



University of Kentucky  
College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environment  
Cooperative Extension Service

# AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

## Cooperative Extension Service

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## November-December 2017

### Kentucky Beef Cattle Market Update

*Dr. Kenny Burdine, Livestock Marketing Specialist,  
University of Kentucky*

The feeder cattle market continues to hold reasonably well as we move further into fall. As I write this on October 18, 2017, fall CME© Feeder Cattle futures contracts are trading in the low \$150's with spring contracts in the mid-\$140's. The fed cattle market did seem to find a bottom in early September and has moved upward from there. This was welcome news across the entire complex. Corn prices have been pretty steady since last month. USDA raised their corn yield forecast slightly in October and the current is for nearly a 14.3 billion bushel crop.

Locally, calf prices are not showing their usual seasonal decline. Fed cattle and corn prices are part of the reason for this, but I also think the good fall weather is at play. October is a typical weaning time for most spring calving operations. However, most producers have had excellent fall moisture and pastures are growing exceptionally well right now. This has likely delayed the fall calf run as many have likely chosen to wean later or may be keeping calves post-weaning to take advantage of inexpensive gain on grass. Also note that I usually don't include the current month in the charts below, but since I had two full weeks of prices, I chose to include October this time. When I show those

charts next month, October will include the whole month, so expect it to change somewhat.

I would still expect calf prices to decline somewhat once we start seeing larger numbers of calves move through the



system. Also remember that stockpiled pasture, for which this has been an excellent year, also supports calf prices by lowering backgrounding costs early in the program. Pretty soon, feed costs will be driving those calf values. The good news is that feed costs are lower and the spring feeder cattle board is much stronger than it was this time last year. So, my best guess for this fall would be for calf prices to bottom in November or early December, but remain significantly above where they were last fall.

For registration or information on any of the educational programs listed in this newsletter, call the Adair County Extension Office at 270-384-2317 or email [nick.roy@uky.edu](mailto:nick.roy@uky.edu)

Nick Roy   
County Extension Agent  
For Agriculture & Natural Resources

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Disabilities  
accommodated  
with prior notification.

## ▶ CATTLEMEN'S ASSOC. MEETING

**November 6<sup>th</sup> – 6:00 pm**  
Adair County Extension Office

TOPIC – Nutrition

Speaker: Retired UK Beef Specialist Dr. John Johns  
Reminder to pay your membership dues to the Cattlemen's Association by November 6<sup>th</sup> to be entered into the prize drawings at the meeting.

### **JR. CATTLEMEN'S MEETING**

The Jr. Cattlemen's Association members will also meet on November 6<sup>th</sup>. Meat Judging will be the topic of the meeting.



## ▶ BEEF MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

**November 16<sup>th</sup> – 6:00 pm**  
Adair County Extension Office

TOPIC – Calf Scours

Speaker: Dr. Michelle Arnold, UK Veterinarian

## ▶ ADA DISTRICT MEETING

**November 13<sup>th</sup> – 7:00 pm**  
@ LWC Dining Center

## ▶ BEEF QUALITY ASSURANCE & CATTLE HANDLING & CARE CERTIFICATION

**December 7<sup>th</sup> – 6:00 pm**  
Adair County Extension Office

Has Your BQA Certification expired, or will it expire soon? If so, make plans to attend this session to renew your certification. This is an important step for beef producers to ensure consumers are receiving wholesome and safe products. Also, applicants approved for the Large Animal investment area in the CAIP program must be BQA certified (Beef Quality Assurance). The fee for BQA Certification is \$5.00, which is due at the time of the certification.

## ▶ AG BUSINESS SUMMIT

**December 12<sup>th</sup> – 10:00 am**  
Adair County Extension Office

Owners of local Ag businesses and lenders are invited to attend the first Adair County Ag Business Summit to gain knowledge of the current trends and outlook for Adair County agriculture commodities. Topics and speakers will include:

- ◆ Overview of Adair County Ag Stats & Trends  
Nick Roy, Adair County Extension Agent
- ◆ On-Farm Expense & Returns  
Jonathan Shepard, UK Farm Business Analysis
- ◆ 2018 Agriculture Outlook  
Dr. Kenny Burdine, UK Ag Economist

Registration for the program is free, but participants are requested to RSVP by December 11<sup>th</sup> in order to make preparation for the lunch and materials. Call the Extension Office at 270-384-2317.

## ▶ DAIRY RESEARCH SHOWCASE

**December 19<sup>th</sup> – 10:00 am**  
Adair County Extension Office

All Dairy Producers and members of the dairy industry are invited to attend the first Dairy Research Showcase held in Adair County. The Dairy Research Showcase will highlight dairy research conducted this past year by the University of Kentucky graduate students. Lunch will be provided. Topics will include:

- Fresh Cow Management Protocols
- Economics of Mastitis Prevention and Management
- Animal Care and Handling
- Corn Silage Production and Management
- Animal Health Economics
- Ration Balancing and Nutritional Management
- Automatic Calf Feed Management

### **ADAIR COUNTY CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION**

**Annual Meeting**

**January 8, 2018 – 6:00 pm**

Agenda will include presentation of awards and board elections. Special guest speaker will be Dr. Roy Burris, UK Beef Specialist.

Keep an eye out in the local media for upcoming announcements regarding the Tri-County Grain Crops meeting and Commercial Pesticide Application CEU meeting.

# FALL IS FOR PLANTING

William (Bill) M. Fountain- Professor of Arboriculture and Landscape Management

Arbor Day, the celebration of the value of trees in our lives is celebrated in spring. Many municipalities plant trees in public areas as part of their Arbor Day celebration. With proper care, trees can be planted throughout the Commonwealth at almost any time of the year. However, in Kentucky the VERY BEST time to plant new trees and shrubs is the fall.

Late October until about the first of the year is the best time to plant for several reasons. The drought-breaking rains of fall have added moisture back to soils made hard and droughty by summer heat. The act of digging trees and shrubs for transplanting necessitates cutting roots. New roots must be regenerated if they are to become reestablished in the new location. With cooler temperatures and no foliage, the water demands for plants with limited or damaged root systems is significantly less.

We think of woody plants as growing in spring and early summer and then going dormant in fall and winter. This is true, at least for the above-ground parts we see. Roots grow most vigorously when the soil is above freezing and below 50 to 60°F. For us, this is most of the fall and winter. By planting in the fall we take advantage of roots being able to regenerate. This allows the plant to efficiently absorb sufficient water in the abundance of new roots when growth begins in spring. These newly transplanted plants can then maintain their water requirements throughout the hot, dry summer.



Fall really is for planting but we need to make sure that the plant will thrive in its new home. Watching plants die that are not adapted to a site is frustrating and a waste of money. Take a look at *Landscape Site Assessment*

(<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/ID/ID244/ID244.pdf>) to help determine the cultural characteristics of your landscape. One of the most important and most neglected assessments is determining if the soil will drain properly. Doing a percolation test, perk test for short, is simple and easy and can even be a part of the planting process. Consult *Soil Percolation: A Key to Survival of Landscape Plants* (<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/ID/ID237/ID237.pdf>) for more information. Plants that are not adapted to a site are less winter hardy and more prone to disease and insect problems. Approximately 80-90% of the samples that come into the UK Plant Disease Diagnostic Labs can be traced back to improper site adaptability and / or improper installation. If you discover that your site is poorly drained, you can then go to the list of flood tolerant species.

One of the secrets of a healthy landscape is species diversity. Neighborhoods planted mainly with ash trees or Bradford pears have experienced the disappointment of having to start over again. For help in selecting underutilized trees, look at *After Your Ash Has Died, Making an Informed Decision on What to Replant*

(<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/ID/ID241/ID241.pdf>).

Diversity adds interest throughout the four seasons. It also results in healthier, more attractive landscapes that require fewer pesticides.



Installing a new tree or shrub in its new home can be exciting... in a good way. It can also be exciting in a bad way. To keep “shocking” surprises from happening, always remember to call 811 a week before you dig. It’s the law! This free service will prevent you from

accidentally hitting buried utilities and perhaps being injured or being billed for the damage you caused.

Guidelines for planting can be found in *Planting Balled and Burlapped Trees and Shrubs in Your Landscape*

(<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/ho/ho91/ho91.pdf>),

*Planting Container Grown Trees and Shrubs in Your Landscape*

(<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/HO/HO114/HO114.pdf>),

and *Planting Bareroot Trees and Shrubs in Your Landscape*

(<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/HO/HO113/HO113.pdf>).

Which is best? All can be great. It depends on the plant, the size, and the site.

After your new trees and shrubs have been properly installed you should mulch it. Mulching is either one of the best things we do for a plant or one of the worst things we do to a plant. *Mulch Myths*

(<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/ho/ho106/ho106.pdf>)

will tell you how to mulch and what products to use. With the exception of bare root trees, most plants do not need to be staked. Staking can damage trunks and can prevent the tree from reestablishing as rapidly. Proper watering for the first year or two is much more important than adding fertilizer.

Selecting the appropriate trees and shrubs and installing them properly can improve the value of your residence, make a park a nicer place to visit, and make our communities a healthier place to live. It is the green infrastructure (trees and shrubs), more than any other single factor that makes Kentucky’s suburban and urban areas sustainable and livable places. For additional information on this or other topics, consult your Cooperative Extension Service.

# Tips on Alternative Grain Storage

Sam McNeil- UK Ag Engineer

High corn and soybean yields, a large carryover from 2016 and transportation challenges have combined to put pressure on grain markets this fall. Many farmers are looking at every available storage option. Some have added grain bins to their existing system in recent years, while others are looking at alternative storage, such as equipment storage buildings, covered outdoor piles, grain bags or other structures.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's September crop report predicts a U.S. corn crop of 14.2 billion bushels and record soybean production at 4.4 billion bushels.

Projections for Kentucky are 215 million bushels for corn and a record 98.3 million bushels for soybeans, according to the Kentucky Agricultural Statistics Service.

Farmers who plan to store grain in alternative structures this fall should remember some key factors to minimize grain spoilage.

"A producer's job really isn't done until grain has passed grade at the elevator and is sold," said Sam McNeill, extension agricultural engineer in the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment. "The diligence spent scouting fields during the growing season should transfer over to managing stored grain."

Properly dried and cooled grain that is protected from pests, aerated and regularly inspected will store well with little chance of excess spoilage, and subsequent price dock, when delivered for sale. Clean, undamaged grain is best for temporary storage when farmers use less-than-ideal facilities. Producers should thoroughly clean alternative storage structures before putting grain in them, fill them last and empty them first.

Grain that is not cleaned to remove broken kernels and trash should be stored at lower moisture levels to minimize spoilage. Producers should aim for 14 percent moisture content for corn and 12 percent for soybeans that will be stored through February.

Producers should evaluate alternative structures for wall strength, capacity, filling and unloading needs and aeration requirements, McNeill said. Most commercial storage buildings have built-in or add-on packages for providing adequate sidewall strength for grain storage. The UK Cooperative Extension Service has plans available for freestanding bulkhead walls up to 6 feet high built from standard lumber and plywood. These can be placed across the open end of a building or adjacent to existing walls to provide adequate strength.



By installing commercially available metal walls with perforated sections for aeration, producers can build covered outdoor piles. McNeill recommends installing a well-packed surface with fine gravel and covering it with heavy plastic to provide a moisture barrier and facilitate unloading. Producers should have aeration tubes in place prior to filling and continue to install them as the pile grows. Flat storage buildings and outdoor piles can be filled by moving a portable auger down the center of the structure. Vacuum systems, portable augers or front-end loaders are most often used to unload grain from these structures. Proper aeration is essential for successful grain storage and is the key to maintaining uniform temperatures, which control moisture accumulation and subsequent spoilage of the grain. Producers should run aeration fans at least once a month in flat storage buildings and continuously in covered piles to hold down the cover.

Farmers should space aeration ducts in flat storage buildings so that equal amounts of grain are ventilated with each tube. A rule of thumb for level piles is that the duct spacing should not exceed grain depth, McNeill said. Aeration fans should provide 250 cubic feet per minute of airflow for each 1,000 bushels of grain in the pile.

Rodent, bird and insect control is usually more difficult in flat storage buildings, piles and bags because of inherent exposure. Producers should commit to routine monitoring and use approved pest control practices to minimize grain spoilage during storage. This includes quickly repairing plastic covers and bags when damage occurs, McNeill said.

Storage cost figures vary widely depending on the type of structure, its original condition and holding capacity. Farmers can use a spreadsheet available on the UK Department of Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering website, <https://www.uky.edu/bae/grain-storage-systems/>, to estimate the amount of grain these types of structures can hold. They can enter the dimensions of the structure, pile or bag to quickly calculate storage capacity in bushels. The UK Cooperative Extension Service has more information on managing stored grain in bins or alternative structures.