

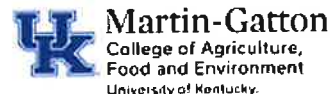
RUSSELL COUNTY AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES APRIL 2025 NEWSLETTER

University of Kentucky Extension and Kentucky Beef Network
offer Free BQCA Certifications in April and September

Kentucky Beef Network, University of Kentucky

The Kentucky Beef Network and University of Kentucky Extension are pleased to announce that they will be offering free Beef Quality and Care Assurance (BQCA) certifications in April 2025 and September 2025. The Kentucky BQCA program takes national BQA practices one step further to provide a holistic program for Kentucky producers, by adding cattle handling and animal care components to the training modules. Educational modules provide the best management practices for handling cattle and providing for their well-being, in addition to training on the core principles of BQA. The cost of BQCA enrollment is \$5 for in person training through their local county extension office and \$10 for online training, however from April 1- 30, 2025 and September 1-30, 2025 the Kentucky Beef Network and University of Kentucky Extension will be sponsoring the enrollment costs, making it free for producers. Producers interested in taking advantage of this opportunity can visit www.kybeefnetwork.com to access the online training platform or contact their county extension office for training opportunities. "We are very excited for this partnership for our Kentucky cattlemen to continue to tell their story to consumers through sound management practices," says Kevin Laurent University of Kentucky Co-BQCA Coordinator. The Kentucky Beef Network and University of Kentucky merged their Cattle Handling and Care Program with the National BQA program to create a new program, aptly named the Beef Quality and Care Assurance (BQCA) program. This program was implemented to raise awareness of practices that ensure the proper handling and welfare of cattle while keeping farmers safe and continuing to supply healthy beef to consumers. In turn, this program enables beef and dairy producers to enhance their product, maximize marketability and strengthen consumer confidence.

RUSSELL COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE
2688 S. HWY 127
RUSSELL SPRINGS, KY 42642
PHONE: (270) 866 - 4477
FAX: (270) 866 - 8645
RUSSELL.CA.UKY.EDU



UPCOMING EVENTS:

Cattleman's Meeting

April 1st: 6:00 PM CST

South KY RECC

2405 N. Main St., Jamestown, KY 42629

Beekeeper's Meeting

April 3rd: 6:00 PM CST

Russell County Extension Office

Homemade Soap Demonstration

April 14th: 5:00 PM CST

Russell County Extension Office

Herb Gardening

April 17th: 5:00 PM CST

Russell County Extension Office

Jonathan Oakes
CEA for Agriculture and Natural
Resources

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

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, physical or mental disability or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Reasonable accommodation of disability may be available with prior notice. Program information may be available in languages other than English. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating.
Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.

Strategies for Managing the Spring Flush

Chris D. Teutsch, University of Kentucky Research and Education Center at Princeton

In March and April grass growth in the Commonwealth's pastures goes from 0 to 60 mph in just a few short weeks. We often find ourselves impatiently waiting for grass to start growing and then just a few short weeks later wondering what we are going to do with it all! The following suggestions can help you to optimize spring grass growth and utilization.

- **Implement rotational grazing.** To fully utilize the spring flush of pasture growth YOU must be in control of grazing. In a continuous grazing system, the cows are in charge. By utilizing rotational stocking, you start to make the decisions. Implementing a rotational stocking system may be as simple as closing some gates or stringing up some polywire.
- **Feed a little hay in late winter and early spring.** It is tempting to just let cattle roam and pick pastures for early grass growth, but this can set pastures back and reduce overall dry matter production. It is important to restrict cattle to one area, feed a little hay, and allow pastures to accumulate 4 to 5" of growth before starting to graze.
- **Start grazing at 4 to 5" of growth.** Another common mistake that graziers make is waiting too long to start grazing. If you wait until the first paddock is ready to graze, 8-10" of growth, by the time you reach the last paddock it will be out of control. Starting a little bit early allows you to establish a "grazing wedge" (Figure 1).
- **Rotate animals rapidly.** It is important to realize that grazing pastures closely and repeatedly as they initiate growth in early spring can reduce production for the entire season. Therefore, it is important to keep animals moving rapidly through the system. The general rule is that if grass is growing rapidly then your rotation should be rapid. This will allow you to stay ahead of the grass by topping it off and keeping it in a vegetative state.

- ***Do not apply spring nitrogen.*** Applying nitrogen in the spring will make the problem of too much grass at once even worse. In many cases you are better off applying nitrogen in late summer or early fall to stimulate growth for winter stockpiling.
- ***Remove most productive paddocks from rotation and harvest for hay.*** Graze all paddocks until the pasture growth is just about to get away from you and then remove those productive paddocks from your rotation and allow them to accumulate growth for hay or baleage harvest.
- ***Increase stocking rate in the spring.*** An alternative to harvesting excess forage as hay or baleage is to increase your stocking rate by adding more animal units in the spring and then decreasing animal numbers as plant growth slows due to higher temperature during the summer months. While this is a viable approach, it is not practical on smaller or part-time operations.
- ***Even out seasonal distribution of forage by adding warm-season grasses.*** Adding a well-adapted warm-season grass that produces most of its growth in July and August would allow you to concentrate grazing on your cool-season paddocks during periods of rapid growth (spring flush). After cool-season grass growth slows in late spring and early summer, animals can be shifted in the warm-season paddocks for summer grazing.
- ***Bush-hog out of control pastures.*** The benefits of clipping include maintaining pastures in a vegetative state, encouraging regrowth, and controlling weeds. Clipping pastures costs money, so make sure that the primary reason for bush-hogging is pasture management, not aesthetics.
- ***Stockpile out of control pastures for summer grazing.*** Although forage quality decreases as the plant matures, the quality of spring stockpiled pasture is sufficient for dry cows and in some cases can result in reasonable gains on growing animals during the summer months. This is especially true if using novel endophyte tall fescue and the pastures were clipped at the early boot stage to promote vegetative regrowth. This could be a cost-effective and simple way to provide additional grazing during the summer months.

Managing spring grass can be challenging. It is important to find that “sweet spot” for starting to graze, not too early and not too late! Hopefully one or more of the above tips will help you optimize your spring grass!

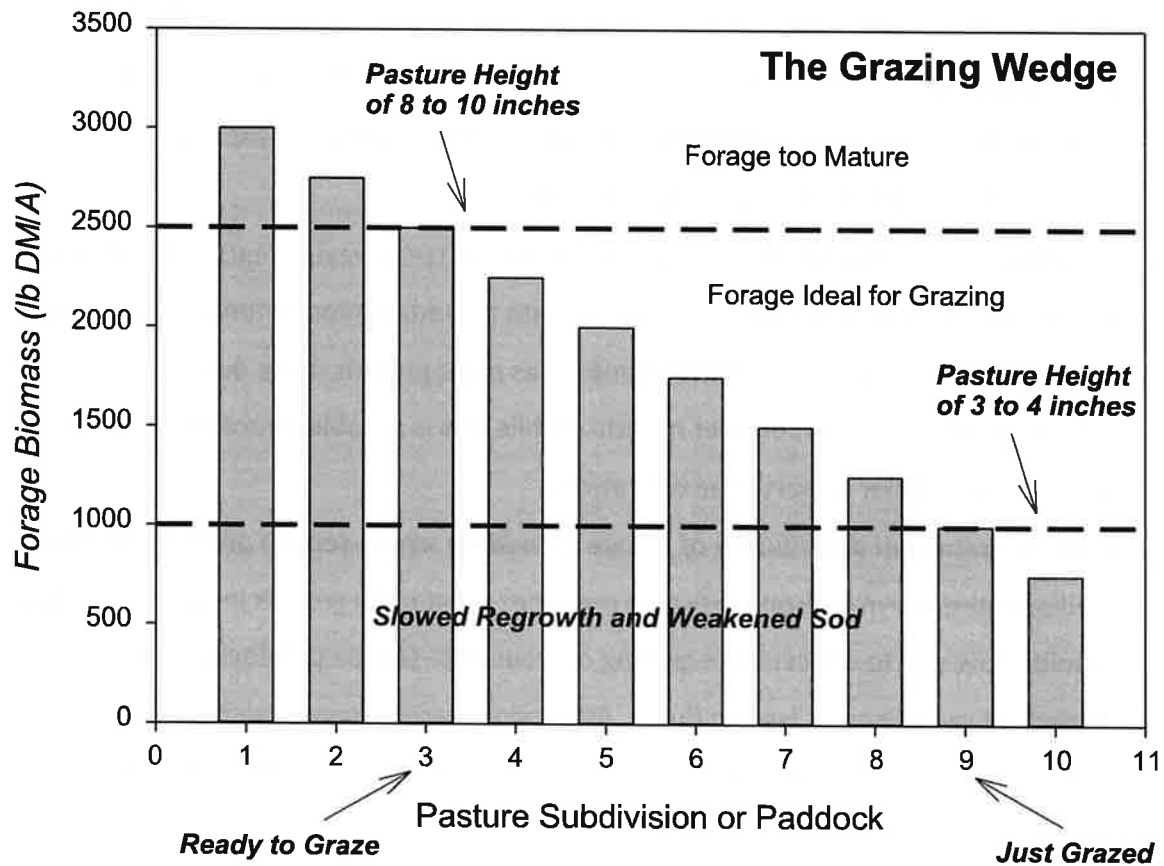


Figure 1. The “grazing wedge” simply refers to having pasture subdivisions or paddocks at varying stages of regrowth from just grazed to ready to graze.



Preparing for Severe Weather: What You Need to Know



By Tony Edwards – National Weather Service Charleston, WV

In parts of the Deep South, the risk of severe thunderstorms persists throughout the winter months. For us here in the Bluegrass State, however, we're quickly approaching a time when thunderstorms become both more frequent and more intense. As winter storms make way for spring, severe weather—including damaging winds, hail, and even tornadoes—becomes the primary concern.

As I write this article in mid-March, much of the Bluegrass State is already facing the threat of severe weather, a common occurrence for this time of year. Data from the National Weather Service's Storm Prediction Center reveals that the likelihood of severe weather increases as March progresses, peaking in mid-June at around 4%. This means, based on historical data alone, residents of Kentucky have a 4% chance of experiencing damaging winds, hail larger than quarters, or a tornado within 25 miles of their home in the middle of June! The risk then significantly decreases by mid-September.

Given this, now is the time to start preparing for the upcoming severe weather season. The first step is simple: **be aware** that severe weather is a real possibility. Make checking your local forecast part of your daily routine to stay informed and prepared.

- **Did You Know?** The National Weather Service (NWS) offices that serve Kentucky offer a 24-hour recorded weather forecast, and in many cases, you can even speak to a live person if you have questions about the forecast. Contact your local NWS office to learn more!

Preparing for Severe Weather

When severe weather is in the forecast, it's essential to take action ahead of time. Start by ensuring you have access to **emergency supplies**. This is particularly important if you live in an area prone to flooding and might need to evacuate on short notice.

Make sure you know where your **safe spaces** are. In most cases, this is the lowest floor of your house—preferably a basement. If you don't have a basement, an interior room with no windows and doors will suffice. If you own livestock, consider moving them to a protected area, especially if hail is in the forecast.

Stay Informed on Severe Weather Days

When severe weather is expected, it's crucial to stay vigilant. Be prepared to adjust outdoor plans if necessary and remain alert to weather updates.

- **Did You Know?** NOAA Weather Radios are specialized devices designed to broadcast weather information and activate alarms when severe weather alerts are issued. Many models run on battery or solar power and do not include an AM/FM radio. You're likely near a transmitter,

making this a reliable option to stay updated. Check out these handy radios at your local store to keep your home prepared.

Understanding Watches and Warnings

- **Severe Thunderstorm and Tornado Watches:** Issued when conditions are favorable for severe weather or tornadoes in the near future.
- **Severe Thunderstorm and Tornado Warnings:** Issued when severe weather or tornadoes are occurring or imminent. This is when you need to act fast!

When a warning is issued, take shelter immediately. You may only have seconds to respond, so knowing what to do and where to go is essential.

SEVERE WEATHER HAZARDS

TORNADO
Take shelter immediately in a sturdy structure

LARGE HAIL
Move indoors away from windows

SEVERE WIND
Move indoors away from windows

FLOODING
Avoid rising creeks and water covered roads

LIGHTNING
Move indoors if you hear thunder

Over 280 fatalities occur each year in the U.S. from thunderstorm related hazards.

weather.gov/safety

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE



Asparagus Tomato Salad

1 pound of fresh asparagus, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces
1 small zucchini, halved and cut into ¼ inch slices
3 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1 garlic clove, minced

¼ teaspoon seasoned salt
¼ teaspoon honey mustard
1 cup cherry or grape tomatoes, halved
¼ cup sliced green onions
¼ cup shredded fresh mozzarella cheese
¼ cup minced fresh parsley

Place the asparagus and zucchini in a steamer basket. **Place** in a saucepan over 1 inch of boiling water. **Cover** and steam for 2 minutes. **Rinse** in cold water. In large bowl, **whisk together** olive oil, red wine vinegar, garlic, seasoned salt and honey mustard. **Pour** over asparagus mixture; **toss** to coat. **Toss** in

tomatoes and green onions. **Sprinkle** with mozzarella cheese and parsley.

Yield: 6 servings

Nutritional Analysis:

110 calories, 7 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 5 mg cholesterol, 35 mg sodium, 5 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 3 g sugar, 4 g protein.



Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers' market, or roadside stand.

Kentucky Asparagus

SEASON: April through May

NUTRITION FACTS: Asparagus is a good source of vitamin A and folate. One-half cup of fresh, steamed asparagus has 22 calories, 2 grams of protein and 4 grams of carbohydrate.

SELECTION: Choose bright green stalks with tightly closed tips. The most tender stalks are apple green in color with purple-tinged tips.

STORAGE: Fresh asparagus will keep 1-2 weeks in the refrigerator. Refrigerate upright with cut ends in water or with cut ends wrapped in wet paper towels in a plastic bag.

Sources: www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov

PREPARATION: One pound of asparagus will yield 4 one-half cup servings, about six spears per serving. Wash asparagus thoroughly in cool, running water. Eat asparagus raw or lightly boil, steam, stir-fry or grill. Overcooked asparagus will be mushy. Try seasoning it with herbs, butter or Parmesan cheese.

KENTUCKY ASPARAGUS

Kentucky Proud Project

County Extension Agents for Family and Consumer Sciences

University of Kentucky, Dietetics and Human Nutrition students

March 2015

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COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION
SERVICE

UK
UNIVERSITY OF
KENTUCKY
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment

Join us for our April

BEEKEEPER'S MEETING

WHAT:

Join us for our April meeting with guest speaker
**Tim Sheehan, President, Kentucky State
Beekeeper's Association**

WHERE:

Russell County Extension Office
2688 U.S 127, Russell Springs, KY 42642

WHEN:

Thursday, April 3rd | 6:00 PM CST

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Cooperative Extension Service

Agriculture and Natural Resources
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Lexington, KY 40506



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