

The Old Farmhand: Part II

February 2024


Martin-Gatton

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A Note from Jessica

Hello everyone! I hope this newsletter finds you and your family happy and healthy in the new year. I cannot believe we are already into February, but that means spring is just around the corner. I hope that each of you had a great holiday season and are refreshed for a new year and new season.

Please pay close attention to the details of this newsletter as there are several upcoming opportunities and information included. If you have any suggestions for classes that you would like to attend feel free to reach out to me!

As we approach spring get those soil tests in prior to spring planting so you have enough time to receive your results and not be rushed, begin thinking about those high mag tubs for your cattle as the grass greens up in March, think about applying nitrogen to those pastures and hay fields in February/ March, and if you are planning on renovating some pastures or hay fields now is the time to be looking at seed and making plans for renovating. Feel free to reach out with any questions you may have.

February has been named Kentucky Lamb Month by Commissioner of Agriculture, Johnathan Shell. We will be celebrating by posting some fun facts and delicious recipes on our Facebook page throughout the month of February so be sure to like our page and follow along. The page name is Harrison County Cooperative Extension– Agriculture!



Annual Tobacco GAP Training

The Annual Regional Tobacco GAP Training will take place in person at the Harrison County Extension Office on **Wednesday, February 21 at 6:00 pm** If you will be marketing tobacco for the 2024 season, then you will need to attend an annual training in order to update your GAP card. If the training here in Harrison County does not fit your schedule, you can find other opportunities at gapconnections.com under the “What We Do” tab and “Annual Grower Training”.

Remember to **bring your GAP card with you** the night of the training so that your card can be scanned and your training recorded. If you are a new grower, we will need to know your basic information in order to have a card issued to you.

Please RSVP at 859-234-5510 if you plan to attend the meeting so we have an accurate count for the meal that will be provided. If you have any questions please feel free to reach out to me.

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

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Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.

Frost Seeding Clover into Hay & Pasture Ground

The frost seeding method allows seeds to be inter-seeded into undisturbed soils by scattering seed on top of the ground. The freezing and thawing action of the soil works the seeds into the soil where they can germinate. In Kentucky, the ideal time to frost seed is between February 10 and March 1, with mid-February preferred. It is important to consider what forage species can be successfully frost seeded. Seeding red and white clover is recommended using this method. While it is possible to frost seed some grass species, it is typically less successful and generally not recommended. Using this technique can reduce machine use and seeding cost. It is also beneficial as it can be done at times when utilizing heavy machinery would damage pastures such as extremely wet periods. Individual pasture characteristics should also be considered when deciding if frost seeding will be successful on your farm.

Seeding nitrogen-fixing legumes into existing grass stands will reduce nitrogen fertilizer costs and can increase pasture yields and quality. Frost seeding legumes can be very successful when performed correctly using the best suited species. Red and white clovers are the most commonly used and establish well with frost seeding. Birdsfoot trefoil is another option and is often frost seeded in a mix with red clover. This non-bloating legume can be slow to establish and is often sparse until the second year. After established, this long-lived perennial legume has been shown to produce a healthy stand for 10 or more years. Annual lespedeza is another legume sometimes seeded using this low input method. This warm-season, non-bloating legume is fairly drought tolerant and will be very productive when cool-season forages are suffering from “summer slump.” It is not recommended to frost seed alfalfa because of highly inconsistent results.

Few grass species have been proven to be effective when frost seeded. In trials, perennial ryegrass and annual (Italian) ryegrass are the only grasses which established well enough to be a reasonable option when using this method. Orchardgrass has been somewhat successful under favorable conditions but frost seeding orchardgrass is not a suggested practice. It is recommended to drill most grass species for maximum success.

It is necessary to follow basic seeding and management guidelines for successful frost seeding. Having seed-to-soil contact is vital. Reduce the vegetative cover on the area to be seeded to allow more seed to reach the soil surface. Broadcasted seed needs to fall directly onto the soil surface in order to be worked into the soil through the freeze-thaw action that will occur. This can be accomplished by heavy grazing in the late fall and early winter or by mowing area to a low height prior to seeding. It may be more difficult to expose sufficient soil in existing stands of sod forming grasses.

Reducing competition from existing forages and weeds is also crucial for successful seeding. Similar to creating seed-to-soil contact, grazing or mowing closely will reduce competition. In the spring, weed pressure may increase and weeds may need to be controlled by management methods or by herbicide application to allow seedlings to establish. It is important to remember that existing clovers will be killed by herbicide applications. Be sure to read herbicide labels and follow recommended waiting periods before seeding clovers or grazing animals.

Although bloat may be an issue when grazing some legumes, a stand mixed with non-bloating legumes and grasses will reduce the likeliness of bloat. Basic management to reduce bloat should be followed as described in the UK Extension publication <http://www.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/id/id186/id186.pdf>. Adding legumes into existing pastures can benefit soil fertility and provide higher quality feed to livestock. Using the frost seeding method can save money on seeding costs and reduces machinery use.



Clovers can increase pasture quality and reduce the need for nitrogen fertilizer

Timing Fertilizer and Pasture Yields

Many producers have already started planning pasture and hayfield fertilization. Pastures require nutrients to reach peak productivity. These nutrients are derived from several sources including residual nutrients in the soil, the breakdown of manure and soil organic matter, and nitrogen produced by N-fixation in legumes. Most importantly, nutrients are supplied to plants through the application of commercial fertilizer and lime.

Soil testing is the first step to knowing how to manage the fertility of your pastures and hayfields. Then nutrient management decisions are based on these test results. The only true way to know what you need to apply is to determine what nutrients are available in the soil and what nutrients the forage you are growing requires. Producers should take soil samples once per year from hayfields and every 3 years from their pastures. Hayfields need to be checked more frequently since large amounts of nutrients are removed in hay.

Fertilizers are sold based on the percent nitrogen (N), phosphate (P) and potash (K) they contain. One hundred pounds of 19-19-19 contains 19 % nitrogen, 19 % phosphorus and 19 % potassium or 19 lbs. of each nutrient. After soil testing match the recommended nutrients needed to the N-P-K ratio in your fertilizer. Agriculture dealers will always make custom blends depending on your needs.

Although P, K and lime can be added anytime, nitrogen fertilizer should be applied when pastures or hayfields will have the best opportunity to have a yield response. Usually a majority of the nitrogen applied as a part of commercial fertilizer is gone in 60 days. Additionally, applying a high rate of N in one application provides more N than a grass crop can use at one time. This leaves grass pastures and hay fields deficient towards the middle through end of the growing season. Fields that receive high levels of nitrogen also tend to become acidic and require more frequent applications of lime.

For cool season grass pastures, research shows that split applications of fertilizers generally maximize yields when N is applied in the late summer, early spring and occasionally in the late spring. Most grass pastures only require late summer applications because extra N in the spring often produces more growth than livestock can consume. Mid-summer N applications are never recommended for cool-season grasses since they typically do not respond and summer weeds are stimulated.

For grass hayfields, apply N when plants are in an active growth phase and will uptake the most N. Ample precipitation and/or soil moisture along with cooler temperatures provide plants the best chance to respond. Timely application will result in less loss due to leaching or denitrification. A split application can maximize overall forage production, and is recommended for hayfields and for pastures when animals unit per acre are high.



The best management practice to improve nitrogen levels in pastures is to interseed legumes. Legumes, like red and ladino white clovers, have the ability to fix nitrogen from the air and convert it into a mineral form usable by for plants. This is an excellent way to economically increase production of grass pastures. The use of frost seeding is a simple technique of broadcasting seed between mid-February and early March when the ground is still going through periodic freeze/thaw cycles. This allows clover plants to fill in bare spots and improves forage quality and yield.

For more information on fertilizer applications for pastures and hayfields call your local extension office or go to the following publications: <http://www.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/agr/agr1/AGR1.PDF> or <https://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage/ProfitabilitySpringHayfieldNitrogenApplications2011.pdf>

Beef Quality & Care Assurance Certification

I will be holding a Beef Quality & Care Assurance (BQCA) certification class on **February 29, 2024 at 6:00pm** in the big meeting room at the Harrison County Extension Office. The BQCA certification will show you how to properly give injections, handle cattle properly, and give some information on diseases and sicknesses to watch for in the cattle herd. Please call 859-234-5510 if you plan to attend so I can have enough materials available.

Kentucky Shepherd's Market

A Farm to Fiber Event - February 17, 2024



Calling all fiber producers and crafters!

For more information →

Kentucky Fiber Producers! Let's get together and showcase our locally raised fleeces, roving, batts and yarn!

Local Fiber Artists! Did you know you could buy Kentucky grown fiber? Would you like to meet the shepherds who are growing your yarn? Are you interested in learning how to raise your own fiber animals?

The Kentucky Shepherd's Market

February 17th, 2024 10:00 to 4:00

We are still finalizing the details, but the McCauley Building at the Harrison County Fairgrounds (on 27 between Paris and Cynthiana) will be a wonderful venue for local farms to set up their fiber wares with plenty of room for a big spinning circle, a large classroom and, as required for any good fiber meeting, room for a fun potluck!

Kentucky Fiber Producers - DM or email thecrazysheep lady@gmail.com for more information about setting up.

Fiber Crafters and Farm and Fiber Curious - Stay Tuned!

UK Beef Webinar Series

Dr. Darrh Bullock, Beef Extension Professor, University of Kentucky

We will be restarting our UK Beef Webinar Series in December. These sessions are open to any beef producers, but a one-time registration is required. If you have received notices in the past then you are registered and should get the notification, if not, you can register by sending an email with your name and county to dbullock@uky.edu with the topic heading of UK Beef Webinar Registration.

The remaining dates and topics are:

February 13 – What's the Cost of a Cheap Mineral – Dr. Katie VanValin, University of Kentucky
All webinars start at 8:00 EST/7:00 CST. All registered members will receive a Zoom invitation the morning of the presentation with the link and password. For more information contact Darrh Bullock at dbullock@uky.edu

Interested in becoming a Master Cattleman?

The Master Cattleman program is back in action and Harrison, Bourbon and Nicholas Counties have teamed up to offer the program to our producers. We are trying to gauge the interest that we will have because there is a minimum number of participants required in order to host the program. If you are interested in becoming a Master Cattleman please call the Harrison County Extension Office at 859-234-5510 or email me at Jessica.barnes2@uky.edu. Each class will begin at 5:30 pm and a meal will be provided. See the flyer below for some more information and call if you are interested! Pre-registration is required for these trainings and the \$125 registration fee is required prior to the first class.

BECOME A MASTER CATTLEMEN



The Master Cattlemen Program was created to give beef producers an in-depth educational course on beef cattle management. Producers completing the program will acquire knowledge that will help them make informed economic management decisions in their beef operations.

All sessions will begin at 5:30 p.m.

Participants must complete all 6 of the 3 hour sessions to be certified

March 5th
Reproduction and
record keeping
Harrison County
Office

March 7th
Marketing and
Profitability
Harrison County
Office

March 14th
Herd Health
Nicholas County
Office

March 19th
Facilities and
Logistics of
Winter Feeding
Bourbon County
Office

March 21st
Genetics for the
Beef Herd
Nicholas County
Office

March 28th
Nutrition for
Optimum
Production
Bourbon County
Office

Registration fee:
\$125
includes all meals,
class materials and a
farm sign

TO REGISTER:

Call the Harrison County Extension Office at
859-289-2312 or email Jessica Barnes at
jessica.barnes2@uky.edu

Couples are welcome; however, they may need to pay an additional registration fee to cover meal costs. Couples will receive only one set of materials and one farm gate sign. To receive a farm gate sign and complete the Master Cattleman Program, one person must complete all sessions.

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Homesteading Series



**CAIP
ELIGIBLE
COURSE**

Join us on the 4th Tuesday of each month, starting in January and going through May to learn more about homesteading on your very own property! These courses are suited for those who are interested in home-grown products and self-sufficiency, whether you are just beginning or have an established operation and just need a few more resources.

5 Courses Available

Maple Syrup 101

Learn the basics of how to tap your own trees and make maple syrup from an expert right here in Harrison County. Class also includes a field trip on February 16.

(Class attendance is required to participate in field trip)

**January 23
6:00pm**

Fodder Systems

Discover how to create an inexpensive system to easily grow fodder for your small livestock.

**February 27
6:00pm**

Dehydrating

Dehydrating is one of the oldest methods of food preservation. Learn how to use a modern day dehydrator as a dehydrating food method.

**March 26
6:00pm**

Chopping Block: Chicken

Whether you are raising your own chickens or buying whole birds, knowing the skill to break down a whole chicken is a skill that can save you money.

**April 23
6:00pm**

Creating Natural Dyes

Discover the basics of using flowers and foliage to naturally dye materials and the sustainability potential involved with it. Participants will learn the supplies needed to get started, which plants create which colors, the steps involved in naturally dyeing fabrics and see a natural dyeing demonstration.

**May 28
6:00pm**

**To register for the courses or for more information, contact the
Harrison County Extension Office at 859-234-5510**

Community Corner

Spanish Resources



MCTC



LIBRARY



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



HC EXTENSION



Check out what's happening in our community!
Use your smart phone camera to scan the QR codes to be directed to the organization's separate website.

Harrison County



Conservation District

The Harrison County Conservation District State Cost Share Applications are accepted year round. They have just submitted for their annual rankings and will receive approvals from the state in January 2024. If you are interested in applying for any conservation cost-share programs, please call their office at 859-234-5876 ext. 3. Or feel free to send an email to kayleigh.evans@ky.nacdnet.net or paul.wilson@ky.nacdnet.net.

Check out the website for occasional program updates at www.harrisoncountyconservationdistrict.com and like us on Facebook!



Harrison County FFA Alumni Farm Machinery Consignment Auction

Rescheduled for:

February 24, 2024 at 10:00 am

**Harrison County Fairgrounds
2849 US Hwy 27 South
Cynthiana, KY 41031**

**Accepting Equipment:
February 21-23, 2024**

**Contact David Mullen with any questions.
859-983-5574**