



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Gene Schmitz
Livestock Specialist
University of Missouri Extension
(660) 438-5012
schmitze@missouri.edu

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Headline: Forage Education Events Scheduled

WARSAW, Mo. – Area livestock producers should be aware of two upcoming events concerning forage and grazing management.

The first event is the Mid-Missouri Grazing Conference. This event will be held on Thursday, February 2, 2017 at the Capital Plaza Hotel in Jefferson City. The day begins with a trade show beginning at 8:00 a.m. and education sessions begin at 9:00. This year's break-out sessions topics include: low cost sheep production, land and livestock leasing options, vaccination programs for ruminants, comparison of legumes for grazing systems, grazing to improve wildlife habitat, farm business succession planning, grass-based heifer development, genetics for grassland livestock production, and grazing standing cover crops to replace stored feed.

Following lunch, our keynote speaker will be Dr. Bob Nusbaum, who will discuss livestock selection wants vs. needs. Dr. Nusbaum is retired from the University of Wisconsin – Platteville and raises registered Angus cattle and Katahdin sheep at Potosi, WI. Additionally, a livestock producer panel will discuss how their operations have evolved and provide insight into how they have adapted their operations in ever-changing environmental and economic conditions.

Registration information is available on-line at the Mid-Missouri Grazing Conference website, <http://extension.missouri.edu/grazingconf>. The 14th annual conference is sponsored by MU Extension, Lincoln University, USDA/NRCS, Missouri Department of Conservation, and Soil and Water Conservation Districts in central Missouri.

A second program that may be of interest to area forage producers is the upcoming Novel Tall Fescue Renovation School. Livestock producers have known for many years the animal production issues associated with toxic Kentucky 31 (KY-31) tall fescue. The endophyte fungus that grows between infected plant cells produces chemicals harmful to animals, but the fungus is beneficial to the fescue plant.

Researchers developed varieties of tall fescue that did not have the endophyte fungus, but these endophyte free varieties lacked persistence. Additional research has discovered so called novel or friendly endophytes. These novel endophytes do not produce animal toxins, but provide plant protection benefits, and thus have the potential to be more persistent than their endophyte free counterparts. New tall fescue varieties have been developed that contain these friendly endophytes.

In order to establish novel endophyte tall fescue, in many cases toxic KY-31 tall fescue must be killed before the new fescue variety can be seeded. Information about this renovation process has been condensed into a one-day school. During 2017, renovation schools are being held in Kansas, Missouri, and Kentucky and are being sponsored by the Alliance for Grassland Renewal with additional support from the University of Missouri, Kansas State University, and the University of Kentucky.

The Missouri school will be held on Tuesday, March 7, 2017 at the MU Southwest Center at Mt. Vernon, MO. Registration is being handled through the Lawrence County Extension Center. Producers can call 417-466-3102 for registration information.

Additional registration information and forms are available on the Alliance for Grassland Renewal website <http://grasslandrenewal.org>. All of the schools start at 9 a.m. and end at 5 p.m. The registration fee includes a notebook of presentations, lunch, and breaks.

For more information on either of these programs, you can also contact me via e-mail at schmitze@missouri.edu or by calling the Benton County Extension Center at (660) 438-5012.

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