

# PLOWING AHEAD

AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES



## September 2017

### PUMPKIN PALOOZA!

Do you love pumpkins? Want to learn how to carve and decorate them? How about new pumpkin recipes? Then join us on **Thursday, October 12th from 6:00 to 7:30 pm**, at the Madison County Extension Office for **"Pumpkin Palooza!"**

This program is meant for all ages.

**Activities include:**

- Story of the Jack-O-Lantern
- How to Grow Pumpkins
- Pumpkin Recipe Samples
- Pumpkin Decorating Ideas
- Punkin' Chunkin'
- Decorate a Pumpkin



Please let us know if you would like to attend so we can have enough supplies. (We will provide one pumpkin per household.) **Deadline to register is October 6th, and space is limited, so call 859-623-4072 to register soon!**

### RINSE AND RETURN PROGRAM

The Kentucky Department of Agriculture will again offer a rinse and return herbicide container recycle program here in the county on **Monday September 18th, from 10 am to 12 noon at Southern States in Richmond**. Containers must be triple rinsed with the label removed, and a one inch hole drilled or cut in the bottom. For more information contact the Richmond Southern States at (859) 623-3041.

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

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LEXINGTON, KY 40546



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College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environment  
Cooperative Extension Service

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## UPCOMING EVENTS...

### Top of the Crop Replacement Heifer Sale



Bluegrass Stockyards of Richmond  
October 16th, 6:00 pm

\*Catalog will be available about one week before the sale.

### CPH-45 Pre-Sale Meeting



Bluegrass Stockyards of Richmond  
October 19th, 6:00 pm

\*Call 859-623-4072 to register.

A sponsored meal will be served.

**\*\* This meeting qualifies as a CAIP educational program for your cost share reimbursement \*\***

### Beef Quality Assurance Training (BQA)



Madison County Cooperative Extension Office  
November 2nd, 6:00 pm

\*final one of this year;  
call 859-623-4072 to register.

### 2017 CPH-45 Feeder Calf Sale

Bluegrass Stockyards of Richmond  
December 12th, 6:00 pm

\*weaning deadline October 28th



Sincerely,

Brandon Sears, County Extension Agent  
for Agriculture & Natural Resources 859-623-4072  
or [brandon.sears@uky.edu](mailto:brandon.sears@uky.edu)



Disabilities  
accommodated  
with prior notification.

# BYPASSING TECHNOLOGY HAS A COST

*By Dr. Jeff Lehmkuhler, Associate Beef Extension Professor, University of Kentucky*

Discussions on the potential to expand exports to China are continuing. The optimists will see this as a means to add value to feeders sold to feedyards in response to increase beef demand. The actual impact of this foreign market on the cow-calf operator is yet to be determined, but increasing demand is generally always favorable. Yet nothing is free in this world, and the current proposed guidelines for beef to be exported to China will likely increase production costs.

As I write this, the most recent guidelines for the beef to be exported as reported by USDA AMS are listed below.

1. Must be derived from cattle born, raised and processed in the U.S.
  - a. Imported cattle from Canada and Mexico that are raised and processed in the U.S.
  - b. Cattle imported from Canada and Mexico directly for processing
2. Cattle must be traceable to the U.S. farm of origin/birth
  - a. Imported cattle must be traceable to the farm of origin or port of entry
3. Beef must be from cattle less than 30 months of age
4. Chilled or frozen bone-in and deboned beef products are eligible as well as offal products
5. Carcasses, beef and beef products must be uniquely identified and tracked up to the time of export

China imports beef from other countries as well. Canada and Australia export beef to China currently. This beef must not contain hormones that are not naturally occurring (i.e. trenbolone acetate) and must be free of beta-agonists (i.e. ractopamine). In addition, pork exported to China from the U.S. must be free of beta-agonists. Though nothing is stated on the USDA AMS website to date regarding the use of growth promotants, reading between the lines, several have stated the use of implants and growth promoting feed additives will not be allowed. With the recent herd expansion and increased beef production, export markets will be important in the near future to sustain beef prices. Yet, what will the cost be for beef to qualify for China?

In the past, Kentucky had an active PVP program for feeder calves when the market demand existed. One had to pay a nominal fee with most of the cost going towards the electronic ear tag, but this was an expense incurred to market calves. In 2007, Iowa State economists estimated that implants improved average daily gain in the feedlot by 12.85% and lowered the breakeven price by 2.3%. This penciled out to about \$18/hd potential return. This work also indicated that ionophores such as monensin and lasalocid provided a 7.7% increase in average daily gain, lowered breakeven price 1.46% and with a cost savings near \$11.51. Lastly, growth promoting additives like ractopamine were estimated to lower production cost by \$43 per head through a 29.9% increase in average daily gain and lowering breakeven cost by 5.5%. If each of these are independent of each other and responses are additive, the potential technology savings is \$72.50 per head per finished steer. Accounting for an increased production cost, this would lower the price one could pay on feeders. Thus, a 500-pound feeder calf would potentially be priced \$14-15/cwt lower to compensate higher production costs.

Granted it is a stretch to assume an additive response for each of the technologies. However, it should illustrate the point that forgoing technology without receiving a higher market price will result in reduced profit margins. Sustaining or increasing market prices are what we are banking on with the opening of the China export market. Be sure to follow this situation so you fully understand the impact it may have on our beef markets.



# FALL FERTILIZER APPLICATIONS TO HAY FIELDS & PASTURES

By Edwin Ritchey, *Extension Soils Specialist, University of Kentucky*

You may be wondering if it's necessary and economical to apply fertilizer to your pastures and hay grounds this fall. The answer depends on your specific situation.

When considering the options for your operation, the first thing you need to do is examine your soil test. If you have not taken soil samples within the past three years, you need to collect new ones before making a decision. From the soil test results, determine what, if anything, is limiting. In terms of soil pH, the minimum value depends on the type of forage you're producing. If it's alfalfa and the pH is below 6.0, you should apply lime. A grass-legume mixture usually can tolerate soil pH down to about 5.8 and a pure grass system probably can go down to pH 5.5 before yields are affected. Similar statements can be made for phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) nutrition, with alfalfa requiring the most and pure grass, specifically fescue, requiring the least.

The University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment recommends P applications starting when the soil test P level drops below 60 pounds per acre and K when soil test K drops below 300 pounds per acre for grasses and legumes. If you are growing alfalfa, we recommend applications for K levels below 450 pounds per acre.

If soil test levels are above these numbers, the likelihood of a yield response to additional P and/or K fertilizer is extremely low. But if you want to be sure that P and K are not limiting, apply fertilizers as recommended. If you are conservative and assume some risk that P and K might reduce yield, you might allow soil test levels to decline further. From small plot research, we know that once soil test P drops below 30 pounds per acre and/or soil test K drops below 200 pounds per acre, a yield response to added fertilizer is likely, therefore; these would be the minimum tolerable levels.

## MID-OCTOBER IS IDEAL TIME TO PLANT SMALL GRAINS

A group of UK specialists were recently discussing what is the best small grain for high quality forage. The consensus was wheat, since it is widely available and favored by many KY growers for forage. For dairy or other high producing livestock, you need to harvest at the boot stage (or sooner) to maintain high quality. At this stage protein content and digestibility are high – similar to alfalfa haylage or corn silage. When harvesting at this early stage, the field can be double-cropped with corn or full season soybeans. It is very difficult to cure early season small grain forages for hay, so most producers preserve as silage or baleage.

Beef producers growing wheat for forage often graze the crop late winter (early March) and then harvest later in the reproductive growth stage (at the milk to soft-dough stage). At this later stage, yields are much higher, but the forage is said to be nutritionally equivalent to an average hay crop. When grazing wheat or any small grains, make sure to remove cattle once stems begin to elongate if you plan to harvest the regrowth.

Forage yields between wheat varieties vary by over one ton per acre so refer to Table 4 of the [2017 Kentucky Small Grain Variety Performance Test](#). Ideally, choose a variety that performs well over several years. For example, the 3 year average shows Pioneer26R10 with consistently high forage yields and also high grain yields. Other varieties that have done well over the past 3 years are: Beck 125; Agrimax 438 DynaGro 9223, DynaGro 9522; Agrimax 454 and VaTech Hilliard. Newer high yielding varieties with only 2 years of test data include: Seed Consultants 13S26, Croplan SRW 9415 and USG 3197.

\*From September Kentucky Forage News

### PLATE IT UP! KENTUCKY PROUD!

Whether it's spring, summer, fall or winter, you can Plate It Up with delicious recipes that put a new twist on your favorite Kentucky Proud foods.

<http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/piukp-recipes>

to find Plate It Up recipes using Kentucky Proud

### MADISON COUNTY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Next meeting is for **Monday, September 25 at 6 pm** at the Madison County Extension Office, 230 Duncannon Lane, Richmond. Please call Randy at 859- 376-0332, or Debbie at 859-200-0090 for more information.



# KENTUCKY BEEF CATTLE MARKET UPDATE

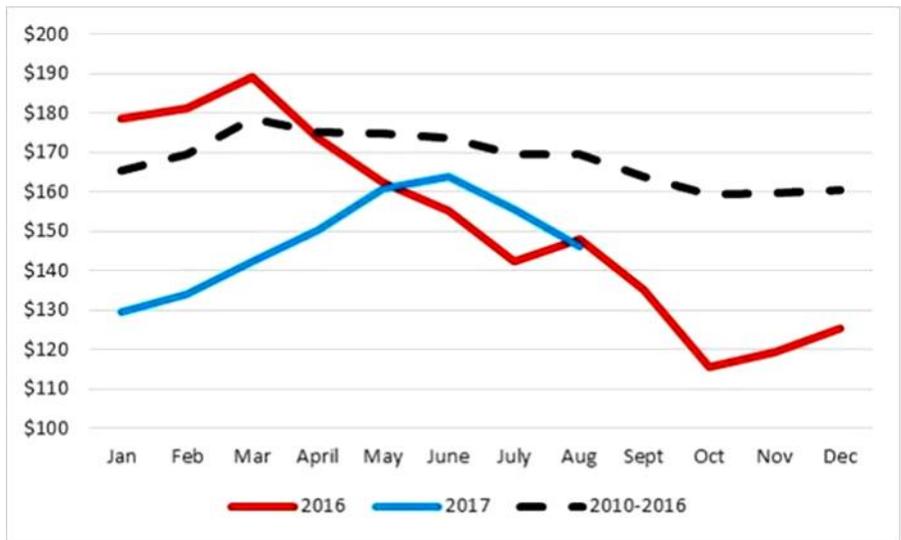
*Dr. Kenny Burdine, Livestock Marketing Specialist, University of Kentucky*

Following up from last month, the feeder cattle market has not pushed much higher, but has managed to hold its ground. At the time of this writing (September 8, 2017), most all CME® Feeder Cattle futures contracts were trading in the mid-\$140's. Fed cattle prices, which didn't reach their annual lows last year until mid-October, still haven't found a bottom for 2017. Slightly lower grain prices have helped somewhat, as has better news on the export front. The horrible flooding in Texas continues to be something to watch, but overall markets have not shown much reaction. Clearly, a large number of cattle and producers were adversely affected.

Glancing at the local cash market price charts that follow, the general downward trend has continued. Calf markets should continue to decline seasonally for the next month or two. Heavy feeder cattle usually peak in late summer or early fall, so 2017 may be a year with a July top. It is worth noting that August average prices were pulled down somewhat by a sharp drop in the last week of the month. Prices in the first week of September were more in line with what was seen in the first three weeks of August.

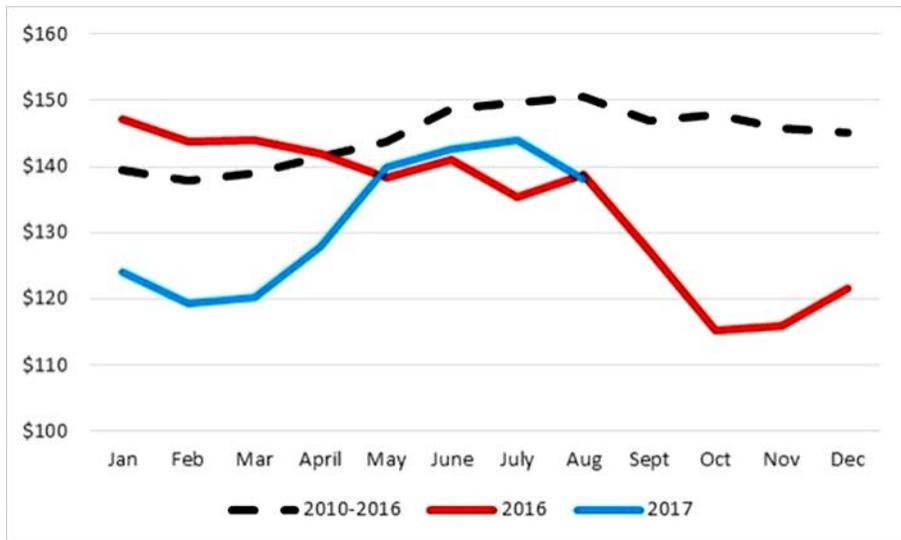
While rainfall has been a serious problem for many producers, it has set many Kentucky cattle operators up very well for fall grazing. We had nearly three inches of rain at my house from September 1<sup>st</sup> through September 5<sup>th</sup>, and more is expected for the week of September 11<sup>th</sup>. The combination of moisture and cooler temperatures should really support pasture growth. The best defense against market declines is usually weight gain and fall pasture growth should provide an opportunity to add some inexpensive pounds to calves or feeders. Stockpiled forage is also an excellent way to reduce winter feed needs for a cow-calf operation. Regardless of the situation, cattle producers should take advantage of this growth to the best extent possible.

**Figure 1. 550# Medium & Large frame #1-2 Steers  
KY Auction Prices (\$ per cwt)**



Source: USDA-AMS, Livestock Marketing Information Center, Author Calculations

**Figure 2. 850# Medium & Large Frame #1-2 Steers  
Kentucky Auction Prices (\$ per cwt)**



Source: USDA-AMS, Livestock Marketing Information Center, Author Calculations