Grazing News Newsletter

- Two issues (August and September/October) of the UK Grazing News were published. Each 4-page issue of UK Grazing News contained 3 to 4 articles on timely forage and animal topics important in managing a grazing system. Topics included (1) Winter Feeding to Protect Pasture, (2) Grazing Alfalfa after a Freeze, (3) Managing stockpiling Fescue, and (4) timely tips for grazing.
- Each issue of the newsletter was sent electronically to all 120 UK agriculture and natural resource extension agents who utilize the articles and information in their programming, newsletters and on local websites. An additional 298 electronic subscribers were received the e-version of Grazing News. Hard copies were mailed out to an additional 180 households who have requested 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.

KY Advanced Grazing School-

- A 1-day, intensive and hands-on educational program focused on renovating and establishing pastures, and summer grazing options.
- Held August 17, 2015 at the University of Kentucky Spindle Top Farm and the Veterinary Diagnostic Lab.
- Attended by 43 farmers representing over 3850 acres of farm land and over 3000 animals along with 3 industry professionals.
- Participants represented 26 KY counties.
- Attendees learned how to calibrate both a no-till drill and a sprayer. Participants also had the opportunity to practice how to properly sample and test forages for nitrate and cyanide poisoning. All participants planned to make changes to their grazing systems as a result of attending the advanced grazing school. 85% of participants felt that the information they received would increase their profit per animal by at least $11.00 per head ($33,000), with 15% indicating that their profit per head would increase $30.00.
“Lengthening the Grazing Season” Short Course-
- Held on September 19th in Clinton County on the Jim Delk Farm outside of Albany.
- Attended by 63 producers representing over 4300 acres and from 8 different counties
- Participants took part in several seminars and hands-on demonstrations covering a variety of topics including: Pasture Renovation, No-till Drill Calibration, Benefits of Rotational Grazing, Stockpiling Economics, Introduction to Temporary Fencing and Watering, and Assessing Pasture Production
- All participants indicated that their knowledge level of each topic increased after attending the grazing school.
- One attendee stated: “This will really help me improve my rotational grazing practices. I'm convinced I'm on the right track and I now know how to make rapid progress”.

Above: Producers listen to UK Extension Agent Ken Johnson on the topic of temporary fencing and watering options for grazing systems. This session was highlighted by a “show and tell” of many different products to use to implement managed grazing.

“Grazing for Cash” Demonstrations and Educational Program
- The goal of these demonstrations is to illustrate and collect information to help producers reduce their reliance on stored forages by improved management of forages grazed to increase the profitability of livestock enterprises.
- Demonstrations included: (1) incorporating winter and spring annual forages, (2) incorporating summer annual forages, (3) use of stockpiled fescue, and (4) improving pastures with clover.

Farm tours on Demonstration Farms
- Mike Wilson has hosted two field days recently. The first was for NRCS Agents interested in learning more about utilizing warm-season summer annuals in grazing programs. The second field day was a group of 40 producers from Hardin County to observe and learn about the practices that Mike was implementing. Lastly, the Hardin tour group also visited our rotational grazing demonstration in Anderson County learning how this producer has made rotation grazing fit his beef operation and illustrate how he still had forage to graze in paddocks despite this dry summer while others were feeding hay.
A farm tour was also held at one of the other warm-season demonstration farms in which approximately 30 producers were able to learn more about grazing sorghum-sudangrass.

- **Use of Summer annuals**
  - Garrad/Lincoln County - Preston Cattrell forage-finishes beef and finding alternatives to fescue to support higher rates of daily gain are important for his operation. He planted a warm-season annual mix which included a grazing corn variety, sorghum-sudan grass, sunflowers, and cowpeas. He currently is grazing his cow-calf herd through this to support a higher carrying capacity. Preston noted that the grazing corn variety did not seem to produce as much forage biomass as the conventional corn variety he used.

- Christian County – This farm planted a grazing corn variety this spring in Christian county. Unfortunately, a herbicide and nitrogen combination lead to a complete stand kill. Though this seems like a failure, this was an educational opportunity as the conventional corn variety treated the same way was not affected.
Master Grazer Educational Program
2015 3rd Quarterly Report
(July 1st - September 30th, 2015)

- Anderson County – A winter feeding area was reseeded to provide grazable summer forage. Forage regrowth was limited because this area was a winter feeding area. Sorghum-sudangrass was seeded to utilize the nutrients deposited during the winter. This area was grazed four times this summer. It otherwise would have been weeds due to the damage from winter feeding. Using annual forages in these areas provided additional grazing while protecting the soil from erosion.

- Anderson County – Mixtures of sorghum-sudangrass, sunflowers, lablab beans or cowpeas were planted on three farms with a total of 34 acres planted. These forage species are warm-season annuals known for their drought tolerance. Two farms grazed these forages while the third farm harvested the field twice for stored forage. On one farm, the farmer was able to obtain 75 grazing days per acre with mature, bred beef cows. The other farm which grazed these forages was able to obtain 52 grazing days per acre. All three farms were transitioning fields to another forage type and the warm-season annuals allowed them to get good forage production during the transition. One of the cooperating producers, Mike Wilson, of Anderson County, said the cows loved the forage mixture. Two of these farms are participating in a winter annual planting demonstration while the third established alfalfa following the warm-season annuals.

Above: Mike Wilson of Anderson County utilized warm-season summer annuals this year to fill in forage gaps in his grazing system. He is shown here moving his herd within the pasture.
Educational Opportunities Planned for 2015

- “Lengthening the Grazing Season” – New Program. 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
  - An Eastern Region “Lengthening the Grazing Season” program will be held in Lewis County, on the evenings of October 13th and 22nd with presentations on renovating pastures and grazing livestock nutrition planned.

2015 Master Grazer County Impact Map (Does not include Grazing News newsletter distribution)