



**UK** Cooperative Extension Service

# Clark County AG & NATURAL RESOURCES Newsletter

Clark County Extension Service • 1400 Fortune Drive • Winchester, KY 40391 • 859-744-4682 • [clark.ext@uky.edu](mailto:clark.ext@uky.edu) • <http://clark.ca.uky.edu/>

**May 2024**



## A Word from the Agent . . .

Spring is here and that means many types of farm work will be starting which involves large equipment. Just remember to be careful while working with large equipment, and this doesn't only go for those operating large equipment. Farm equipment will be moving from area to area on the roads, and trust me, a tractor will win a fight with a car. Just be careful! No one wants to hear of a farming accident. Also, remember the sunscreen and hats. Melanoma is not a game, and that hat and sunscreen can save your life.

In this newsletter, you will find information about grazing, the CAIP program updates, forage tips, Cattlemen's Field Day and more.

As always, please feel free to reach out to the Clark County Extension Office if you have any questions!

**Levi Berg**

Clark County Extension Agent  
for Agriculture and Natural Resources  
[levi.berg@uky.edu](mailto:levi.berg@uky.edu)



## Forage Management Tips for May

- Start hay harvests for quality forage. Consider making baleage to facilitate timely cutting.
- Seed warm season grasses for supplemental forage once soil temperature is at 60 F.
- Clip, graze, or make hay to prevent seedhead formation.
- Rotate pastures as based in height rather than time.
- Consider temporary electric fencing to subdivide larger pastures and exclude areas for mechanical harvesting.
- Scout pastures for summer annual weeds and control when small.



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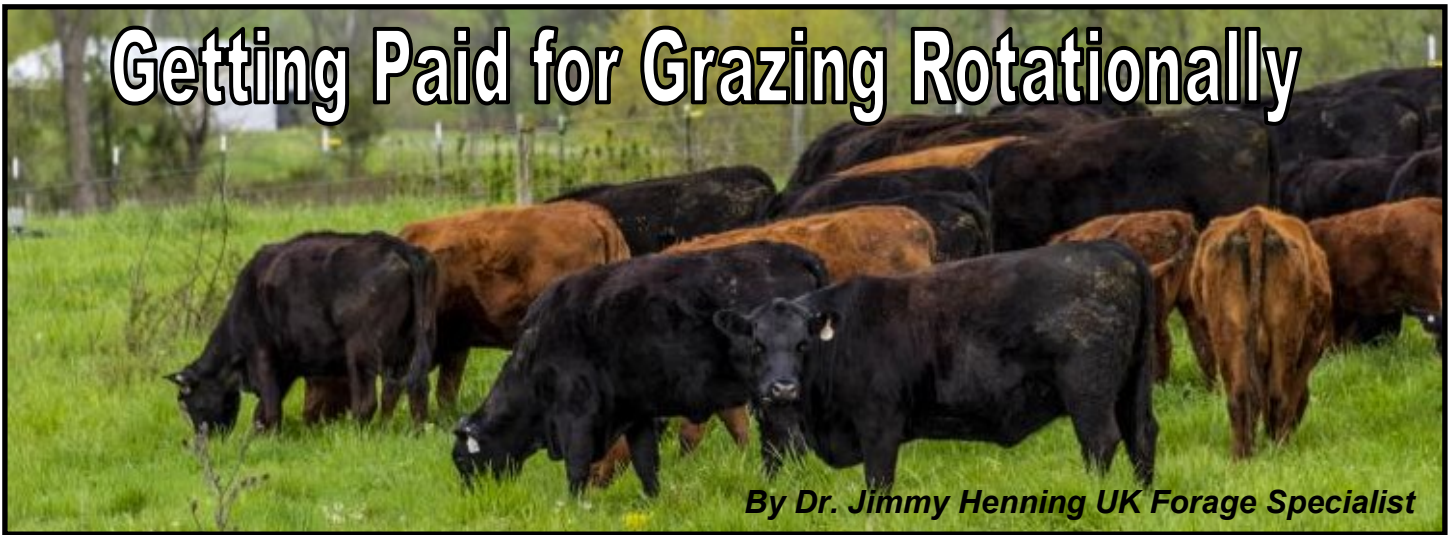
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Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.

# Getting Paid for Grazing Rotationally



*By Dr. Jimmy Henning UK Forage Specialist*

In my first posting in forage extension, a grazing guru was making a big splash in the popular press touting that rotational grazing will let you double your stocking rate. The logical conclusion is that a grazier could double their income by dividing pastures. To me, this was completely illogical because adding fence changed nothing about the productivity of a pasture. Or does it? Even the wildest claims can have a grain of truth in them. I now know that whether rotational grazing pays depends on many factors, such as stocking rate, soil fertility status, grass/forage base, and even the size of the grazing animals.

Let's start with stocking rate. Rotational grazing may allow you to increase your stocking rate if you are severely understocked. It may be difficult to visualize how a field will yield more when rotationally grazing compared to set stocking at very low stocking rate, but research has shown that it can. One study compared the annual productivity of grass at five different grazing intensities from zero to 80%. The plots allowed to grow all season with no defoliation yielded less than those defoliated at 20 or 40%. Non-defoliated plots yielded less because shading caused by the old growth inhibited the emergence and growth of new grass. So depending on the initial stocking rate, rotational grazing may allow a doubling of stocking rate, at least for a while.

Another reason rotational grazing pays is related to the stocking rate effect. When you move from a set stocked pasture to a sub-divided system, you prevent the shading that limits yield. The forage stays in an active growth stage for more of the year, and that fresh growth is green, leafy and very high in quality. Forage quality is therefore nearly always greater under rotational grazing. Rotational grazing lets you eat more of what you grow. Early in the evolution of our understanding of intensive grazing, there was a tendency to graze too close and too often because of this new ability to subdivide pastures. Over time, graziers have learned that high utilization can be overdone. This evolution of

understanding has led to the general recommendation of 'take half and leave half' as a guide for grazing intensity for grasses. Another guide is to always leave some green leaf area on defoliated forage grasses.

Regrowth in grasses will be faster when there is green leaf tissue left after grazing. This principle is especially true for the more erect grasses like orchardgrass and the native grasses. When defoliation results in bare ground, weeds can encroach and soil temperatures are elevated. This heating is especially detrimental to cool season grasses. Rotational grazing pays because we can incorporate high yielding legumes like red clover and alfalfa into the sward. Rotational grazing allows you to manage for a 30 day period of rest between defoliations which is the key to legume persistence. This 30 day rest is the length of time needed to recharge the carbohydrate reserves in the taproot. This carbohydrate reserve is what drives the new legume growth after defoliation.

A graphic poster for the Clark County Fair. At the top, there are three stylized fair tents with red and white striped awnings and blue and white polka-dot canopies. Below the tents, the word "FAIR" is written in large, bold, red letters with a white outline. Underneath "FAIR", the text "Clark County Fair" is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font. Below that, the dates "June 22nd - 29th" are written in a yellow, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the words "SAVE THE DATE" are written in white, bold, sans-serif letters on a red rectangular background. The entire graphic is enclosed in a black border with a white dashed line pattern. At the very bottom, there is a line of asterisks: "\* \* Fair books will be online ONLY this year! \* \*".



I presented at a Master Cattlemen session last night and, after the meeting, got asked a common question about body condition and feeding cows at calving. His question was he had heard that he should reduce feed to his cows before calving to keep birthweights lower to reduce calving problems. He indicated that the BCS of his cows as they begin to calve was only 4. This is a frustrating question because it comes up often and nothing could be further from the truth.

Several researchers have addressed this issue over the last 20-30 years. Each of these experiments had cows that were fed to maintain weight, decrease weight, or increase weight right before calving began. The result of underfeeding cows before calving results in the exact problem the producer is trying to

avoid. The research demonstrated that poor nutrition and low BCS precalving:

- Increased calving problems
- Decreased calf health  
(low colostrum consumption and poor-quality colostrum)
- Increased calf death loss
- Increased the number of days for females to resume estrous cycles.

One of the most extreme research trials on prebreeding nutrition in cows was conducted by Dr. Steve Loerch at The Ohio State University. At that time, the cost of hay was much higher than the cost of grain and Dr. Loerch was examining the impact of feeding corn as an alternative to hay for gestating and lactating cows. The cows used were large framed Charolais-cross cows and were either fed around 11 pounds of whole shelled corn, 2.5 pounds of a pelleted supplement, and 2 pounds of hay (dry matter basis) or offered hay and a salt and mineral mix free choice from November to April. Hay was predominantly first-cutting orchardgrass testing around 72% neutral detergent fiber (NDF) and 9.5% crude protein (CP). Cows fed free choice hay ate twice as much feed resulting in double the feed costs compared to limit feeding the corn-based diet. In this study, cows consuming the corn-based diet had fewer calving problems than the cows consuming forage-based diets. Limit-feeding corn to meet the nutrient requirements of cows did not negatively impact calving performance, pregnancy rate, or calf weaning weight. I don't bring this trial up to endorse feeding gestating cows corn-based diets but rather to reinforce that feeding cows prior to calving does not increase calving problems even if cows are fed corn-based diets.

This producer indicated that his cows were at a BCS of 4 prior to calving and this is going to create some issues for him. Rebreeding performance of cows is greatly influenced by BCS at calving. Cows that are thin (BCS < 5; visible ribs) at calving take longer to resume estrous cycles and therefore are delayed in their ability to rebreed. As precalving BCS decreases, the number of days from one calving to the next (calving interval) increases in beef cows. Females with a precalving BCS <5 tend to have production cycles greater than 1 year. For example, cows with a precalving BCS of 3 would be expected to have a calving interval of approximately 400+ days, while a cow with a precalving BCS of 6 would have a calving interval of approximately 360 days. Thin cows are anestrus for a longer period of time and are therefore more likely to be open at the end of the breeding season. They may also result in lighter calves to sell the next year because the calves from these thin cows will be born later in the calving season.

Let's consider the impact of anestrus and calving date for a herd in BCS 4 that calves from March 1 until May 10. Bull turnout is May 20 and the length of anestrus for mature cows (BCS 4) is 90-120 days and for young cows is 120-150 days. A mature cow (BCS 4) that calves on March 1 will begin to cycle sometime in the month of June and will likely conceive later than desired. However, the thin mature cow that calves on April 20 won't cycle until end of July/middle of August and her opportunity to conceive is minimal. Thin two-year olds nursing their first calf will likely begin cycles 4-5 months after calving and will have limited opportunities to conceive.

Reducing nutrients before calving is a huge mistake but this strategy has been circulating in the beef industry for decades. At first glance, it seems logical, but no research supports the notion of limit-feeding cows prior to calving and this dogma has cost the industry millions of dollars. So, beware of reducing feed to your cows at calving. It won't impact calf size but will impact your cows ability to rebreed.



## ~ CAIP INFORMATION ~

The County Agriculture Investment Program Informational Meeting will be held Monday, June 3, at 6:00 pm at the Clark County Extension Office, 1400 Fortune Drive. *(Review Guideline Changes & Investment Areas).* **Attending the CAIP Informational Meeting will increase your application score.**

CAIP Applications will be available at the Clark County Conservation District office starting Monday, June 10 until Monday, July 1 during the hours of 8:30 am to 4:00 pm, Monday — Friday or at [ccdky.com](http://ccdky.com) under forms. **Please call or email to schedule an appointment.** (NOTE: The office will be closed on Wednesday, June 19).

**Clark County Conservation District Office**  
667 Tech Drive; Winchester, KY  
*(also available at [ccdky.com](http://ccdky.com) under forms)*

**For more information:**  
Angie Embry: 859-744-2322  
[angela.embry@ky.nacdnet.net](mailto:angela.embry@ky.nacdnet.net)

**EVERY OTHER YEAR RULE:** Producers approved for 2023 CAIP funding will not be eligible in 2024, but will be eligible for 2025 CAIP funding. NO applications will be accepted after July 1.

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## ~ CAIP INVESTMENT AREAS ~

- Agricultural Diversification
- Fencing & On-Farm Water
- Forage & Grain Improvement
- Innovative Agriculture Systems
- Value-Added & Marketing
- Technology & Leadership Development
- Large Animal
- Small Animal
- Farm Infrastructure
- On-Farm Energy
- Poultry & Other Fowl

Maximum local cost share is \$1,500.00 on a 50/50 matching basis upon the investment area completion.

**Submit the following:**

- ① Education Certification Form
- ② Project invoices
- ③ Proof of payment for cost share reimbursement. **(NO cash receipts)**

# IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY  
TRANSPORTATION CABINET  
transportation.ky.gov

## State Transportation Crews Treating Roadsides for Noxious Weeds

*Controlling invasive plants protects infrastructure and maintains roadway visibility*

As weather improves, more Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) highway crews will be out working to control noxious weeds along state-maintained roadways – a task essential to protecting roadway infrastructure and maintaining safety for motorists. Motorists should watch for slower-moving spray trucks and other equipment on highways.

In addition, Kentuckians who are treating noxious weeds on private property adjacent to state-owned rights of way may request highway crews to treat select invasive plants.

KYTC is directed to control the following invasive plants and noxious weeds in accordance with KRS 176.051 and 603 KAR 3:100:

- Amur Honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*)
- Canada Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*)
- Common Teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*)
- Cutleaf Teasel (*Dipsacus laciniatus*)
- Japanese Knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*)
- Kudzu (*Pueraria montana*)
- Marestail (*Conyza canadensis*)
- Multiflora Rose (*Rosa multiflora*)
- Nodding Thistle (*Carduus nutans*)
- Poison Hemlock (*Conium maculatum*)

“Managing invasive and noxious plant life maintains safety and protects the integrity of our roadway infrastructure,” said KYTC Secretary Jim Gray. “If left unchecked, this vegetation can reduce visibility, damage drainage systems, and attract wildlife that would otherwise not be in the area.”

Noxious weeds like Spotted Knapweed and Canada Thistle often invade and destroy the roadside turf grass, leaving these areas vulnerable to erosion. Aggressive invasive species like Kudzu can smother native plants through rapid reproduction and long-term persistence. Others like Amur Honeysuckle (a favorite of white-tail deer), if left to mature, can grow over 20 feet tall and wide, reducing roadway visibility.

Kentuckians who want to request weed treatment must submit a written application to their local KYTC highway district office. To request an application, please contact:

**District 7** — 800 Newtown Court; Lexington, KY 40511

Phone: (859) 246-2355 ••• Fax: (859) 246-2354 ••• Email: [KYTC.District7Info@ky.gov](mailto:KYTC.District7Info@ky.gov)

Hours: 8:00 am— 4:30 pm EST, M-F

**OPENING  
DAY**

Mark  
your  
Calendar!



**SAVE THE DATE**

Winchester/Clark County  
**Farmers'  
Market**

**OPENING DAY!**

**SATURDAY, MAY 11**  
8:00 am - 12:00 noon  
Depot Street

For questions and information email:  
[wccfarmersmarket@gmail.com](mailto:wccfarmersmarket@gmail.com)





# Clark County Cattlemen's Spring Field Day

**May 7th, 2024**

**Meal at 6:00pm, Talks after the Meal  
at Pace Farms  
(2520 Pilot View Rd. Winchester, KY)**

**FREE MEAL!**

**Please RSVP By Calling  
859-749-8700!**

*Will count towards CAIP education!*

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## RECIPE

What's  
Cooking?



### Cabbage Rolls

12 cabbage leaves	1 teaspoon garlic salt	¼ cup chopped green pepper
1 pound lean ground beef	¼ teaspoon pepper	1 teaspoon sugar
1 cup cooked brown rice	½ teaspoon dried basil	1 tablespoon cornstarch
1 (15 ounce) can tomato sauce	½ teaspoon dried oregano	1 tablespoon water
	½ cup chopped onion	

**Cover** cabbage leaves with boiling water. Let **stand** until leaves are limp, about 4 minutes. **Drain**. When cool, **trim** away excess ridge on leaf for easier rolling. **Mix** beef, rice, ½ cup tomato sauce, garlic salt, pepper, basil, oregano, onions and green pepper. **Put** ½ cup in each leaf, starting at leaf end; **roll**, tucking in the sides. **Place** seam side down in a 9-by-11-inch baking dish. **Mix** remaining tomato sauce with the sugar, **pour** over rolls. **Cover** and **bake** at 350 degrees F for

1 hour. **Remove** cabbage rolls from baking dish, **pour** juice in a saucepan. **Mix** cornstarch and water; **stir** into saucepan. **Heat** and **stir** until mixture boils, **cook** 1 minute. **Serve** sauce with cabbage rolls.

**Yield:** 6 servings, 2 rolls each

**Nutritional Analysis:** 190 calories, 4 g fat, 1.5 g saturated fat, 40 mg cholesterol, 550 mg sodium, 24 g carbohydrate, 6 g fiber, 9 g sugars, 18 g protein.