implement these demonstrations in 2015.
- Current Status of 2015 Demonstrations:
  - **Weed Control Demonstration** (continuation of project started in 2014)
    - **Lewis County:** Mike Setters is continuing to rotationally graze the pasture where herbicide was applied in July 2014. As a result of controlling weeds (primarily tall ironweed and horsenettle), he has seen improved quantity and quality of pasture forages and been inspired to spray other areas of his farm. Dr. Green plans to revisit the site this July and take samples to determine the effect of pasture weed control a year from the application date.
    - **Mercer County:** Zack Ison is continuing to graze the pastures where herbicide was applied last year. He clipped the pasture this spring and is now grazing this pasture. The field shows improvement in reduced weed pressure where herbicide was applied. As you can see in the pictures, in the area where herbicide was applied there are fewer weeds, and the cattle have grazed this area shorter because of access to more lush grass.
  - **Rotational Grazing demonstration** from 2014
    - **Anderson Co:** David Burge has reconstructed his rotational grazing system and added additional paddocks to his rotation. He is rotating his entire herd this year instead of splitting the herd into two groups for rotational grazed and continuously grazed fields. He also frost seeded clover to improve his pastures. UK ANR Agent Tommy Yankey helped Mr. Burge re-construct his paddocks and interseed the clover. The number of grazing days and stocking rate is being recorded.
  - **Grazing Green Corn- Summer grazing option**
    - **Garrard Co:** Preston Correll with Marksbury Farms has planted grazing corn in combination with cow peas using a no-till drill. The corn is currently 2 feet tall as of June 15th and the additional rain should help in growth. He plans to graze this corn green late this summer depending on growing conditions.

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- **Todd County:** Dan Askew has planted corn for grazing as a green, summer forage, and reported that the crop is growing well. Some voluntary wheat has appeared in the field from a previous cover crop, but the wheat should not survive the heat and cause any problems.

- **Summer Annuals Demonstrations**
  - **Anderson Co- 3 separate farms:** Buddy Smith, Mike Wilson, and Brandon Mitchell have all seeded warm-season annual forages to graze this summer. For all 3 farms, this mixture contained cow peas, brown-midrib sorghum x sudangrass, sunflowers, triple cross sorghum x sudangrass, and lablab beans. All 3 farms report the forage is established and plan on grazing early summer. Mr. Smith is experiencing problems with bugs eating the lablab beans. Mr. Wilson was the first to seed and he should begin grazing near the 1st of July. The lack of rain has delayed the beginning grazing date for all 3 farms.

- **Interseeding Clover into Established Fescue Pastures**
  - **Wolfe Co:** Gary Kash frost seeded red clover into 8 acres in early March. A strip of fescue was left without interseeding clover for comparison. The addition of red clover has provided the grass with additional nitrogen for improved growth. On June 8th ANR Agent Daniel Wilson determined the stand contained 30 to 40% clover. Daniel said that he can tell a major difference in the pastures where clover had been interseeded versus the pastures where none had been added.

  - **Fayette Co:** Todd Clark interseeded clover using no-till drill into fescue pasture. He is grazing the pasture and percent clover in this pasture will be measured at regrowth.

**Educational Opportunities Planned for 2015**

- **KY Advanced Grazing School-** 1 day program, August 17th, 2015, Spindletop farm in Lexington, KY from 7:30a.m. – 3:15 p.m. EDT. Topics to be covered include, but no limited to, (1) renovating and establishing of pastures with demonstrations on calibrating seeding and spray equipment, (2) summer grazing options lead by invited speakers from the Southeast, and (3) fall grazing options.

- **“Lengthening the Grazing Season” – New Program.** This program is designed to reach producers who cannot attend our KY Grazing School in Woodford County. One day or evening short courses will be held in different regions of the state, reaching as many producers as possible. They will consist of multiple topics related to managed, rotational grazing to extend the grazing season.
  - **Southcentral Region:** Clinton and Russell Counties will host a session on a producer’s farm on Saturday, September 19, 2015 in Clinton County from 9:00a.m. – 2:00p.m. CDT. Topics to be covered include benefits of rotational grazing, use of portable fencing, electric chargers, and temporary water systems, no-till drill calibration, paddock size determination, and practices to manage stockpiling fescue.
  - **North East Region:** “Lengthening the Grazing Season” program will be held in Lewis County, date is TBD. Program is being planned at this time.
Demographics of KY

Numbers of Livestock Represented by Producers at Kentucky Grazing School

- Beef Cow/Calf: 1383
- Beef Stockers: 187
- Grass Finished Beef: 86
- Dairy: 99
- Dairy Heifers: 4

2015 Master Grazer County Impact Map.

In addition, producers and allied industry partners residing in all 120 KY counties received UK Grazing News Newsletter.