

Robertson County Agriculture & Natural Resources Newsletter June 2024

The Robertson County Extension Office
 will be closed on the following days:

June 19th—Juneteenth Holiday

July 4th—Independence Day



BLUE LICKS

Farmer's Market



Blue Licks Museum
 May 11-September 28
 Fridays 3pm-7pm
 Saturdays 9am-1pm



Mt. Olivet Shelter
 July 12- October 25
 Fridays 9am-1pm



Mt. Olivet City Park
 July 13-October 26
 Saturdays 9am-1pm



Mason Co. Health Dept.
 July 23- September 17
 Every Tuesday
 10am-2pm



We gladly accept
 Senior Discounts



WIC GROWING
 HEALTHY
 FAMILIES



UK Cooperative Extension Service

Going Against the Grain to Work with Mother Nature

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

Approximately 70% of the nation's cow herd calves between January 1st and June 30th each year, typically calving in February and March, a breeding season ranging from May through July, and weaning calves in the fall. On the other hand, those with fall calving herds will calve in September and October, breed from December to February, and wean in the spring. While fall-calving herds are in the minority and may seem to "go against the grain," this system offers producers unique opportunities to work with mother nature, especially in the fescue belt.

Environmental conditions are often more favorable for fall calving, starting with calving. While heat can be an issue, especially for calves born early, the cold, wet, and muddy conditions often seen in February and March are a non-issue. Cool-season forages pick up again in the fall as the summer heat begins to subside, providing a forage base for the lactating cows. Tall fescue stockpiles well and can be a good option for helping to maintain the fall calving herd. One downfall to fall calving that I often hear talked about is the need to overwinter both the lactating cow and her calf. While this is true, and conserved forage plus energy supplementation is often required to meet the nutritional requirements of the lactating cow, these costs can be offset by marketing calves into what is typically a seasonally higher market in the spring.

One of the most significant environmental differences between spring and fall calving herds is observed during the breeding season. Heat stress occurs when the combination of temperature and humidity reaches a threshold that causes cattle to generate or take on more heat than they can dissipate. Heat stress is compounded by cattle experiencing fescue toxicosis because of the vasoconstrictive effect of the ergot alkaloids found in endophyte-infected tall fescue. Heat stress has profound impacts on reproduction in both the cow and the bull, including temporary infertility. As our climate continues to change, periods of heat stress may become more prevalent during the typical May-July breeding season for spring calving herds, and of course, this will be exacerbated in herds grazing endophyte-infected fescue during this time. Fall-calving herds can avoid complications from heat stress during a winter breeding season. Profitability in the cow-calf sector starts at breeding by getting cows bred on time. In the mid-south, we are more likely to encounter challenges from mother nature during the spring-summer breeding season than during fall-winter.

Weaning is another critical dichotomy between the spring and fall calving seasons. With spring calving herds weaning in the fall, producers looking to pre-condition or background their calves may have limited forage resources for both the cow herd and weaned calves. Fall-calving cows weaning in the spring are often weaned at a time when grass growth is plentiful, and it can often grow faster than our cow herd can graze it. Keeping with the theme of working with mother nature, one consideration with fall calving herds is to delay weaning until calves are a bit older. Running fall-born calves on grass can be a great way to take advantage of the relatively cheap cost of gain while adding value and pounds to the calf. Once calves have reached 5-6 months of age, the cow produces much less milk compared to peak lactation, as the calf, at this point, is getting most of its nutrients through grazing. Keeping the calf on the cow a bit longer in the spring can also help to prevent fall cows from becoming overly conditioned after weaning. By delaying weaning later into spring, fall calving producers can also avoid the cool, wet, and muddy conditions often seen in March. March in the mid-south seems to be one of the dreariest months of the year, and I have found myself saying on more than one occasion, "I don't like weaning in March for the same reasons I don't like calving in March."

Nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of the nation's cow herd calves in the first part of the year, and there is a reason for that. As a nutritionist, I know fall calving has its challenges, and managing winter feeding is a big one. It is critically important that those fall-calving cows don't lose condition during the breeding season while typically consuming stored forages. However, when considering the big picture or the overall system, fall calving can have much to offer cow-calf producers in the fescue belt. In the fall calving system, we can work with Mother Nature and avoid extreme heat and fescue toxicosis during the breeding season and cold, wet, and muddy conditions at both calving and weaning (if timed correctly). In return, fall-calving herds can market calves at a time of the year when markets are expected to reach their seasonal highs. Fall calving won't be for every operation, but it is something to consider when managing cows in the fescue belt. Sometimes it pays to go against the grain.

Kentucky Tornado History

Tony Edwards – National Weather Service Charleston, WV

Here's some Bluegrass state tornado facts that blow your mind - pun intended!

- ⇒ Well over 1,000 tornadoes have hit the Bluegrass State since 1950! And that's just counting the ones we know about. Many more have occurred but gone unreported to the National Weather Service.
- ⇒ While tornadoes are much more common in central and western Kentucky, every one of Kentucky's 120 counties has had at least one documented tornado.
- ⇒ Tornadoes occur most frequently from March through June, but they have occurred in every month of the year.
- ⇒ While tornadoes typically occur between 3 pm and 10pm, they have occurred during every hour of the day. The ones that occur during the nighttime hours can be especially dangerous.
- ⇒ The longest tracked tornado to strike Kentucky occurred on December 10, 2021. The tornado first struck Obion County, TN before crossing into Fulton County, KY. The tornado, which reached EF4 intensity with peak winds of up to 190 mph, covered a track of over 165 miles in about three hours, claiming 57 lives and injuring over 500 people.
- ⇒ The strongest tornado you can get is one that is rated a five on the Fujita Tornado Intensity Scale. There have only been two F5 tornadoes to strike Kentucky and they both occurred on April 3, 1974. One struck Breckinridge and Meade Counties and another occurred in Boone County.
- ⇒ Unfortunately, 222 Kentuckians have lost their lives in tornadoes since 1950 with over 3700 injuries and over four billion dollars in property damage!

The good news is that the National Weather Service has meteorologists on staff 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, keeping a lookout for severe weather and tornadoes. We issue outlooks, watches and warnings that keep you informed of the potential for severe weather. Severe weather outlooks are produced by the Storm Prediction Center and can be accessed online or in our Hazardous Weather Outlook product on NOAA Weather Radio. Severe Thunderstorm and/or Tornado Watches are issued when environmental conditions are supportive of severe weather and/or tornadoes. You may get the notification that a Watch has been issued and look outside and see the sun shining. However, that Watch is telling you to get a plan in place as severe weather and/or tornadoes could soon threaten. Warnings are issued when severe weather and/or tornadoes are happening or about to happen. Warnings mean to take action and to get to your safe place!

STORM PLANNING TIMELINE

A few days out	The day before	The day of
<p><i>If the forecast calls for severe weather in a few days, start preparing now.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure that you have emergency supplies Know your safe places Have a family communication plan	<p><i>The day before, forecast accuracy continues to improve.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust plans Make sure your phone can receive WEAs Ensure your shelter is clean and accessible	<p><i>Remain vigilant and aware of any active Watches. A Warning may be issued at a moment's notice!</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remind your family of the communication plan Know how to evacuate and/or get to safety from wherever you are When a Warning is issued, you may only have seconds to take action!

weather.gov

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I think we can safely say that summer is officially here. Hay fields are being mowed, tobacco is being set, corn and soybeans are being planted, and the home gardens are ready for the season ahead.

Be sure to visit the Farmer's Market this summer at one of their locations! (Flyer on the back of this newsletter)

I would like to officially welcome Megan Curtis to the office as our new Staff Assistant. If you happen to be by the office, stop by and welcome her into this new position!

Samantha Saunders

Samantha Saunders
Robertson County Agriculture & Natural Resources/
4-H Youth Development Agent

Robertson Conservation—Equipment Rental

⇒ No-till Drill (Hay Buster)

\$65/day, 1-10 acres

\$65 + \$6.50/acre, 11 acres and up

⇒ Lime Spreader

\$50/day

***NEW* \$100 check deposit is required upon pick-up of equipment**

Contact Grant Paynter to schedule: (606)-842-0320

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- Equipment Rental
- Farmer's Market Squash Sauté
- Kentucky Tornado History
- Going Against the Grain to Work with Mother Nature
- Farmer's Market Flyer
- Holiday Dates (Office Closed)

Farmers Market Squash Sauté

Ingredients:

- 2 cups whole grain rotini pasta
- 3 boneless chicken breasts
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 medium zucchini, diced
- 4 medium carrots, peeled and diced
- 2 medium yellow squash, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons fresh chopped basil
- ¾ cup light Alfredo sauce
- 2 tablespoons shredded Parmesan cheese

Directions:

1. Cook pasta according to package directions.
2. Roast chicken breasts at 400 degrees F to an internal temperature of 165 degrees F, about 25-35 minutes; Let cool.
3. Dice chicken into bite sized pieces.
4. In a large saute pan, add olive oil, zucchini and carrots.
5. Saute until slightly cooked.
6. Add yellow squash and garlic and saute until all vegetables are tender.
7. Remove from heat and stir in basil, diced chicken and pasta.
8. Add Alfredo sauce and toss until ingredients are evenly coated.
9. Reheat by tossing the ingredients in the saute pan for 3-5 minutes over medium heat.
10. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and serve.

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MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

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Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.