

**AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES**

Wolfe County

April 2016

# Ag Newsletter

Heather Graham, Wolfe County Extension Agent for Agriculture & Natural Resources

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Extension Service**  
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Greetings!

I am so pleased to be your new Extension Agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources. I want to take this time to thank our previous agent, Daniel Wilson, for everything that he has done for Wolfe County and Eastern Kentucky. I know I have some big shoes to fill! We will all miss Daniel at the county level, but I know that we're all excited (and proud!) of him and his promotion and wish him the best!

It is my hope that you will all feel free to come into the office or give me a call with any questions that you might have. Like with any new job, there are learning curves. But I promise each of you that I will do my absolute best to be of service to you and our wonderful Wolfe County!

If you have any suggestions for programs that you think would be beneficial, please let me know.

Also, if you would like to receive your newsletter via e-mail, call the office and we will put you on our e-mail list.

Stay tuned to Facebook and our website (<https://wolfe.ca.uky.edu/>) for updates!

Be safe, be healthy, and be happy!

Heather K. Graham

*"Agriculture is the most healthful, most useful and most noble employment of man."* – George Washington

## Renovating High Traffic Areas

High traffic areas, such as feeding areas, sacrifice lots, alleyways, gateways and waterers, are often bare and muddy late winter and early spring. To slow and reduce soil erosion, compaction, forage damage, and weed problems, these areas need to be renovated promptly. Reducing these muddy areas is beneficial for animal health.

The ideal recommendation to renovate such areas is to fence it off to do a permanent seeding. This would allow a producer to use traditional forages such as fescue, orchardgrass, or Kentucky bluegrass. The problem many face is having to leave this area out of normal production for at least six months for these forages to establish well enough to graze. When a producer is not able to take the area out of production to renovate, both perennial and annual (Italian) ryegrass are good options for spring ground cover and where high traffic areas are damaged every winter. Perennial ryegrass is more susceptible to summer slump than other cool-season grasses. However, with proper management (fertilization and rotational grazing) they usually survive for 2 years in KY pastures and provides high quality pasture. Annual ryegrass is a temporary fix, and usually dies out during KY summers. If using annual ryegrass for a spring cover seeding ask for Italian type varieties.



Renovating bare or muddy areas with annual or perennial ryegrass may be a good option for ground cover.

These cool-season forages work well to renovate high traffic areas because they establish easier and more quickly than other common perennial forage species. They are frequently used as cover crops for row crop production. The dense, shallow root system not only reduces erosion but also improves soil aggregate stability, reduces current compaction by breaking up dense soils, and helps to prevent future compaction. Vigorous growth helps these forages to outcompete unwanted late summer and winter annuals.

Annual ryegrass is more vigorous than perennial ryegrass, but provides only short term grass cover. It will die out during the summer whether it is planted in the spring or the fall of the previous year. The advantage of late summer or fall planting, is high quality late fall and early spring grazing. Some producers mix annual and perennial ryegrass to obtain quick cover from the annual ryegrass and longer term survival from the perennial ryegrass. Spring seeding annual ryegrass is a temporary fix that usually only lasts 3-4 months. Seeding annual ryegrass in the early spring can be achieved by the same seeding methods as perennial ryegrass.

Establishment of perennial ryegrass is similar to that of other cool-season grasses. Drilling seed into a firm seed-bed is recommended for best seedling establishment. Perennial Ryegrass can be seeded in the late summer/fall (Aug 20 –Oct 1) or early spring (Feb 1– Apr 15). Frost seeding ryegrass by scattering seed on the soil surface is a possibility in February but it is suggested that seed be drilled into the soil for maximum success. Fertilizer and lime should be applied according to soil test results. Split applications of nitrogen (40-60 lbs/acre) is beneficial for maximum pasture production. Using high quality seed of a variety suited for the intended use is

important. Using a winter hardy variety is suggested as this species is not highly tolerant of extremely cold temperatures. Reduce competition from weeds and other unwanted species. If possible, keep livestock or heavy traffic off newly seeded areas for a month to allow for seedling establishment. Rotationally graze for maximum efficiency. Do not overgraze and allow for an adequate rest and regrowth period.

In conclusion, annual and perennial ryegrass both offer a short term fix to high traffic areas, but perennial ryegrass has the advantage of surviving two seasons. For long term productive pasture stands, seed improved varieties of tall fescue, orchardgrass and Kentucky bluegrass.

The table below contains the suggested management of ryegrass in Kentucky. See the 2014 ryegrass variety trial report at <http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage/PR681.pdf> for more information regarding varieties to plant.

Species	Seeding Depth	Seeding Rate	Height to Start Grazing	Height to Stop Grazing
Annual (Italian) Ryegrass	1/4 - 1/2"	20-30 lbs/acre	8-10"	2-3"
Perennial Ryegrass	1/4 - 1/2"	12-25 lbs/acre	6-8"	3"

### **2016 Kentucky Grazing School**

***Austin Sexten, Master Grazing Coordinator, University of Kentucky***

This year the spring grazing school will be held on May 17-18, 2016 at Woodford County Extension office and the Oran C. Little Research Center in Versailles, KY. This two-day program will include hands-on exercises, such as building temporary paddocks and watering systems, assessing pasture production, and designing your own grazing systems. Classroom sessions include a variety of topics regarding forages, animal management, and grazing systems. Emphasis will be on spring and summer grazing management for ruminant species.

Anyone interested in this program may apply, but a limited number of applicants will be accepted, so apply early. Past participants have included new farmers to experienced grazers and all have gained new information and practical skills to implement on their operations. All grazing school participants have indicated that attending this program motivated them to make changes to their grazing systems to improve their operations and increase production. Pre-registration for the grazing school as enrollment is limited to the first 45 who register. The \$50.00 registration fee includes all materials, grazing manuals, breaks, and lunch both days. To register, contact Austin Sexten, Master Grazer Coordinator, at (859) 257-7512 or [austin.sexten@uky.edu](mailto:austin.sexten@uky.edu).

### **Pasture to Plate**

The number of cattle in Kentucky that are being fed to finish, harvested and sold to Kentucky consumers is increasing every year. There are more opportunities for cattlemen to market

directly to the consumer. There are also an increasing number of Kentucky farmers that are retaining ownership of their cattle through the finishing phase and being paid on carcass performance. In order to help our producers to capitalize on their increased investment, we are implementing a new demonstration/educational effort to increase the knowledge base on all aspects of cattle production from genetics to final product. This is a cooperative effort between the University of Kentucky's College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, Kentucky Beef Network, Kentucky Beef Council, Kentucky Department of Agriculture and University of Kentucky's USDA Forage Animal Production Research Unit.

Three demonstration farms (UK's Princeton Farm, KBN's Eden Shale Farm, Morgan County Extension Farm) will be backgrounding and finishing cattle at the same time. These cattle will represent a wide variety showing the difference in purebred, crossbred, and dairy influenced cattle of different breeds and quality. There will be numerous field days during the finishing process and ending with a taste evaluation of the different types of carcasses that were harvested (including grass fed vs grain fed). Other topics to be covered include water quality and nutrient management.

The target audience will be Kentucky farmers interested in retaining ownership of their cattle all the way to selling carcasses and any UK ANR agents with clientele with this interest. Consumers interested in knowing more about where their food comes from and proper cooking methods for various cuts of beef. Youth judging teams will be targeted to enhance their understanding, knowledge, and experience of these processes.

Session 1 will be held at 6:00pm at the Morgan County Extension Farm on April 11<sup>th</sup>. Register online at <http://www.kybeefnetwork.com/pasture-to-plate.html> or contact Heather at 606-668-3712.

## **Gardening in Small Spaces**

*R.E. Durham and D.B. Hill*

*Extension Specialist*

*Department of Horticulture and Department of Forestry*

Gardening, in one form or another, is often described as one of the most popular hobbies in the United States. And rightly so. Involvement by people in gardening activities helps promote healthy habits. At a time when Americans are overweight and under-exercised more than ever before, consider that a 150-pound person working in the garden will burn approximately 350 calories per hour. That's roughly equivalent to doing low-impact aerobics, playing softball, pulling a cart while playing golf, walking at a very brisk pace, or playing vigorously with children. Of course, consuming home-grown vegetables is good for health as well. Fresh vegetables are loaded with vitamins, antioxidants, and fiber, all of which play a role in cancer prevention and general good health. And when you grow your own vegetables, you know exactly how they were grown and where they originated—issues of food safety and security that are becoming more and more important to our society.

So, most would agree that gardening is a worthwhile endeavor. However, when most people think of a garden, they imagine a large field that has been plowed with long neat rows spaced 3 or 4 feet apart to allow cultivation by a tractor or tiller. Gardening on such a scale is impossible for city dwellers, considering that residential lot sizes continue to decrease and more and more people are choosing to live in town homes, condominiums, or apartments.

Our modern landscapes have little enough room for outdoor leisure in general, not to mention gardening. Nevertheless, you would be surprised at the amount of vegetables that can be produced in a very small area. When gardening in a small space, there is little need for spacing plants in rows, so planting can be more efficient. Also, placing plants in a raised bed or container reduces the need to walk in or closely around your plants. This reduces the chances that soils will become compacted and need frequent tilling. And with a little planning, even residents of apartments and condominiums can grow a few vegetables on their patios. Raised-bed and container gardening may also allow those with limited mobility to garden. For information on specific vegetable crops, the reader is especially encouraged to consult ID-128, Home Vegetable Gardening in Kentucky, and ID-133, Vegetable Cultivars for Kentucky Gardens, available from your local County Extension Office.



Cedar post and boards can be used for raised beds. They are naturally resistant to decay and will persist for several years in the landscape.



## Cheesy Broccoli Potatoes

<b>5 slices</b> turkey bacon	Salt and pepper to taste
<b>1 tablespoon</b> olive oil	<b>4</b> large potatoes, cubed
<b>1 clove</b> garlic, minced	<b>2 cups</b> fresh broccoli florets
<b>2 tablespoons</b> chopped chives	<b>1 cup</b> fat-free, shredded cheese

**Preheat** oven to 425° F. **Cook** bacon until crispy, crumble and set aside. **Spray** 9x13-inch baking dish with non-stick cooking spray. In a small bowl, **combine** olive oil, garlic, chives, salt and pepper; **stir** to blend. In a large bowl, **toss** together potatoes and broccoli. **Pour** olive oil blend over potato mixture; **stir** to coat. **Pour** into baking dish and **cover** with foil. **Bake** for 35 minutes or until potatoes are

tender; **remove** from oven. **Sprinkle** cheese and bacon on top and place back in oven until cheese melts.

**Yield:** 8, ½ cup servings.

**Nutritional Analysis:** 140 calories, 5 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 20 mg cholesterol, 470 mg sodium, 15 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 2 g sugar, 10 g protein.



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

COOPERATIVE  
EXTENSION  
SERVICE



College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environment

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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

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**Upcoming Events**

April 11<sup>th</sup>      **Pasture to Plate – Session 1**  
6:00pm      Morgan County Extension Farm

April 19<sup>th</sup>      **Applied Master Cattleman**  
6:00pm      Morgan County Extension Office

May 17-18      **KY Grazing School**  
Woodford Co. Extension Office & C. Oran Little Research Center