



Forage News

Keeping Forage- Livestock Producers in Kentucky Informed

Dr. Ray Smith and Echo Gotsick, MS editors

October 2025

2025 KY Grazing Conference with Jim Gerrish

Make plans to join us at the KY Grazing Conference Oct 28 or Oct 30 "Grazing for Profit: Optimizing Returns in Grass Based Operations". Our special invited speaker will be Jim Gerrish and we will be holding the conference at two locations for your convenience, Winchester on the 28th and Leitchfield the 30th. Topics include:

- Seven Things That I Have Learned About Profitable Ranching in the Last 45 Years,
Jim Gerrish, American GrazingLands Services
- Nutrient Cycling in Grassland Ecosystems
Dr. Ricardo Riberio, University of Kentucky
- Forage Management and Shifting Weather Patterns
Dr. Chris Teutsch, University of Kentucky
- Breeding a Functional Cow that Works in Your Environment
Cody Rakes, Manager, Loretto Motherhouse Farm
- Forage Spokesperson Contest/Local Producers
- What We Have Learned About Bale Grazing
Dr. Greg Halich, University of Kentucky
- Managing Feed Costs in Ruminant Livestock Production Systems
Jim Gerrish, American GrazingLands Services

We expect a full house at both locations so you are encouraged to register soon. \$60 per participant or \$25 per student. Register at the UK Forage Website under Events or make checks payable to KFGC and mail to: KFGC c/o Caroline Roper, PO Box 469, Princeton, KY 42445. Call Caroline if you have questions (270) 704-6618.

Winchester, KY

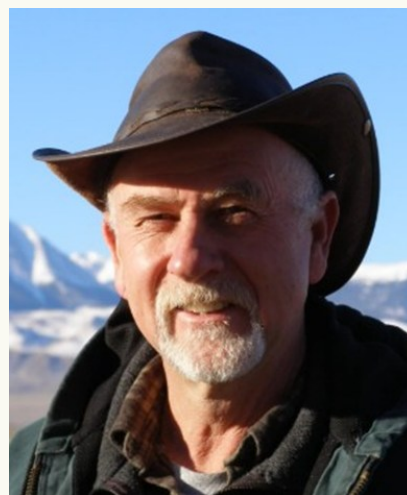


Leitchfield, KY



Forage Timely Tips: October

- ✓ Feed hay to allow cool-season pastures to accumulate forage growth for winter grazing.
- ✓ Leave 4" stubble on some pastures to stimulate faster spring regrowth.
- ✓ Do NOT harvest or graze alfalfa fields Nov or after a hard frost.
- ✓ Inventory and test each hay lot for nutritive value and consult a nutritionist to design a supplementation program as needed.
- ✓ Remove ruminants from pastures that contain sorghum species (forage sorghums, sorghum-sudangrass hybrids, sudangrass, and johnsongrass) when frost is expected. Even small patches of johnsongrass that have been frosted can cause prussic acid poisoning.
- ✓ Begin strip grazing early planted small grain and brassicas (turnips and rape) mixes by the end of this month.
- ✓ Late Oct/early Nov can be a great time to control broadleaf weeds like plantain (broadleaf or buckhorn), biennial thistles (bull, musk, plumeless), and poison hemlock.



Jim Gerrish of American GrazingLands Services. Photo by Dawn Gerrish.

Profitability Workshop-Oct. 29 – Elizabethtown, KY

We are calling this a [deep-dive profitability workshop with Jim Gerrish](#). It will take place on Wednesday Oct.

29, at the Hardin County Extension Office at 111 Opportunity Way in Elizabethtown. Jim will examine factors impacting profitability and outline cost-effective solutions for increasing net return in ruminant livestock operations. The morning session, beginning at 9 am Eastern, will explore topics such as ranching as a land management business, feed costs and profitability, individual animal performance and whole-ranch profitability, cow size and profitability, and finding balance between cow-calf production and custom feeding.

The afternoon session will explore topics including stock water development, reseeding pastures and conducting financial analysis. This registration for this focused workshop is \$100 and will be limited to 35 participants. To register for the Kentucky Grazing Conference, Profitability Workshop or other fall forage, fencing and livestock grazing events, visit <https://forages.mgcafe.uky.edu/events>. For additional information or to mail in registration, please contact Caroline Roper at caroline.roper@uky.edu or 270-704-6618.

Join/Renew KFGC Membership

We encourage you to show your support for Forage/Livestock agriculture in Kentucky and join the Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council. A bonus to joining KFGC is an automatic membership to the American Forage and Grassland Council. A great two for one value for only \$25. If you are already a KFGC member, then I encourage you to renew your membership today. The easiest way is to go to AFGC.org, then click on Membership and Join/Renew Now. Make sure you join as an Affiliate Member of Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council. If you want to mail in your membership then write a check payable to KFGC for \$25 and mail to our KFGC Treasurer: Caroline Roper, UKREC, PO Box 469, Princeton, KY 42445. Make sure to include your name, address, phone, and email with your check.

Pub of the month – Controlling Fall Weeds AGR-207

One of the most comprehensive yet concise weed publications in the country is Dr. J.D. Green's 2 page publication "Broadleaf Weeds of KY Pastures." Dr. Green updated this pub just over a year ago. One side has photos of the major weeds and the other side lists the weeds with the products that are most effective controlling them. He also indicates the time of the year that's best to spray. Fall is a good time to kill many problem winter annual weeds like poison hemlock when they are small. An additional benefit of fall weed control is that when spraying standard herbicides like 2,4-D/dicamba there will be no residue come February when it's time to frost seed. Remember that buttercup will continue to germinate throughout the winter so it's best to spray in early March. Some people have used Duracor or GrazonNext to control fall weeds

and limit germination of buttercup over the winter, but these products have a long term residual so you cannot frost seed the following spring.

Remember that the best weed control is a good grass cover, so try to avoid overgrazing in the fall. Pastures that have a 4" residual going into the winter will green-up several weeks earlier in the spring. Go to this pub on the UK Forage Website or the direct link is: <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/AGR/AGR207/AGR207.pdf>

For a more detailed weed control publication, including information on each product, withholding periods and application rates, go to "Weed Management in Grass Pastures, Hayfields, and Other Farmstead Sites AGR-172". Direct link - <https://weedscience.ca.uky.edu/sites/weedscience.ca.uky.edu/files/agr172.pdf>

New Herbicide Product - NovaGraz

Corteva's new pasture herbicide, NovaGraz, adds another option to the pasture weed control toolbox. What makes it somewhat unique is that many broadleaf weeds are controlled, while white clover exhibits tolerance and lives on as a valuable pasture legume component.

"Our research has found NovaGraz can provide effective control of common pasture weeds, and the label lists effectiveness on a range of other annual, biennial, and simple perennial weeds," reports Mark Renz, an extension weed management specialist with the University of Wisconsin-Madison. ~excerpt of article by Mike Rankin in Hay and Forage Grower. For the full article go to:

<https://hayandforage.com/article-5460-NovaGraz-offers-white-clover-tolerance.html>

Hay & Forager Grower Article: Will Hay Prices Beef up?

In her September 23, 2025 article, Amber Friedrichsen explores whether rising cattle prices will drive up hay costs. She explains that hay pricing is highly regional and depends on factors like weather, water availability, and local stocks. While strong cattle prices might encourage ranchers to buy more feed, dry conditions—especially in the western U.S.—are pushing ranchers to pull cattle off pasture earlier and increase hay demand. The article also discusses trade-offs for producers in either developing their own heifers versus buying bred ones, noting that opportunity costs and feed expense can quickly accumulate. Friedrichsen emphasizes that there is no one-size-fits-all answer: the interplay of production costs, regional supply, and livestock markets will determine whether hay prices truly "beef up." ~summary of Article by Amber Friedrichsen in Hay and Forage Grower. For the full article go to: <https://hayandforage.com/article-5475-Will-hay-prices-beef-up.html>

see blue.

Another successful Intermediate KY Grazing School was held Sept. 24-25, 2025 in Versailles, KY.

The photos below provide an overview of the hands-on activities that are part of the grazing school. Check out the UK Forage website in January 2026 for the dates and locations for the April and September UK Beginning and Intermediate Grazing Schools.



(1– Left) Allocating pasture size for sheep grazing was added to the Intermediate Grazing School for 2025.

(2– Right) The entire 2025 Intermediate Grazing School class showing plant roots from annual forages. See Dr. Deutsch knelling down left of center. He is the leader of the Grazing Schools, but was so busy taking photos and setting up activities that this is the only photo he was in



(3– Left) One of the favorite activities of the Intermediate Grazing School is evaluating the extensive root systems of annual forages. A participant is shown here washing the soil off a corn plant grown for grazing.

(4—Right) Groups allocating paddocks for the 2025 Intermediate Grazing School. The electric netting in the foreground is being utilized by the sheep grazing group. All the other groups are using a single strand electric polywire to contain heifers in small paddocks.



(5—Left) One of the 2025 Intermediate Grazing School groups determining pasture forage mass with grazing sticks and clipping. Like many farms in KY, the dry conditions in August and September led to a profusion of foxtail in the pastures at the UK Oran Little Research Farm.

(6—Right) Dr. Smith showing the 2025 Intermediate Grazing School class how to determine forage mass using a grazing stick.



(7—Left) Dr. Lehmkuhler showing the 2025 Intermediate Grazing School participants how to set up a temporary water system using plastic hose and quick couplers.

(8— Right) Dr. Smith showing 2025 Intermediate Grazing School participants how KY county agents use cyanide and nitrate test strips to access toxicity risk on warm season annual forages under drought conditions.

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Forage News



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Upcoming Events (see Forage website for details and to register, click on EVENTS)

Oct. 28 – KY Grazing Conf. East,
Winchester, KY

Oct. 29– Profitability Workshop, Elizabeth,
KY

Oct. 30—KY Grazing Conf. West, Leitchfield,
KY

Jan. 11-13, 2026 – AFGC Annual Conf,
Asheville, NC

Jan. 16—Forages at KCA, Owensboro, KY

Feb. 24—Alfalfa and Stored Forage Conf.,
Russellville, KY

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