UK Grazing News Newsletter

- One issue (December) of the UK Grazing News was published. This issue is the 7th newsletter for this year and is an additional issue over the promised benchmarks for the year. The 4-page issue of UK Grazing News contained 4 articles on timely forage and animal topics important in managing a grazing system. Topics included (1) Winter Watering for Livestock, (2) Master Grazer Profile: Bob Hall (3) Information regarding the upcoming Heart of America Grazing Conference in Lexington, KY. (4) Information about the Master Grazer program website.

- 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 316 electronic subscribers 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.

“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, improve management of forages grazed, and increase the profitability of livestock enterprises. Demonstrations have included: (1) incorporating winter and spring annual forages, (2) incorporating summer annual forages, (3) use of stockpiled fescue, and (4) improving pastures with clover.

- Use of Winter Annuals - Demonstration Update
  - Anderson County- Producers Buddy Smith and Mike Wilson planted a winter annual mix of forages in an effort to extend grazing into the winter. Forages included in the mix were: Triticale, Oats, Crimson Clover, Winter Collards, Annual Ryegrass, Winter Pea, and Rye.
  - Both farms plan on grazing the winter annuals this winter and should have some regrowth next spring for additional early grazing.
  - Small areas within each planting were fenced off to gather forage samples to calculate forage production and nutritive value. Results will be summarized in the first quarter of 2016.

“Lengthening the Grazing Season” Mini Grazing Schools

- Regional Session #1: Southeast region- Held during the 3rd reported quarter of 2015 in Russell and Clinton Co.
- Regional Session #2: Northern KY
  - Held on the evenings of October 13th and 22nd in Mason County on the Richard Hardy Farm outside of Maysville with producers from Bracken, Fleming, Lewis, Mason and Robertson Counties attended both sessions.
October 13th session: 34 Producers attended the October 13th session that focused on forage production and management.

- Dr. Ray Smith presented on the topics of measuring forage availability using a variety of methods, renovating pastures by inter-seeding legumes, and pasture fertility management.
- Master Grazer Coordinator Austin Sexten led the group in a discussion and demonstration of how to properly calibrate a no-till drill for seeding forages.

October 22nd session focused on livestock management and was attended by 31 producers.

- Dr. Donna Amaral-Phillips led a discussion on establishing a mineral program for livestock, as well as how using rotational grazing allows proper rest and recovery time for forages.
- Dr. Jeff Lehmkuhler provided a hands on discussion for attendees on different methods of rotational grazing along with a discussion of different components used in temporary fencing and watering systems.
- Master Grazer Coordinator Austin Sexten discussed the importance of record keeping in a successful grazing operation.

Producers attending the “Lengthening the Grazing Season” Mini Grazing Schools learned of the benefits of rotational grazing. Above left, Dr. Jeff Lehmkuhler discusses using temporary fencing in a rotational grazing system. Above right, Dr. Donna Amaral-Phillips talks to producers about proper forage rest and recovery using a mowing demonstration to simulate different grazing management and how it affects forage production.

Regional Session #3: Central KY- Winter Annual Pasture Walk

- On December 16th a pasture walk was held at the farm of Mike Wilson in Anderson County to highlight and inform producers about utilizing winter annuals to extend grazing into the colder parts of the year when traditional forages are not available.
- The Wilson farm is the site of one of the Master Grazer program’s “Grazing for Cash” demonstrations.
- Earlier in the fall four different seed combinations were planted on the farm to establish late season grazing. A total of 15 producers from Anderson, Mercer, and Franklin counties were present at the pasture walk.

Educational Opportunities Planned for 2016

- KY Grazing School- 2 day, intensive and hands-on educational program on how to design and implement a grazing system, May 17-18, 2016, Woodford Co Extension Office and C. Oran Little Research Center
- KY Advanced Grazing School- 1 day program, date and location TBA.