

April is the month of spring that releases spring fever in full blast. This year trees and flowers are blooming, grass is growing, and temps are on the rise. That goes without saying that planting season is upon us. Soon we will be seeing tractors and planters in the fields and on the roads, so be safe and share the road. The weather can be very unpredictable, so it is imperative to stay weather aware this month. However, this could possibly be one of the busiest months of spring spreading fertilizer, applying herbicides, and planting crops. This month is also busy for us here at the Extension Service. Stay up to date with happenings and for farm visits or recommendations reach out to us at (270) 358-3401.

Adam Thomas

LaRue County Extension Agent for Agriculture & Natural Resources Education adam.thomas@uky.edu

- April 22-23 University of Kentucky AI and **Pregnancy Diagnosis** School, Versailles UKY **Beef Unit**
- April 22 BQCA Training, LaRue County Extension, 6 pm EDT
- April 23 BQCA Training, LaRue County Extension, 1 pm EDT

Cooperative **Extension Service**

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

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status 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 st physical or mental disability or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Reason may be available with prior notice. Program information may be made available in langua glish. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and K. Coopera ion of disabilit glish. Lexington, KY 40506



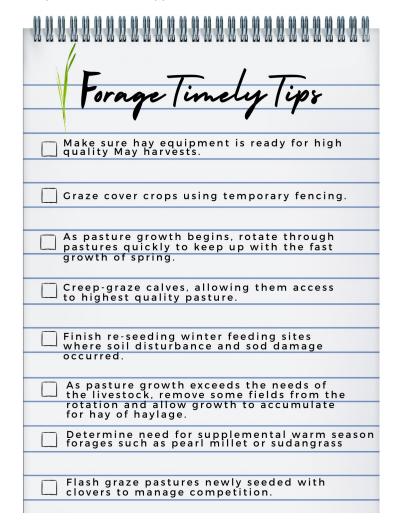




SPRING CALVING COW HERD

Dr. Les Anderson, Beef Extension Professor, University of Kentucky

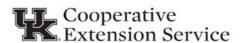
- Watch cows and calves closely. Work hard to save every calf (you can cull/sell them later). Calves can be identified while they are young and easy to handle. Commercial male calves should be castrated and implanted. Registered calves should be weighed at birth.
- Cows that have calved need to be on an adequate nutritional level to rebreed. Increase their feed after calving. Don't let them lose body condition. Keep feeding them until pastures are adequate.
- Don't "rush to grass" although it can be really tempting. Be sure that grass has accumulated enough growth to support the cow's nutritional needs before depending solely upon it. Cows may walk the pastures looking for green grass instead of eating dry feed. This lush, watery grass is not adequate to support them. Keep them consuming dry feed until sufficient grass is available to sustain body condition. We've spent too much money keeping them in good condition to lose it now!
- *Prevent grass tetany! Provide magnesium in the mineral mix until daytime temperatures are consistently above 60 degrees F. Mineral supplement should be available at all times and contain a minimum of about 14 percent magnesium. Make sure that your mineral mix also contains adequate selenium, copper, and zinc.
- Make final selection of heifer replacements. Strongly consider vaccinating with a modified-live BVD vaccine.
 Vaccinate at least 60 days before the start of the breeding season.
- Purchase replacement bulls at least 30 days prior to the start of the breeding season. Have herd bulls evaluated for breeding soundness (10-20% of bulls are questionable or unsatisfactory breeders). Get all bulls in proper condition (BCS 6) for breeding.
- If you are going to use artificial insemination and/or estrous synchronization, make plans now and order needed supplies, semen, and schedule a technician.
- Prebreeding or "turn-out" working is usually scheduled for late April or May between the end of calving season and before the start of the breeding season (while cows are open). Consult your veterinarian about vaccines and health products your herd needs. Plan now for products needed and have handling facilities in good working order. Dehorn commercial calves before going to pasture.







RED HILL FARMS







An Equal Opportunity Organization

SOIL TESTING



Soil testing is a soil-management tool we use to determine the fertility of soil as well as the optimum lime and fertilizer requirements for crops. Fall is the best time of year to test your soil, but spring is also acceptable. Most nutrients take some time to break down and become available to the plant. If you give them all winter to break down, by the time you are ready to plant in the spring, the plants can better take up the nutrients.

When taking a soil sample, remember plants have shallow roots that lie within the top 6 to 12 inches of soil. Use a soil test probe to pull a core at a depth of about 6 to 8 inches and collect approximately two cups of soil per sample. Put the sample in a plastic bucket since a metal bucket may taint the results. When you bring the sample to us we will put it into a soil test

bag along with some information you provide and soon you will have your test results. It will save you some money and it is good for the environment.

Remember the LaRue County Extension Service offers this service free of charge to the residents of LaRue County.

EQUIPMENT RENTAL



That includes no-till drills, boomless pasture sprayer, lime spreader, and hay wrappers.

Contact the LaRue Conservation District at (270) 358-3132 for costs and availability.

DON'T CHASE PRICE PER POUND AT THE EXPENSE OF VALUE PER HEAD

By: Kenny Burdine, University of Kentucky

Over the last few months, I have been able to talk with a lot of cattle producers at Extension programs. As you can imagine, the strength of the cattle market is almost always the first topic of discussion. We are seeing prices like we have never seen before for cattle of all types and weights. But my observation has been that producers tend to become a bit more enamored than they should with price per pound and sometimes don't think as much as they should about value per head.

I see this play itself out in a couple ways. First, I hear some producers talk about selling cattle sooner to capture the higher prices. I don't necessarily think that downside price risk is greater in high priced markets, but I think there is a perception among some that there may be "more to lose". This perception lowers interest in adding value to cattle by taking them to higher weight before sale and leads to more calves being sold off the cow, as opposed to being weaned and preconditioned.

Secondly, I think people get too focused on price per pound differences across weight categories and don't make the mental adjustment to the new price environment. To illustrate this point, I am going to use Kentucky average auction prices from the last week of March. The table below shows the average price for medium / large frame #1-2 steers at 450 lbs, 550 lbs, and 650 lbs. For transparency, I am using the average prices for cattle without a description (not value-added or fancy), which represents most cattle being sold. Also, I am averaging the 50 lb weight ranges to arrive at my average price. In other words, the estimated price per lb for a 450 lb steer is the average of the 400 to 450 lb and 450 to 500 lb weight ranges.

Examine the average prices from Kentucky last week in the table for 450 and 550 lb steers. The price per pound drops by \$0.50 on that 100 lb increase in weight. If one looks solely at price per lb, they may be tempted to sell calves sooner

and avoid the \$0.50 slide. However, in this cattle price environment, those 550 lb steers were still worth \$113 per head more than the 450 lb steers. The relevant question becomes whether that difference justifies keeping those 450 lb steers longer. In many cases, the answer to that question may be yes, especially in the spring with pasture starting to grow.

To be fair, cattle prices are extremely high by historical standards. Price slides widen as the overall market gets higher and we have never seen a calf market this high. What may have seemed like a bizarre price slide a few years ago, may make perfect sense now. For example, if 450 lb steers were selling for \$2 per lb and we applied the same \$0.50 price slide for 550 lb steer, that 550 lb steer at \$1.50 per lb is actually worth \$75 less than the 450 lb steer at \$2. But that is irrelevant in the current market.

The main point is that the spring 2025 feeder cattle price environment is like nothing we have seen before. Given that,

we must be careful about using rules of thumb and simple approaches that may have worked in the past. Focusing on price per lb, without consideration of weight impacts, can be very misleading. And one needs to be careful they aren't chasing price per lb at the expense of value per head!

BEEF MANAGEMENT WEBINAR SERIES

If you are interested and would like to be registered send an email to dbullock@uky.edu with Beef Webinar Series in the Subject and your name and county in the message to receive a Zoom link and password. You will receive an invitation and password the morning of the presentation.

November

Shooting the Bull: Answering all your Beef Related Questions!

Updates and Roundtable discussion with UK Specialists

December

Winter Feeding Strategies to Extend Short Hay Supplies

Dr. Lawton Stewart, Professor, University of Georgia

January

Important Traits for Bull Selection in Kentucky

Dr. Matt Spangler, Professor, University of Nebraska **February**

11

Marketing Opportunities for the Spring
Dr. Kenny Burdine, Professor, and Kevin Laurent, Extension
Specialist, University of Kentucky

March 11

Preparing for a Successful Spring Breeding Season

Dr. Les Anderson, Extension Professor, University of Kentucky

April 8

Health Update and Internal Parasite Field Study Results

Dr. Michelle Arnold, Extension Veterinarian, and Dr. Jeff Lehmkuhler, Extension Professor, University of Kentucky

If you have any questions or need additional information please email dbullock@uky.edu. If you are already registered you will get a Zoom invitation the morning of each session with the link and password.



BQCA

BEEF QUALITY & CARE ASSURANCE

Pertification



APRIL 10 | | 6-8 pm

APRIL 22 ~ / 6-8 pm

APRIL
23 1/2
1-3 pm

LaRue County Extension Service 807 Old Elizabethtown Rd., Hodgenville

(af to register: 270-358-3401

*Certification required for Large Animal CAIP reimbursement.

THE FIRST CALF HEIFER IS NOT A MATURE COW so why should we treat her like one?

Dr. Katie VanValin, Assistant Extension Professor, University of Kentucky

Developing and first calf heifers are not the same as mature cows. While that seems like an obvious statement, there is still a common belief that heifers should be able to "get by" under the same management as mature cows. The thought is that we are selecting heifers that match available resources when we should be selecting heifers that will become cows that match our resources. Because heifers still have additional nutrient requirements for growth, they require different nutritional management than cows.

In the beef industry we talk about selecting "heifer-acceptable" bulls all the time, because we understand the need for emphasis on calving ease in heifers compared to mature cows. If we are going to keep back our own replacements or develop heifers, we also need to think about selecting a heifer acceptable feeding program.

Decades of research have helped us understand how heifers and cows prioritize nutrients. The first priority is meeting maintenance requirements—these are the nutrients needed to keep the animal alive and maintaining their current body condition. Next up is supporting lactation, followed by growth (for growing females), supporting an existing pregnancy, and lastly the estrous cycle or the ability to breed back.

First-calf heifers are particularly vulnerable in a cow-calf operation. They must do everything a mature cow does— raise a calf and breed back—while also continuing to grow. The consequence of not meeting her nutrient requirements is the inability to breed back, often resulting in young females being culled from the herd. Developing heifers is a significant investment, with costs spread over the animal's productive lifetime. Research has shown that it takes at least 4-5 years for a heifer to pay for herself.

When first-calf heifers fail to breed back and are culled, it almost always results in a net loss to the operation. Not only have we failed to recoup her development costs, but we've also lost out on potential income from her future calves.

Reproductive failure in these young females is often wrongly blamed on genetics, but we know reproductive traits are lowly heritable. The real blame is likely due to nutrition, or more specifically undernutrition. The good news is that nutrition is something we can manage and control. Young growing females are smaller than their mature cow counterparts which means that their feed intake will be less than that of the mature cow. With less feed intake, this means that heifers require diets with greater concentrations of energy and protein. In a typical spring calving system, the herd will likely be consuming lush forages during the breeding season but looking at the critical time leading up to breeding season, most herds will be consuming conserved forages. When thinking about supplementing average quality cools season grass hay, a lactating cow may require 3 lbs. of dried distillers grains, whereas a heifer consuming this same hay would require 5 lbs. of dried distillers grains.

To ensure that heifers are meeting their nutrient requirements, consider managing these young females in a separate group from the rest of the cow herd. For smaller herds, it may also make sense to manage any mature cows that have a low body condition score with these young females. This can allow for strategic supplementation for cattle needing extra nutrition without overfeeding mature cows that are in good body condition.

Always test your hay, and consider feeding higher quality forages to heifers, which can reduce supplemental feed costs. Another benefit to hay testing is the ability to select supplemental feeds that provide the best value based on the amount of supplemental energy or protein required by the herd. Energy is often the most limiting ingredient in forage-based systems, and it is highly unlikely that average quality grass hay is going to be an adequate source of energy for developing heifers, lactating first-calf heifers, or even lactating mature cows. Careful consideration should be made to provide adequate energy as well as protein in the diet.

At the end of the day, it is important to remember that developing and first-calf heifers are simply not the same as the mature cows in the herd. Take care to manage these animals to set them up for long-term success and longevity in the herd.

Cooperative

Extension Service

2025 Kentucky Fencing School Agenda

- 7:30 **Registration and Refreshments**
- 8:15 Welcome and Overview of the Day Chris Teutsch, UK
- 8:30 Fencing Types and Costs Chris Teutsch, UK
- 9:00 Fence Construction Basics Eric Miller and Payton Rushing, Stay-Tuff
 - · Perimeter fences vs. cross fences
 - · Fencing options on rented farms
 - · Proper brace construction
 - · Line posts and fence construction

9:45 Break – visit with sponsors and presenters

10:15 Electric Fencing Basics - Jeremy McGill, UK and Nick Chism, Gallagher

- · Proper energizer selection and grounding
- · Proper high tensile fence construction and wire insulation
- · Electric offset wires for non-electric fences
- · Underground wires and jumper wires

11:00 Innovations in Fencing Technologies - Josh Jackson, UK

- · Wireless fences, fence monitoring, fence mapping
- 11:30 Overview of Kentucky Fence Law Clint Quarles, KDA
- 12:15 Catered Lunch visit with sponsors and presenters
- 1:00 Hands-on Fence Building
 - Safety, fence layout, and post driving demo Jody Watson and Tucker LaForce, ACI
 - . H-brace construction Jeremy McGill, UK, Nick Chism, Gallagher & Eric Miller and Payton Rushing, Stay-Tuff
 - . Knot tying, splices, and insulator installation Jeremy McGill, UK, Nick Chism, Gallagher & Eric Miller and Payton Rushing, Stay-Tuff
 - Installation of Stay-Tuff Fixed Knot Fence Eric Miller and Payton Rushing, Stay-Tuff
 - Installation of High Tensile Fencing Jeremy McGill, UK & Nick Chism, Gallagher
- 4:30 Questions, Survey and Wrap-up











Organized and Sponsored by the Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council, UK Cooperative Extension Service, and the Master Grazer Program

This program is designed for producers and agricultural professionals to learn the newest fencing methods and sound fencing construction through a combination of classroom and hands-on learning

WHEN: April 22 - Owensboro, KY April 24 - Tompkinsville, KY

WHERE: **Daviess County Extension Office** 4800 New Hartford Road A Owensboro, KY 42303

> Monroe County Extension Office 252 Commerce Drive Tompkinsville, KY 42167

COST: \$35/participant -- includes notebook. glasses, hearing protection, and catered lunch

Registration DEADLINE: 2 weeks prior to workshop

ONLINE Registration with Credit Card:

Owensboro, KY https://2025FencingDaviess.eventbrite.com/

Tompkinsville, KY https://2025FencingMonroe.eventbrite.com/

Registration by U.S. Mail: Caroline Roper UK Research and Education Center Space is P.O. Box 469 LIMITED... Princeton, KY 42445 Register today!!!

Street: State: Zip code: City:

Cell Phone:

Number of participants x \$35 per participant = **Total Cost** Make CHECKS payable to: KFGC (Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council)







Kentucky Master Grazer Educational Program

High tensile and

wire fencing!!!

Kentucky Fencing Schoo

For more information contact Caroline Roper at 270-704-2254 or Caroline.Roper@uky.edu

KY BEGINNING GRAZING SCHOOL-

2025 Kentucky Beginning Grazing

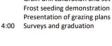
Meet at Logan County Extension Office

- Registration and refreshments
- 8:00 Welcome and introductions
- Getting stocking rate right-Ray Smith, UK
- 8:30 Forage plant growth and grazing management-Chris Teutsch, UK
- 9:00 Grazing system design-Jeff Lehmkuhler
- 9:45 Break
- 10:15 Forage species-Chris Teutsch, UK
- 10:45 Hands on forage identification-Ray Smith, UK
- 11:30 Grazing system planning exercise-Adam Jones, NRCS
- 12:00 Lunch at church
- 12:45 Travel to host farm
- 1:00 Introductions and farm overview Soil sampling pastures
 - Hay sampling
 - Hay sampling Grazing planning exercise

Meet at Logan County Extension Office

- 7:30 Refreshments
- Interpreting soil test results-John
 - Grove, UK
- Meeting the nutritional needs of 8:30 grazing livestock-Katie VanValin, UK
- 9:15 Electric fencing-Jeremy McGill, UK
- Extension
- 10:00 Break
- How I made grazing work on the farm-10:30 Local Producer
- Rejuvenating run-down pastures-Chris Teutsch, UK
- 11:30 Financial assistance for improved grazing infrastructure- Local NRCS
- 12:00 Lunch at extension office
- Travel to host farm 12:45
- 1:00 Hands on electric fencing Hands on watering system Grain drill calibration and set up Frost seeding demonstration

For more information, please contact Caroline Roper at 270-704-2254 or Caroline.Roper@uky.edu

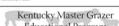
















Helping livestock producers improve profitability with classroom and hands-on learn

When: April 29-30, 2025

Where: Logan County Extension Office

Cost: \$60/Participant – includes all materials, grazing manual, grazing stick, morning refreshments, and lunch both

Program Registration: DEADLINE is April 21, 2025 Online Registration with CREDIT CARD AT:

https://Spring2025GrazingSchool.eventbrite.com

Registration by U.S. Mail with CHECK:

Caroline Roper

UK Research and Education Center 348 University Drive, Princeton, KY 42445 Registration limited to 35 participants!!!



Name: Street: City:

Zip Code: Cell Phone:

Number of participants ____ ___ x \$60 per participant = _

Total Amount

Call for student rates. Please make checks payable to KFGC







U.S. AG TRADE DEFICIT CONTINUES TO WIDEN

Will Snell, Extension Professor - published on Mar. 31, 2025

The balance of trade, measured by the difference in a country's value of exports versus the value of its imports, has received a lot of attention in recent months. While the overall U.S. economy has experienced negative annual trade balances for decades, U.S agriculture has historically recorded annual trade surpluses. Prior



to 2019, the last time U.S. agriculture observed a trade deficit was in the 1950s. However, this situation has reversed in recent years as U.S. agriculture has become a net importer.

U.S. agricultural exports have been slumping the past couple of years in response to a relatively strong U.S. dollar, competition from South American crops, lower commodity prices, and a slowing global economy. According to USDA's latest Outlook for U.S. Agricultural Trade (February 2025) report, U.S. ag exports are projected to total \$170.5 billion in fiscal year (FY) 2025, down 13% since its record level of \$196.1 billion in FY 2022. On the other side of the ledger, U.S. agricultural imports are forecast to continue to increase to record levels of \$219.5 billion in FY 2025, up 13% since FY 2022. Consequently, the U.S. agricultural trade balance is estimated to swell to a record high level of \$49 billion in FY 2025 – the fifth year of recording a trade deficit in the past seven years.

Mexico, Canada, China, and the European Union (EU) are the largest exports markets for U.S. agriculture, but these are also the same markets that are currently in a major trade debate with the U.S. Despite the economic importance of these four export markets for U.S. agriculture, the U.S. faces significant ag trade deficits with each of these markets, with the EU exporting \$22 billion more in ag products to the U.S. in 2024 than it purchased from the U.S., Mexico registering a \$18.3 billion ag trade surplus with the U.S. and Canada with a \$12.6 billion ag trade surplus with the U.S.

The U.S has traditionally been a net importer of fruits and vegetables, primarily due to Americans demanding year-round availability of these food products plus labor cost advantages for these labor-intensive crops, primarily coming in from Mexico and Central/South America. Demand for these horticultural crops has intensified in recent years as Americans attempt to improve their diets by consuming more fresh fruits and vegetables. In addition, the U.S. continues to purchase an increasing volume of food and drink products from Mexico, Canada, and Europe, along with imported lean beef from markets like Australia and New Zealand to blend with fattier U.S. raised beef for ground beef production. Of course, there are ag products that are imported simply because the United States is not a major producer such as is the case with coffees, teas, avocados and certain fertilizers. In recent years increasing imported vegetable oils (used for a variety of uses including foods, plastics, and biofuels) and alcoholic beverages (distilled spirits, wine, and beer) have contributed to rapidly rising imports and boosting the overall U.S. ag trade deficit. Within Kentucky, imported tobacco has played a huge role in the demise of the Kentucky tobacco growing sector.

Tariffs become a policy tool to address trade deficits, with the goal of raising revenues and boosting domestic consumption of U.S. produced goods. However, the net effects of a particular industry following tariff adoption depends on the retaliatory action by our foreign competitors and the ability to displace imports and lost exports with additional domestic demand. In general, U.S. ag faces higher tariffs and trade restrictions in many important export markets than foreign producers face with similar products imported into the United States. Consequently, the Trump administration is promising reciprocal tariff action in the coming weeks to "level" the playing field in the international marketplace which could cause additional reaction by our trading partners.

Overall tariffs/trade wars generally hurt export-dependent industries like U.S. agriculture as reduced export demand leads to lower export volumes, puts downward pressure on farm-level prices and tends to inflate input prices for imported items like fertilizer and farm equipment/parts coming into the United States.[i] A recent USDA study (The Economic Impacts of Retaliatory Tariffs on U.S. Agriculture), concluded that the 2018-2019 trade war led to \$27 billion of U.S. agricultural export losses due to retaliatory tariffs invoked by U.S. trade competitors. In response to trade losses, the Trump administration provided \$23 billion in trade assistance called Market Facilitation Payments (MFP). Farm groups and certain members of Congress are currently lobbying for similar trade assistance programs to become available if a lingering trade war evolves. This outcome, along with the trade policy direction and trade volume impacts remain very uncertain amidst a current vulnerable and depressed U.S. farm economy.

Snell, W. "U.S. Ag Trade Deficit Continues to Widen." *Economic and Policy Update* (25):3, Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Kentucky, March 31, 2025

SOIL PROPERTIES WORKSHOP

APRIL 10, 2025 8:30 AM-3 PM EST

Eastern Kentucky University Meadowbrook Farm 485 Whitt Road Richmond, KY 40475

We will examine three soil pits with distinctly different profile properties to discuss how they will influence water and nutrient retention and delivery



- Plant available water
- Soil texture
- Nutrient profile





CCA Credits: 5.5 CEUs

For questions contact Lori Rogers Iori.rogers@uky.edu 270-365-7541 ext 21317

Pre-registration is required at ATSSoilPropertiesRichmond2025.eventbrite.com

Cost \$105 Lunch provided













9:00 AM - 1:00 PM



\$20

The cost includes a FAMACHA Card and lunch!



Nelson County Fairgrounds 2389 New Haven Rd. Bardstown



Participation is limited!

Register online through the Kentucky Sheep and Goat Development Office.











Slow Cooker BBQ **Turkey Legs**

- 2 wild turkey legs with thighs
- ¼ teaspoon ground pepper
- ¼ cup ketchup
- 18-ounce can no-saltadded tomato sauce
- ¼ cup water
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons prepared yellow mustard
- · 3 tablespoons vinegar
- · 2 teaspoons paprika
- 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.

Yield: 6 servings Serving Size: 6 ounces of meat

Nutrition facts per serving: 370 calories; 4.5g total fat; 1g saturated 370 calories, 4.5g total lat; Ig saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 170mg cholesterol; 470mg sodium; 12g total carbohydrate; Ig 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.





LaRue County PO Box 210, 807 Old Elizabethtown Road Hodgenville, KY 42748-0210

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

LARUE COUNTY FARMERS MARKET

