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A NOTE FROM YOUR AGENT

Hello all

I can hardly believe it's already November! It feels like fall just got started, and now we're heading into the holiday season. It's been a busy few months in Mason County, and I know many of you are wrapping up harvest and finishing out the fall calving season.

As things start to slow down, it's a great time to do some fall soil testing or take part in one of our upcoming educational programs. You'll find several opportunities listed later in this newsletter to help you make the most of the off-season.

I'm truly thankful for the great producers here in Mason County and the enjoyment I get every day from my role working with each of you. Wishing you all a safe, restful, and happy Thanksgiving season!

audrey Wright

Audrey Wright Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent Mason County Extension

00 US HIGHWAY 68 | MAYSVILLE KY 41056 | P. 606-564-6808 | AUDREY WRIGHT@UKY EDI



FOLLOW OUR FACEBOOK!





Mason Co. Conservation District

SHARED-USE EQUIPMENT



GREAT PLAINS 1006NT DRILL

INLINE WRAPPER HYBRID X

For rental information, contact the district office (606)759-5570 Ext. 3

GRAZING SCHOOL RECAP

Two Mason County producers, along with Ag and Natural Resources Agent Audrey Wright, attended the 2025 UK Intermediate Grazing School held at the UK Oran Little Research Farm and Woodford County Extension Office. Participants gained hands-on experience in forage evaluation, pasture allocation, and temporary water system setup. The annual school continues to provide valuable, practical training for producers looking to improve grazing efficiency and forage management.

The photos below highlight some of the hands-on learning activities from the event. Check the UK Forage website in January 2026 for upcoming dates and locations for the April and September Beginning and Intermediate Grazing Schools.











FALL MEETING

Brent Tolle with Boehringer Ingelheim will be discussing vaccination and deworming strategies designed to help increase profits and improve herd health on your farm.

REGISTER HERE:





As a member, you'll enjoy:

- ☑ Meetings that include a free meal and door prizes
- Up-to-date information on research, markets, and trends delivered to you through Cow Country News
- Networking with local producers and industry leaders
- Educational presentations from specialists at every meeting focused on topics that pertain to Mason County producers



For more information contact:

- 📞 Audrey Wright (606) 564- 6808
- President Ronnie Lowe (606)782-5058
- 📞 Treasurer Mike Ravencraft (606)584-0310
- Email: audrey.wright@uky.edu



TIMELY TIPS

DR. LES ANDERSON, BEEF EXTENSION PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

<u>Spring Calving Cows</u>

- If you need to replace cows, consider buying bred heifers in some of the Kentucky Certified Replacement Heifer sales that are being held across the state this month.
- Extend grazing for as long as possible to decrease the amount of stored feed needed. The drought is
 making this difficult for most of the state in 2024.
- Evaluate body condition of cows. Sort thin (less than body condition score 5) cows away from the
 cow herd and feed to improve their condition. Two and three-year olds may need extra attention
 now. These cattle can use the extra feed/nutrients.
- Dry cows in good condition can utilize crop residues and lower quality hay now (but don't let them
 lose any more body condition). Save higher quality feed until calving time. Keep a good mineral
 supplement with vitamin A available.
- Contact your herd veterinarian to determine pregnancy in your cows if you have not already done so.
 Pregnancy can also be determined using blood sampling. Several diagnostic labs will analyze blood
 samples for pregnancy and a chute-side test is on the market. Culling decisions should be made prior
 to winter feeding for best use of feed resources. Consider open, poor-producing, and aged cows as
 candidates for culling.
- A postweaning feeding period will allow you to put rapid, economical gains on weaned calves, keep
 them through the fall "runs" and allow you to participate in Kentucky CPH-45 sales. Consider this
 health and marketing program which is designed for producers which are doing a good job of
 producing high quality feeder calves.
- Replacement heifers require attention during the winter, too. Weaned heifer calves should gain at an adequate rate to attain their "target" breeding weight (2/3 of their mature weight) by May 1.

Fall Calving Cows

- Continue to watch fall-calving cows. Catch up on processing of calves including identification, castration, and vaccinations.
- Cows that have calved need to go to the best pastures now! Help them maintain body condition prior
 to breeding in December.
- Move cows to accumulated pasture or increase feed now. If at all possible, try to get animals
 vaccinated 60 days or longer before the breeding season.
- Start the breeding season in late November or early December for calving to begin in September. If
 you are using Al and/or estrus synchronization, get your supplies together now and schedule your
 technician.
- Make final selection of replacement heifers now.
- Don't forget to contact your herd veterinarian to schedule a breeding soundness exam (BSE) for your bulls. All herd sires need a BSE at least 30 days before the onset of the breeding season. A BSE can be useful insurance that your bull has the physical ability to breed cows. Even though BSE's aren't perfect, they are the best tool we have to identify infertile bulls.

General

- Have your hay supply analyzed for nutritive quality and estimate the amount of supplementation needed. Consider purchasing feed now.
- Take soil tests and make fertility adjustments (phosphate, potash, and lime) to your pastures.
- This is a good time to freeze-brand bred yearling heifers and additions to the breeding herd.
- Graze alfalfa this month after a "freeze-down" (24 degrees for a few hours).
- Don't waste your feed resources. Avoid excessive mud in the feeding area. Hay feeding areas can be
 constructed by putting rock on geotextile fabric. Feed those large round bales in hay "rings" to avoid
 waste. Concrete feeding pads could be in your long-range plans.
- Consider bale grazing to decrease damage to your pastures and to more evenly distribute nutrients across your pastures.

MORE THAN ONE WAY TO FEED THIS WINTER

KATIE VANVALIN, ASSISTANT EXTENSION PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

Every winter feeding strategy comes with its own set of advantages and disadvantages. Differences in equipment, facilities, forage availability, and how nutrients, mud and labor are managed mean that no single system works best for every farm or every year. Kentucky's variable winter conditions make flexibility and combining strategies key to success. Winter feeding strategies generally fall into two categories: concentrates and dispersed.

Concentrated strategies involve feeding cattle in a fixed location. This approach can lead to significant disturbance in a localized area and concentrates nutrients due to heavy manure and urine deposition. Common examples include hay feeding with or without rings, feeding on heavy-use pads or pasture, using fence-line hay structures, or delivering total mixed rations with corn, grass, or small grain silages in fence line bunks. Dispersed feeding strategies, on the other hand, spread cattle and feed across the farm, resulting in less severe disturbance of a larger area and more uniform nutrient distribution. These include bale grazing, unrolling hay, and extended grazing using stockpiled forage, winter annuals and cover crops.

While concentrated systems can reduce labor, especially when hay is stored near the feeding site, they also come with challenges. Sod damage, soil compaction and mud are common issues. Mud increases equipment wear, creates safety hazards and raises cattle energy requirements due to the effort they must exert to move through it. These drawbacks can be managed with infrastructure. Hay rings, for example, can reduce feeding losses by 30% by creating a barrier between cattle and hay. Heavy-use pads made from geotextile fabric and rock or concrete provide a solid surface that prevents feeding areas from getting too muddy and helps keep trucks and farm roads, reducing maintenance time. Since fixed feeders concentrate impact in one area, rotation, especially corn silage, can be an efficient way to meet cattle energy needs. Corn silage is energy-dense, allowing more total digestible nutrients to be harvested per acre than grass hay. Because of this, less dry matter is needed, though protein supplementation is usually required. While harvesting silage requires specialized equipment, custom harvesting is an option and storage in bunker or pit silos, or plastic bags can be cost-effective. However, silage must be delivered frequently to prevent spoilage, and the equipment and labor demands can be significant. Like other concentrated methods, silage feeding also concentrates nutrients in one area.

Bale grazing has gained popularity in recent years. In this system, round bales are strategically placed in the pasture ahead of cattle. Cattle are given access to a few bales at a time, controlled by polywire, and hay rings are used to reduce waste. Once the hay is consumed, the polywire and rings are moved to allow access to more bales. Lightweight poly hay rings are recommended for ease of movement. Although the area around each bale is disturbed, frost seeding with a mix of cool-season grasses, legumes and forbs can help the site recover the following spring. Bale grazing reduces the need for mechanical feeding equipment during the cold weather, and with experience, moving the setup can take just minutes. It does require planning and flexibility, and caution is needed on poorly drained soils. Over time, bale grazing can improve soil fertility without commercial fertilizer, but can lead to widespread nutrient distribution.

MORE THAN ONE WAY TO FEED THIS WINTER

KATIE VANVALIN. ASSISTANT EXTENSION PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

In Kentucky's dry winters, 1.5 to 2.5 bales per acre, around 2 tons, is typically sufficient. Bale grazing or other hay can offer similar benefits if done nearby access from the field. On the ground a mechanical unroller may be needed but cost-effective options that work with UTVs are available. Unrolling hay also provides similar benefits, especially for producers who lack equipment or prefer flexibility. Hay waste can be minimized by using temporary polywire to prevent trampling.

Extending the grazing season is another effective strategy. Stockpiled tall fescue is the most common approach. Fields are rested in the late summer, fertilized and allowed to regrow through the fall. One option is to feed hay in a dry lot early in the season when cattle nutrient needs are lower and weather is more favorable, then shift to grazing as winter progresses. Strip grazing helps reduce trampling and improves utilization.

Winter annuals such as wheat, rye, triticale and oats can also extend grazing or provide an additional source of conserved forage. The main drawbacks are the cost and labor of establishing these forages. Integrating livestock into crop-livestock systems where annuals are planted as cover crops can help offset these costs. However, many crop fields lack fencing and water infrastructure and cattle traffic may compact soil, especially when wet, potentially affecting future crop yields. This is an area currently being studied by a team of researchers made up of animal scientists, soil scientists, and forage agronomists at the University of Kentucky Research and Education Center. Winter annuals can be excellent feed sources, supporting gains in growing calves, but careful management is needed to prevent overgrazing.

Ultimately, there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Each method has tradeoffs in labor, equipment, soil suitability and weather. A flexible strategy should be utilized to create a system that works best on your farm. An example of a mixed approach winter feeding system might include stockpiling part of the farm, bale grazing on low-fertility sites when conditions are favorable and using heavy-use areas or hay structures when grazing or dispersed feeding aren't possible. By understanding the strengths and limitations of each system, producers can tailor winter feeding to meet their operation's needs.

HAY TESTING

The Mason County Extension Office now has a hay probe available to check out at the office to help producers collect hay samples for lab analysis.

WHY TEST YOUR FORAGE?

- Tested forages can mean higher profit, whether feeding cattle, horses, goats, sheep or other livestock. Knowing the nutritional value will help you minimize your cost and maximize your production.
- The analysis report, assists producers in balancing feed rations for their livestock. Each livestock species take a different energy level at different stages of their lives. A ration balance will help maintain a healthy diet.
- Forage testing helps determine fair market value and establish an equitable price for forage sales.
- Buying or Selling Hay: The Forage Testing Program maintains a list of Kentucky hay producers that have their hay tested through KDA. The service is offered throughout the state and the information may be viewed on this KDA "Forage Sales Directory/Tested Hay" webpage.

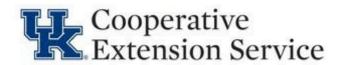
Contact me if you have any questions or to learn more about submitting samples for analysis!



FALL SOIL TESTING

Soil samples can be collected through much of the year, although fall (September to December) or spring (February to April) are the best times. Fall sampling will often result in a faster return of results and recommendations. Fall sampling will also allow the grower time to have the fertilizer applied well before planting the next crop. However, fall sampling results in lower pH and soil test K levels when conditions are dry. In either case, a field should always be sampled the same time of the year in order to make historical comparisons. Most fields should be sampled every three to four years. High-value crops, such as tobacco, commercial horticultural crops, alfalfa, red clover, and corn silage, should be sampled annually so that plant nutrient levels can be monitored more closely. Application of manure can change soil test phosphorus, potassium, and zinc levels dramatically, so sampling manured fields each year is also recommended.





BARNYARD THEATER

A FARMER WELLNESS PROGRAM



NOVEMBER 7, 2025



STRAUB ELEMENTARY GYMNASIUM

387 CHENAULT DRIVE, MAYSVILLE, KY



4:00PM-5:45PM HEALTH SCREENINGS

6:00PM DINNER & SHOW

PROGRAM INFORMATION

- GENERAL HEALTH SCREENINGS
- VISION SCREENING
- RESPIRATOR FIT TESTING
- INFORMATIONAL BOOTHS
- LOTS OF GIVEAWAYS
- DRAWINGS FOR DOORPRIZES
- FREE CHILDCARE
- FREE STEAK DINNER & SHOW

GUERNA

EAR PLUGS | UV HATS | SAFETY GLASSES
RUBBER WEDDING BANDS | FIRE EXTINGUISHERS
FIRST AID KITS | CHAPSTICK | N95 MASK
RATCHET STRAPS | 5 GALLON BUCKETS

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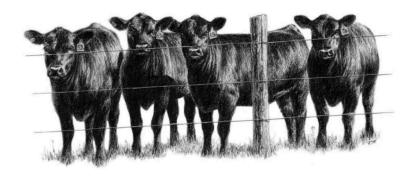




BRACKEN COUNTY: (606) 735-2141 FLEMING COUNTY: (606) 845-4641 LEWIS COUNTY: (506) 796-2732 MASON COUNTY: (606) 564-6808 ROBERTSON CO.: (606) 724-5796



Herd Builder Heifer Sale



Friday November 7, 2025

Sell Starts at 6:30 pm @ The Farmers Stockyards 255 Helena Rd Flemingsburg KY 41041

- > All Heifers will be CAIP eligible
- > Bred to low birth weight, easy calving bulls
- > Pelvic measured and PI test negative

Selling approximately 110 First Calf Heifers (Multiple consignors)

Meal sponsored by Farm Credit





NOVEMBER 14, 2025



MASON CO. EXTENSION OFFICE



11:00AM-1:00PM



SAMPLE WILDLIFE RECIPES

HUNTING & FISHING LICENSE INFO

WILDLIFE ID

SEASONS

WILDLIFE TRACKS & SCAT

GENERAL HARVEST RULES



TO REGISTER: USE THE QR CODE OR CALL (606) 845-4641

Cooperative **Extension Service**

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or accial status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creek, religion, political bellef, sex. and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, receive, religion, political bellef, sex. and political bellef, sex. and political politic Agriculture and Natural Resources Family and Consumer Sciences

4-H Youth Development Community and Economic Development

Lexington, KY 40506

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT







Emergency Calf Care

Tuesday, Nov. 18 at 6:00 PM

Morehead State University Farm Classroom 25 MSU Farm Drive Morehead, KY 40351

For more information call your local Extension Office at (606)564-6808

Lexington, KY 40506

Highlights:

- Guest Speaker Dr. Phil Prater, Retired MSU DVM
- How to Tube Feed a Calf

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

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UPCOMING PROGRAMS



COMMERCIAL PESTICIDE APPLICATOR CONTINUING EDUCATION TRAINING

NOVEMBER 20, 2025 9AM-3:30PM EST

30 Minute Lunch Break

This training has been approved by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture for the following CEU credits in each category:

Category 1A: Agricultural Plant 2 CEUs

Category 1B: Agricultural Animal 1 CEU

Category 3: Ornamental & Turf & Lawn Care 1 CEU

Category 4: Seed Treatment 1 CEU

Category 6: Right of Way 1 CEU



CALL (606) 845-4641 TO REGISTER FOR THIS FREE TRAINING OR REGISTER USING THE QR CODE:



LOCATION: VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM

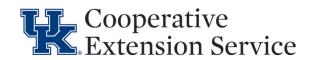
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Disabilities accommodated with prior notification





FRESH GREENERY

CHRISTMAS WREATH MAKING CLASS



DECEMBER 1 @ 5PM DECEMBER 2 @ 12PM

MASON COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE 800 US HWY 68, MAYSVILLE KY 41056

MUST CALL (606) 564-6808 TO REGISTER BY NOVEMBER 24TH CHECKS MADE PAYABLE TO: MASON CO. EXTENSION OFFICE

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Agriculture and Natural Resources

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

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Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.



- 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 \$125 per

REGISTRATION REQUIRED BY: 12/1/25

Cooperative Extension Service

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENV



SAVETE DATE



AGRONOMY DAY

FEBRUARY 19, 2026



9:00AM-3:00PM

AT MASON COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE

FREE TO ATTEND!

REGISTRATION REQUIRED BY: FEBRUARY 7th

TOPICS

(In no particular order)

- PESTICIDE UPDATES & DRONE APPLICATIONS
- WEED CONTROL IN GRAIN CROPS
- PESTICIDE APPLICATION EQUIPMENT & PROPER USE
- SOIL FERTILITY & DIFFERENCES IN LAB RESULTS
- CONTROL OF INVASIVES
- APPLYING PESTICIDES/PRIVATE APPLICATOR CERTIFICATION

USE THE QR CODE OR CONTACT YOUR LOCAL OFFICE TO REGISTER:

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LUNCH PROVIDED



Cooperative Extension Service

Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

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IMPORTANT DATES

Herd Builder Heifer Sale | 6:30 PM | Farmers Stockyards, Flemingsburg

Mason Co Cattlemen's Meeting | 6:00 PM | Mason Co Extension Office

Barnyard Theater | 4:00 PM | Straub Elementary

Taste KY Wild | 11:00 AM | Mason Co Extension Office

November 7

November 7

November 13

November 14

January 22

January 29

February 5

February 12

February 19

November 20	Commercial Pesticide CEU Training 9:00 AM Virtual via Zoom
November 27	Thanksgiving Day- Office Closed
November 28	Office Closed
December 1	Wreath Making Class 5:00 PM Mason County Extension Office
December 2	Wreath Making Class 12:00 PM Mason County Extension Office
Dec 24-Jan 2	Office Closed for Christmas and New Years Holidays
January 8	Master Cattlemen Session 1 6:00 PM Mason County Extension Office
January 15	Master Cattlemen Session 2 6:00 PM Bracken County Extension Office

Master Cattlemen Session 3 | 6:00 PM | Fleming County Extension Office

Master Cattlemen Session 4 | 6:00 PM | Mason County Extension Office

Master Cattlemen Session 5 | 6:00 PM | Lewis County Extension Office

Master Cattlemen Session 6 | 6:00 PM | Robertson County Community Center

CAIP Education Eligible 🗸

Agronomy Day | 9:00 AM | Mason County Extension Office



University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment

Mason County

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