

Forage Focus



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Upcoming Programs for Your Calendar

December 4, 11, 13—Regional Hay School, Springfield (See below and attached brochure)

December 4—Farm Family Appreciation Luncheon, 11:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.—Lamar (See attached flyer)

December 6—Farm Labor Management Workshop, Ramada Oasis Convention Center, Springfield (See attached flyer)

January 3—Lawrence County Soils and Crops Conference, 6:00 p.m., Southwest Center, Mt. Vernon

January 9—Barton County Soils and Crops Conference, daytime, Lamar (Call 417-682-3579 for details)

January 17—Dade County Soils and Crops Conference, 4:00 p.m., Lockwood (Call 417-637-2112 for details)

January 22—Spring Calving Clinic, 9:00 a.m.-Noon or 2:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m., Pinegar Arena, Darr Center, Springfield (See below and attached flyer)

February 26—Spring Forage Conference, 9:00 a.m.— 3:00 p.m. Ramada Oasis Convention Center, Springfield (New Location)

Regional Hay School Offered December 4, 11 and 13 in Springfield

Southwest Missouri hay producers will have an opportunity to attend a regional school December 4, 11 and 13 in Springfield to learn how to improve their hay making skills. This program will be offered by the Greene County University of Missouri Extension Center in cooperation with the Missouri State University William H. Darr College of Agriculture.

This three-night non-credit course is specifically designed for livestock producers who already own hay equipment or have hay custom harvested on their land. All aspects of hay and round bale silage production will be covered.

There is a lot at stake when making hay and many things to consider to make it worth the effort and to be profitable. Attending a hay school is an important management tool to insure that you will get the most out of your land, time and hay equipment during the 2019 season.

The program will focus on topics like economics of hay production, forage options, hay quality issues and testing, fertility management, round bale silage management, hay storage, feeding to keep losses low and nutritional needs of cattle.

This regional hay school will be held December 9, 11 and 13 at 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., at the Darr Agricultural Center (2401 S. Kansas Expressway) in Springfield. There is a \$25 fee to attend the program which includes three meals. The program is also underwritten by MFA, Heritage Tractor of Rogersville and



Hay harvest of a new stand of Texoma Max QII fescue on the Tom Kisse Ranch near Stott City this past May.

Vermeer. Preregistration is required by November 28 and space is limited so register early. Contact the Greene County Extension Center at 417-881-8909 to preregister and to receive a brochure with more information. You may also register on-line at <http://extension.missouri.edu/greene>.



Spring Calving Clinic

Extension specialists have been preparing for a calving clinic in Springfield on January 22. You can choose from a morning session or afternoon session to participate. This program is shaping up to be an outstanding hands-on program to attend. Heather Conrow, Livestock Specialist from Fulton, Missouri, will be the featured presenter and will lead discussion and give demonstrations on assisting difficult births, tubing and caring for the newborn calf and mother after the birth. There is a \$30 fee to attend. Preregistration is required by January 15. Space is limited so register early. See the attached flyer for more details.

Conserve Stockpiled Fescue Pastures this Winter

Cold weather hit early this year in November so livestock producers are busy making sure cattle are fed and in good shape going into winter. I want to encourage those who held pastures back and stockpiled some fescue to not give the grass away too early. You may continue to be feeding some hay but remember that most of the time, the fescue you held back will still provide some outstanding quality as late as



Above: Stockpiled BarOptima fescue from the Anderson Ranch near Seligman taken on February 13, 2018. Fescue samples (all material above ground) pulled on this day tested 10% protein and 52% TDN.



Above: Stockpiled Estancia fescue from the Don Houschel farm at Stark City taken on January 27, 2017. Mr. Houschel tested the grass in this field on January 1, 2017 and it tested 15.4% protein and 60.6% TDN. (Photo Credit—Don Houschel)

January in most years. That may be a time you will need it most going into spring calving season. It will be hard to beat the quality of fescue “on the stump” compared to fescue in a typical hay bale. In the photo captions, you can see some real-life examples of stockpiled fescue and how well it tested mid-late winter. It’s not unusual for a lot of typical fescue hay to test under 10% protein and 50% TDN. The things that can lead to stockpile challenges include cattle trampling on the grass and a heavy ice storm.

Some have started to graze cereal grain forages such as rye and triticale that were planted in September. Typically, one acre of small grain forages can carry about 500 pounds of live weight per acre. In some cases you may want to allow for a few hours of grazing each day to conserve the grass. How well it grows back after grazing is dependent on weather in the next month. The rule of thumb we follow on grazing rye, triticale, oats or wheat is to turn in at about 8 inches of growth and take it down to no lower than 4 inches, especially in the fall when there is potential for regrowth. Grazing lower eliminates the chance for regrowth if the weather is good. I’ve monitored several stands of turnips this fall and where planted early and with little competition they have done very well. However, the cold snap has caused earlier than normal deterioration. We are at the point that you should graze turnips and radishes as much as possible to harvest as much forage as you can before it is gone.