

# UK Cooperative Extension Service

Robertson County Extension  
PO Box 283  
Mt. Olivet, KY 41064

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**Robertson County**  
**BEEF FIELD DAY**

UK Cooperative Extension Service

**SEPTEMBER 15, 2025**

**CURRENT HEALTH ISSUES FACING THE LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY**  
DR. JESSIE LAY, UK EXTENSION ANIMAL HEALTH VETERINARIAN

**NEW TECHNOLOGY/EQUIPMENT DEMONSTRATIONS**

MEAL WILL BEGIN AT 5:30 PM AT THE  
ROBERTSON COUNTY AG BARN  
LOCATED ON MT. PLEASANT BEHIND ROBERTSON CO. SCHOOL

THE PROGRAM WILL BEGIN AT 6:00 PM WITH  
SHUTTLES GOING TO KELVIN GAY'S FARM

QUALIFFIES FOR CAIP EDUCATION

**KADF**  
KENTUCKY AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

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

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT  
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# Robertson County Agriculture & Natural Resources Newsletter September 2025

# Cowherd Expansion is Not the Only Way to Capitalize on a Strong Calf Market

*Dr. Kenny Burdine, University of Kentucky*

Much has been written recently about the strength of the current cattle market. With beef cow inventory at a 60+ year low and demand being very strong, cow-calf operations are clearly in the driver's seat. Calf values are more than double what they were three years ago, which speaks to considerable opportunity for cow-calf operators to invest in their cowherds. Expansion is often the first opportunity that comes to mind in a strong calf market and there is likely merit in expansion, if doing so is consistent with the goals of the operation. However, some producers may not be interested in growing the size of their cowherds due to land and / or management constraints or other reasons. This article will briefly walk through other opportunities that are worth consideration.

**Genetics** – Some producers may choose to use the current increase in cow-calf revenues to improve the genetics of their herds. Investment in genetics often has long-run implications, resulting in more valuable calves to sell over multiple years. Sires certainly come to mind, but the current calf market combined with the strong cull cow prices may provide an opportunity to cull a bit harder and also purchase some higher quality females.

**Facilities** – Working facilities are crucial resources for cow-calf operations for numerous reasons. Value-added opportunities such as health protocols, post-weaning programs, castration, implants, etc. are made much easier with quality working facilities. The same is true for receiving, sorting and loading of cattle. If facilities have historically been a constraint, the current market may be providing an opportunity to make improvements and position the operation to sell higher value calves in the future.

**Grazing systems** – Winter feeding days are typically the most expensive days for cow-calf operations as stored feed (hay) is being fed. Improved grazing systems (interior fencing, additional water sources, portable mineral feeders, etc.) allow for more efficient use of existing forage during the grazing season. This has the potential to increase the number of grazing days and reduce the number of hay feeding days. In most cases, this results in lower costs per cow per year and puts an operation in a better position when calf prices fall.

**Debt service / financial management** – Strong markets also provide an opportunity to make financial moves that set an operation up for the long run. Increased revenues may allow an operation to pay down some debt and thereby lower their cost structure going forward. Similarly, it may provide an opportunity to build some working capital and lower dependence on operating loans. In both cases, future interest expenses are reduced, which has implications for profitability.

To be clear, the purpose of this article was not to discourage expansion. There are likely operations that need to do just that. But I also live in an area where land constraints are real and know that expansion is not always feasible. Plus, I have seen situations where operations expanded during strong markets and wished they had not done so a few years later. The main point is that the current calf market provides a significant opportunity for a cow-calf operation to position itself for the long-run, and that will look different for each one of them.

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## Consider Planting Oats for Fall Grazing and Stored Forage

When grass is in short supply during the fall and extra grazing sources are needed, spring oats can be used for grazing cattle during late fall. Oats is a high quality forage comparable to winter wheat and can be used for pasture, hay, or silage. Spring oats can be planted in early August to mid-September, often after corn silage has been harvested if it was an early crop. The planting rate for oats is about 2.5 to 3 bushels per acre, and it is ideal to plant into a well prepared seedbed. Oats can be planted into crop residue if weeds are killed ahead of planting. They do not establish well when broadcast seeded. When seeding oats, the producer should apply around 40-60 pounds of nitrogen, unless the previous crop was heavily fertilized.

With good soil moisture, spring oats will be ready to graze about 6 to 8 weeks after emergence. When grazing oats, calves and yearlings can gain over two pounds per day. A downside to grazing oats is the potential for grass tetany. A producer should ask their veterinarian about feeding high-mag mineral while grazing oats. Also, if cattle have been grazing short or dry pastures and are suddenly turned onto a pasture of oats they can develop respiratory problems.

If choosing to use oats for hay, a producer should cut before a killing frost if plants are in a desirable growth stage. Oats cut before a killing frost can accumulate nitrates, so be sure to test this hay before feeding. After a killing frost occurs, oats should be cut soon after the plants begin to dry out. Since spring oats will not survive the winter, they are a great choice when needing fall pasture, but you are looking to plant something different the next spring. If you have enough pasture in the fall, the good thing about spring oats is they can also be seeded in February to early March and used as a ground cover or companion crop.

Other small grain options for grazing are available, but oats can provide a high quality forage in a short period of time. Cereal rye is a better option if you want late fall grazing and grazing early next spring or annual ryegrass will give grazing into early June.

## A soil test is the first important step for updated lime and fertilizer recommendations

*Source: John Grove, research and extension soils specialist; and Edwin Ritchey, extension soils specialist, UK Research and Education Center at Princeton*

To maximize yield and economic return on every acre, begin with a soil test. A current soil test from the University of Kentucky ensures you will receive more accurate fertilizer recommendations, optimized for your crop, field history and production methods.

University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service publication AGR-1, Lime and Nutrient Recommendations, was recently updated for the 2025-2026 crop seasons, and new recommendations are a result of a review of soil fertility research and soil test data collected across the state. It covers nutrient recommendations for grain crops, forages, tobacco and several specialty crops.

To get reliable recommendations, it is important that the submitted soil sample accurately represents the field or area from which it was taken. Analytical results provided on the soil test report form are for the sample submitted, and the listed recommendations are based on those results. All recommendations are made on the assumption that a representative soil sample was taken. If soil sampling procedures are questionable, accurate nutrient and lime rate recommendations for the sampled field or area cannot be assured. Because results can vary between fall and spring sampling, it is better to consistently sample a given field at the same time of the year.

When sampling untilled fields in the fall, an equal number of cores should be collected from both between and close to the rows. For tilled areas, take soil cores to the depth of primary tillage (plow, chisel plow, big disc, etc.), usually six to eight inches. With pastures, lawns, no-tilled areas and turf, take soil cores to a depth of four inches.

With changing fertilizer and commodity prices, each production field should be sampled every two years. Annual sampling is preferable for high-value crops or rotations that remove large amounts of soil nutrients, such as alfalfa, tobacco and double-crop silage. Sampling each year after manure application is also recommended.

Recommended nitrogen additions are made with an expectation of a yield response as measured for that crop under Kentucky soil and weather conditions. Yield responses to phosphate and potash rate recommendations are more likely when soil test levels “very low,” “low” and “low-medium.” When the soil test value is “medium” or higher, associated phosphate or potash rate recommendations are mostly intended to ‘maintain’ sufficient soil phosphorus and potassium availability.

Field research yield and soil test relationships measured by the Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station were used to establish the phosphate and potash recommendations contained in AGR-1. Those recommendations strive to enable each soil/field to supply a sufficient level of available plant nutrients, regardless of seasonal weather and assuming good management practices.

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## Italian Chicken Summer Squash Skillet

### Ingredients:

- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 1 yellow bell pepper, diced
- 1 sweet onion, diced
- 2 large tomatoes, diced
- 3-4 garlic cloves, finely diced
- 3 medium summer squash, sliced crosswise
- 1 cup whole grain rotini pasta, uncooked
- 1¼ pounds boneless skinless chicken breast
- Nonstick cooking spray
- 1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
- 2 tablespoons dried Italian seasoning
- ½ cup shredded Parmesan cheese
- Salt and pepper, to taste

### Directions:

1. Slice squash into ¼ inch pieces.
2. Combine all vegetables, with garlic in a bowl. Set aside.
3. Cook pasta according to package directions.
4. Cut chicken into bite size pieces.
5. Spray large nonstick skillet with cooking spray; heat to medium.
6. Add chicken; cook 6 minutes or until no longer pink, stirring occasionally.
7. Add vegetable mixture to the skillet.
8. Add tomato sauce and dried Italian seasoning.
9. Stir well. Increase heat, cover and bring to a boil.
10. Reduce heat to medium; cook 10 minutes or until summer squash is tender, stirring occasionally.
11. Stir cooked pasta into chicken/vegetable mixture.
12. Sprinkle with cheese.
13. Season as needed.

## ROBERTSON COUNTY

# SHRED EVENT

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27<sup>TH</sup>

9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

ROBERTSON CO. EXTENSION OFFICE

39 E WALNUT ST. MT. OLIVET, KY 41064

**\*MUST BE A ROBERTSON COUNTY RESIDENT\***

DOCUMENTS CAN BE BROUGHT TO THE EXTENSION OFFICE ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26<sup>TH</sup>, IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO COME THE MORNING OF THE EVENT

SPONSORED BY:

**UK** Cooperative  
Extension Service  
Robertson County



## SURVIVING HIGH PRICES\$

WEBINAR SERIES

WEDNESDAYS: 2-3 P.M. ET | 1-2 P.M. CT | 12-2 P.M. MT | 11-12 P.M. PT

Join us for a 6-week series to learn about & discuss the uniqueness of the current cattle cycle so we can better understand how to help our producers manage their operations through record-high prices!

Speakers will include Extension economists and specialists from across the United States.

DATES	TOPICS
September 10	Industry Margins & Beef Demand
September 17	Differences in this Cattle Cycle & Import Dynamics
October 1	Risk Management & What To Do With Profits
October 8	Operation Resiliency & Contract Grazing
October 22	Integrated Crop-Livestock Systems & How Not to Need a Hay Baler
October 29	Defining "Better Genetics" & Economics of Reproduction Strategies

Visit this link or scan the QR Code to register: [bit.ly/register-for-SHPwebinar](https://bit.ly/register-for-SHPwebinar)



UF IFAS Extension  
University of Florida

MSU MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY  
EXTENSION

ESU EXTENSION

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

UTIA INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE

UK Martin-Gatton  
College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environment

extension

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

TEXAS A&M  
AGRI LIFE  
EXTENSION

The University of Florida is an Equal Opportunity Institution. The University of Florida is committed to providing universal access to all of our events. For disability accommodations such as sign language interpreters and listening devices, please contact Hannah Baker, [h.baker@ufl.edu](mailto:h.baker@ufl.edu), 863-374-7051 at least 2 (week in advance). Advance notice is necessary to arrange for some accessibility needs.

**UK** Cooperative  
Extension Service



## BUFFALO TRACE AREA FARM SCHOOL

**4 THURSDAYS IN OCTOBER**  
**6:00PM** MEAL WILL BEGIN AT 5:30PM

**FLEMING CO. EXTENSION OFFICE**  
1384 ELIZAVILLE RD, FLEMINGSBURG

**OCTOBER 2**  
PLUMBING BASICS

**OCTOBER 9**  
PLANT DISEASES 2.0

**OCTOBER 16**  
BACKYARD POULTRY

**OCTOBER 23**  
CONTAINER  
GARDENING

CALL YOUR LOCAL EXTENSION OFFICE TO  
REGISTER BY 9/26/2025

-BRACKEN: (606) 735-2141  
-FLEMING: (606) 845-4641  
-LEWIS: (606) 796-2732  
-MASON: (606) 564-6808  
-ROBERTSON: (606) 724-5796



OR REGISTER USING  
THE QR CODE



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

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University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, UK Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Extension, Cooperative Extension, KY 40306

# MASTER CATTLEMAN PROGRAM

**UK** Cooperative  
Extension Service  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

PRESENTED BY THE BUFFALO TRACE COUNTIES COOPERATIVE EXTENSION OFFICES

THURSDAYS: JANUARY 8-FEBRUARY 12

- 1/8/26: GENETICS (AT MASON COUNTY)
- 1/15/26: MARKETING & PROFITABILITY (AT BRACKEN)
- 1/22/26: HERD HEALTH (AT FLEMING COUNTY)
- 1/29/26: NUTRITION (AT MASON COUNTY)
- 2/5/26: REPRODUCTION & RECORDS (AT LEWIS CO.)
- 2/12/26: FACILITIES & WINTER FEEDING (AT ROBERTSON)



CALL TO REGISTER OR USE  
QR CODE:

- BRACKEN COUNTY: (606) 735-2141
- FLEMING COUNTY: (606) 845-4641
- LEWIS COUNTY: (606) 796-2732
- MASON COUNTY: (606) 564-6808
- ROBERTSON CO.: (606) 724-5796

\$100 per  
person  
OR  
\$125 per  
couple

MEAL  
BEGINS AT  
5:30PM  
we will serve until a  
little after 6pm

PROGRAM  
6PM-9PM

REGISTRATION REQUIRED BY: 12/1/25

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

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University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, UK Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Extension, Cooperative Extension, KY 40306



DATE	PROGRAM	LOCATION
SEPTEMBER 1	OFFICE CLOSED	
SEPTEMBER 2	LAST DAY TO SIGN-UP FOR FREE HAY TESTING	CALL 606-724-5796 TO REGISTER
SEPTEMBER 4	ROBERTSON COUNTY LIVESTOCK SHOW AND SALE	ROBERTSON COUNTY AG BARN
SEPTEMBER 11	BQCA 10:00 AM	ROBERTSON CO. EXT OFFICE
SEPTEMBER 15	ROBERTSON COUNTY BEEF FIELD DAY MEAL WILL BEGIN @ 5:30 PM PROGRAM @ 6:00 PM	ROBERTSON COUNTY AG BARN & KELVIN GAY'S FARM (SEE FLYER FOR MORE INFO)
SEPTEMBER 24	BQCA 5:00 PM	ROBERTSON CO. EXT OFFICE
SEPTEMBER 27	ROBERTSON COUNTY SHRED EVENT	ROBERTSON CO. EXT OFFICE
OCTOBER 2	BUFFALO TRACE AREA FARM SCHOOL PLUMBING BASICS	FLEMING CO. EXT OFFICE
OCTOBER 9	BUFFALO TRACE AREA FARM SCHOOL PLANT DISEASE 2.0	FLEMING CO. EXT OFFICE
OCTOBER 16	BUFFALO TRACE AREA FARM SCHOOL BACKYARD POULTRY	FLEMING CO. EXT OFFICE
OCTOBER 23	BUFFALO TRACE AREA FARM SCHOOL CONTAINER GARDENING	FLEMING CO. EXT OFFICE

#### **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**

#### **Soil Samples**

First 10 Soil Samples are free!

\$10 deposit on soil probe

Soil bags can be picked up at the Extension Office

#### **Hay Samples:**

Hay sampling is **FREE** during the East KY Hay Contest.

If you want to be added to our list, please call our office at (606)-724-5796

# Robertson County Agriculture & Natural Resources Newsletter September 2025

 Cooperative  
Extension Service

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Robertson County  
39 E Walnut St.  
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samantha.woerner@uky.edu

September is here, which means we have almost made it to fall! There are several upcoming programs happening here in the county, as well as our Buffalo Trace Area.

## **BQCA certifications are free for the month of September!**

If you have a BQCA that is expired or getting ready to expire, now is the time to go ahead and get that renewed. You can find the dates of these classes on the next page.

The Robertson County Extension Council has partnered with the Robertson County Public Library to offer a community shred event on **Saturday, September 27th.**

*\*If you are unable to come on that day, you can bring any documents you may want to shred to the Extension Office on Friday, September 26th.*

We are very excited to offer this service to our community!



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

### **Inside this edition:**

- Important Dates
- Robertson County Shred Event
- Surviving High Prices
- Buffalo Trace Area Farm School
- Mater Cattleman Program
- A soil test is the first important step for updated lime and fertilizer recommendations
- Italian Chicken Summer Squash Skillet
- Cowherd Expansion is Not the Only Way to Capitalize on a Strong Calf Market
- Consider Planting Oats for Fall Grazing and Stored Forage
- Robertson County Beef Field Day

## **Reviving Cool-Season Lawns for Fall**

Cool-season grasses (like Kentucky bluegrass, tall fescue) often brown out in summer but can be revived.

- **Mow High:** Keep your mower at 3-4 inches to promote deeper roots and reduce weeds.
- **Water Smart:** Water infrequently but thoroughly. Avoid overwatering.
- **Fertilize in Fall:** Conduct a soil test every 3-5 years.
- **Plant in Fall:** Mid-August to mid-September is ideal for new lawns. Cooler temps and less weed competition allow strong root development.

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Disabilities  
accommodated  
with prior notification.