

MCCRACKEN AG NEWS



McCracken County's Agriculture and Natural Resources Update

Cooperative Extension
University of Kentucky
McCracken County
2025 New Holt Rd
Paducah, KY 42001
270-554-9520



Meet the New Agent

Hello everybody! In case we haven't met, my name is Gracey Moffitt and I am the new Ag agent here in McCracken County. I am very blessed to have been chosen to take on this position and I am so excited to see what all the future holds! If you haven't taken it yet, please take my Program Interest Survey! The results from this survey will help me to plan programs. You can find the link on our website.



Gracey Moffitt

Agent Update

This past month I have been on the go between the **Alaska Trip, State Fair**, and various meetings.

The **Alaska Trip Highlight** is included on the next page!

My **Pepper Variety Trial** is still going strong and I have even started harvesting them! (as pictured above)! If you are interested in coming by to try the peppers let us know! We would be happy to give you a sample!

I have also started on another project: **Harvest Festival 2024**. Our Harvest Festival is scheduled for November 15th from 3-7, I will share more info as we get closer. In preparation for the festival I have planted pumpkins, popcorn, Indian corn, and flowers (as pictured above)! Please ignore the weeds, it is a work in progress and stay tuned for updates!

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Other Upcoming Events and Recipe

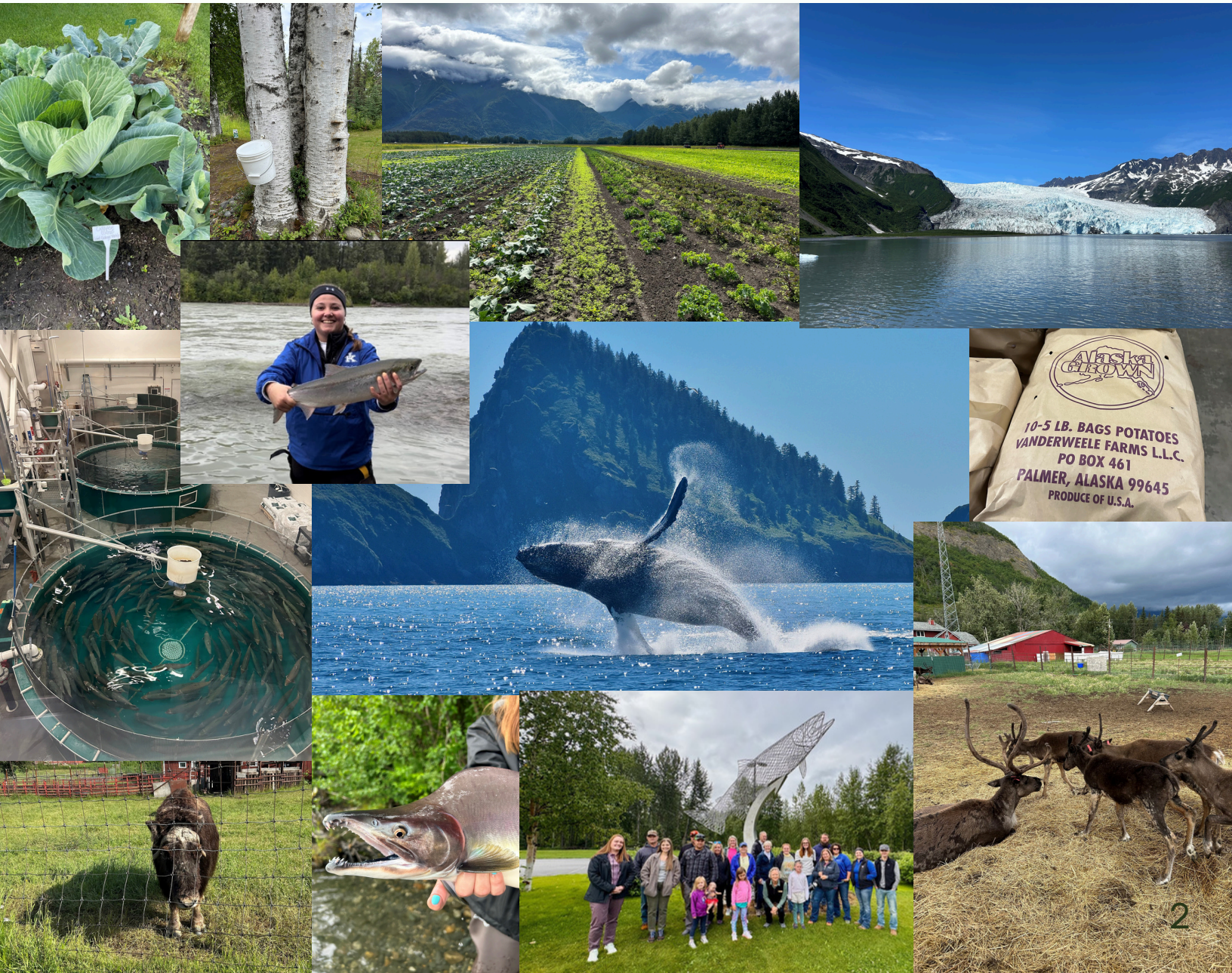
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Ag & Natural Resources Events and News for Everyone

Alaska Trip 2024 Highlights:

First off, I am going to start by telling you that this trip was a professional development opportunity for ag agents like myself in Graves, Calloway, Marshall, and here in McCracken. We made it open to all producers that may have a passion or desire to learn about agriculture in other parts of the US.

- Day 1:** Our first full day in Alaska was spent at the Anchorage Port in the Gulf of Alaska, a fish hatchery, Pyrah's Pioneer U-Pick Farm, the Alaskan Plant Materials Center, and a local Reindeer Farm for rehabilitated rescues.
- Day 2:** The longest day on our trip was spent between the 3 hour Coastal Train to the Kenai Fjord where we boarded the 6 hour Glacier Cruise through the Resurrection Bay. We were able to see beautiful views of wildlife and the glaciers peaking through.
- Day 3:** Our 3rd day started out at the VanderWeele flower and vegetable farm, the Musk Ox farm, the birch tree syrup farm and operation, and lastly a local brewery.
- Day 4:** The 4th day in Alaska was spent in Talkeetna. We were given free reign this day to explore the Alaskan wilderness. So, a group of us went on a Salmon fishing Charter. After our charter we were able to venture through the small town.
- Day 5:** Our last day of exploring on our trip was spent at Denali National Park. Due to the temperature inversions and cloud cover we were unable to see the mountain range. However we were still able to view some wildlife and experience a tundra-type ecosystem.



Livestock Events and News

US Hay Production Expected to Increase Again in 2024

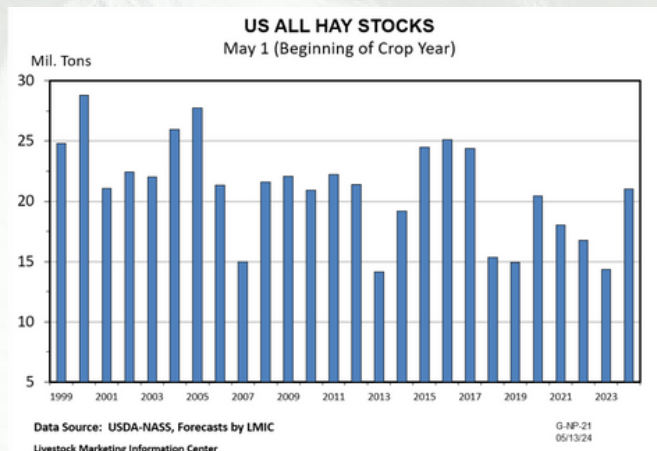
By: Kenny Burdine, University of Kentucky

Date: 8/19/2024

Non-Alfalfa Hay Production Estimates in Selected States and US (2023 and 2024)

State	2023 Production (1,000 tons)	Est. 2024 Production (1,000 tons)	Change from 2023 to 2024
Arkansas	2,204	2,684	+21.8%
Kansas	2,781	3,028	+8.9%
Kentucky	4,158	4,466	+7.4%
Mississippi*	1,102	1,276	+15.8%
Missouri	4,380	5,805	+32.5%
Oklahoma	6,630	5,270	-20.5%
Tennessee	3,740	3,360	-10.2%
Texas	8,280	10,780	+30.2%
United States	68,853	74,450	+8.1%

*Mississippi Estimates include Alfalfa and Alfalfa Mixtures
Source: USDA-NASS August 2024 Crop Production Report



While row crop estimates get the most attention, USDA's August Crop Production report also provides an initial estimate of US hay production and includes projections for individual states. Hay production and stocks have major implications for winter feed supply and winter feed costs for cattle operations. Widespread drought in 2022 led to low hay production levels and left very limited hay supplies coming into 2023. This can be seen in the May 1 Hay Stocks figure above. Note that hay stocks in the US on May 1 of last year were at their lowest levels since 2013. A sharp increase can also be seen in 2024 as the larger 2023 crop helped to replenish hay supplies.

Last week's report suggested increases in production were likely at the national level for both "Alfalfa and Alfalfa Mixes", as well as "All Other Hay" in 2024. These are the only two categories of hay for which estimates are made by USDA-NASS. In this article, I will focus on the All Other Hay (non-Alfalfa) category as that is typically more reflective of hay that is fed to beef cows over the winter. At the national level, non-Alfalfa hay production was estimated to be up by 8.1% from 2023, largely due to higher expected yields across the country. While this is encouraging for hay supply in aggregate, hay markets are very localized since transportation costs tend to be very high. This is especially true for large roll bales, which are most often fed by cow-calf operators.

As I have done the last few years, I selected some state estimates from the August report to provide some regional perspective on likely hay production levels. As can be seen in the table below, non-Alfalfa hay production is expected to be higher in most states. Texas and Missouri especially stand out and it is worth noting that they are projected to be the two states with the highest production levels nationwide. Oklahoma stands out to the downside, but that decrease is driven by a sizeable drop in expected harvested acres. Hay production was projected higher in Kentucky, Arkansas, and Mississippi, with Tennessee (down 10.2%) being the outlier in the Southeast.

While a lot can still change with respect to hay production this fall, the August Crop Production report does paint a picture of increased hay supplies in many areas. In addition to hay production, fall grazing prospects will also impact how much hay will be needed in the upcoming winter. It is also important to understand that these production estimates say nothing about hay quality, which is another important element of the discussion. I like to examine hay production estimates and do think it provides some general perspective, but I would also reiterate how different hay availability can be across the country. It's never too early to think about winter hay needs and make plans to source additional hay, if needed.

Cattle Market Notes Weekly

Josh Maples



James Mitchell



Kenny Burdine



Livestock

The right time is **now**.
The right way is **BQCA**.

Thanks to the partnership between Kentucky Beef Network and University of Kentucky get **FREE BQCA CERTIFICATION** online or through your county extension office **September 1st through September 30th, 2024**.



Martin-Gatton
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment

CALL 270-247-2334
TO REGISTER!

NEW DATE!

NEW RETAIL CUTS FROM THE BEEF RIBEYE

MEAT CUTTING DEMONSTRATION

WITH

DR. GREGG RENTFROW,
UK MEAT SCIENCE SPECIALIST

SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

5:30PM

GRAVES COUNTY
EXTENSION OFFICE



Cooperative
Extension Service

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT



Martin-Gatton
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment

Cooperative Extension
Marshall County
2081 Mayfield Highway
Benton, KY 42025
(270) 527-3285

"Very educational, I
really enjoyed getting to
see things in action at
the mock auction"
-past participant

"(BQCA) really assisted
with understanding real
world usage of EPDS"
-past participant

**Bull
Value
Assessment
Program**

October 14th & 22nd
6:00PM

Free meal both nights!
@ The New Marshall County
Extension Office

RSVP Required
Call 270-527-3285

This two night
program is
designed to help
producers make future
bull buying decisions.
This "mock" bull buying
experience allows producers to
fine tune their bull evaluating,
selecting and purchasing skills at a
live, no risk, auction simulation!

This program is a collaboration of the Marshall, Caloway, Graves, McCracken & Livingston County Extension Offices.

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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University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating.



2024 HEART OF AMERICA GRAZING CONFERENCE

Regenerative grazing... Merging science and practice

Tuesday, October 15, 2024

Pasture Ecology Workshop with Matt Poore, North
Carolina State University
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. ET
Glenmar Farms, 16943 St. John Road, Cecelia, KY 42724

Heart of America Banquet

6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. ET
Hardin County Extension Office, 111 Opportunity Way,
Elizabethtown, KY
Capturing the Beauty of Forages with Dr. Jimmy Henning

Wednesday, October 16, 2024

Heart of America Grazing Conference
7:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. ET
Hardin County Extension Office, 111 Opportunity Way,
Elizabethtown, KY

- Healing the Land with Grazing
Ray Archuleta, Raythesolgu LLC
- Soil Health: Separating Fact from Fiction
Alan Franzluebbers, USDA Ag Research Service
- Bale Grazing for Biological Fertility and Soil Health
Greg Halch, University of Kentucky
- My Regenerative Journey
Sam Kennedy, Kettle Mills Livestock Co.
- Build It and They Will Come... Managing for Soil Life
Chris Teutsch, University of Kentucky
- Putting it All Together... A Call to Action
Matt Poore, North Carolina State University

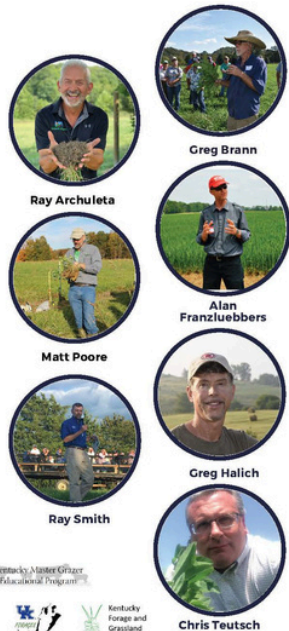
Thursday, October 17, 2024

Pasture Walk at Greg Brann's Big Springs Farm
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. CT
683 Blankenship Rd. Adolphus, KY 42120

Tickets can be found at
<https://2024HeartofAmerica.eventbrite.com>



Kentucky Master Grazers
Educational Program



If registering by mail, please send checks payable to KFGC to: Caroline Roper, UKREC, PO Box 469, Princeton, KY 42445

Pasture Ecology \$100 x _____ = _____
Banquet \$50 x _____ = _____
Grazing Conference \$75 x _____ = _____
Pasture Walk \$45 x _____ = _____
Total: _____

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

Row Crops & Forages

Events and News



Return of the Fall Armyworm?

Source: Dr. Jonathon Larson, Entomology Extension Specialist

Date: 8/20/24

In 2021, Kentucky was one of many states that were impacted by a historic outbreak of fall armyworms. That year marked perhaps the worst year for the pest since the 1970s and has inspired fear and dread about these hungry, hungry caterpillars rearing their head again. In the past week, reports from western and central Kentucky have indicated that some folks are seeing fall armyworms in turfgrass areas. It doesn't seem to be at the same levels we experienced in 2021 but it doesn't hurt to review how this pest works and what can be done about it.

Fall Armyworm & Kentucky

Fall armyworms do not overwinter in this state. They are a tropical species, and they typically overwinter in southern Florida and southern Texas. These spots stay warm enough for them to persist and then mate to start the generations that will migrate northward. They usually move from these toasty states into states like Mississippi and Alabama in April and May, arriving next in Tennessee by May or June. Typically, they start to appear in Kentucky by June.

In the Bluegrass State, fall armyworms are usually associated with issues in pastures and crops. In this state and others, they will cross over into the home landscape to feed on turf in lawns. Initially when they feed, the tips of the blades of grass will have windowpane-like damage. As the caterpillars grow, they will progress into consuming whole blades of grass. The term "armyworm" also comes from the fact that these pests move in a group across the grass, creating a distinct line of damage opposed to undamaged grass. Newly planted sod is more susceptible to being killed by these pests than established turf areas.

What should you do now?

If you live near pastures or agricultural production fields that have been affected by fall armyworm damage, it might be a good idea to check your lawn for initial signs of damage. Additionally, if you noticed large numbers of egg masses, it would behoove you to check in with your lawn. Infested stands of turf will appear thinned out, often with exposed crowns or soil where caterpillars have completely consumed the plant.

Some folks won't have to worry. If you have a yard that was treated with Acelepryn or Scott's GrubEx in the spring/early summer for grub control, you likely won't get fall armyworms. These systemic products last through the whole summer and are effective against both beetle grubs and moth caterpillars.

If you haven't had your yard treated, though, and are seeing a concerning amount of damage, you can minimize fall armyworms and their feeding with pyrethroid products like bifenthrin, cyhalothrin, and others. Bt and spinosad, which are organic options, will work when caterpillars are smaller and might be effective if another generation of armyworms develops here.

Producers should scout their fields and pastures and treat if numbers exceed a threshold of 2 to 4 larvae per square foot on average.

No insecticide will make grass green again though! If you have seen part of your lawn destroyed, you can salvage what is left, but prepare to reseed or resod in the near future.

Are you curious if you have Fall Armyworms in your yard? You can apply a mixture of dish soap and water to the surface to flush them out. From there you can make the decision to treat the issue or not. Don't hesitate to call and ask questions.

Row Crops & Forages

Drought conditions on the rise?

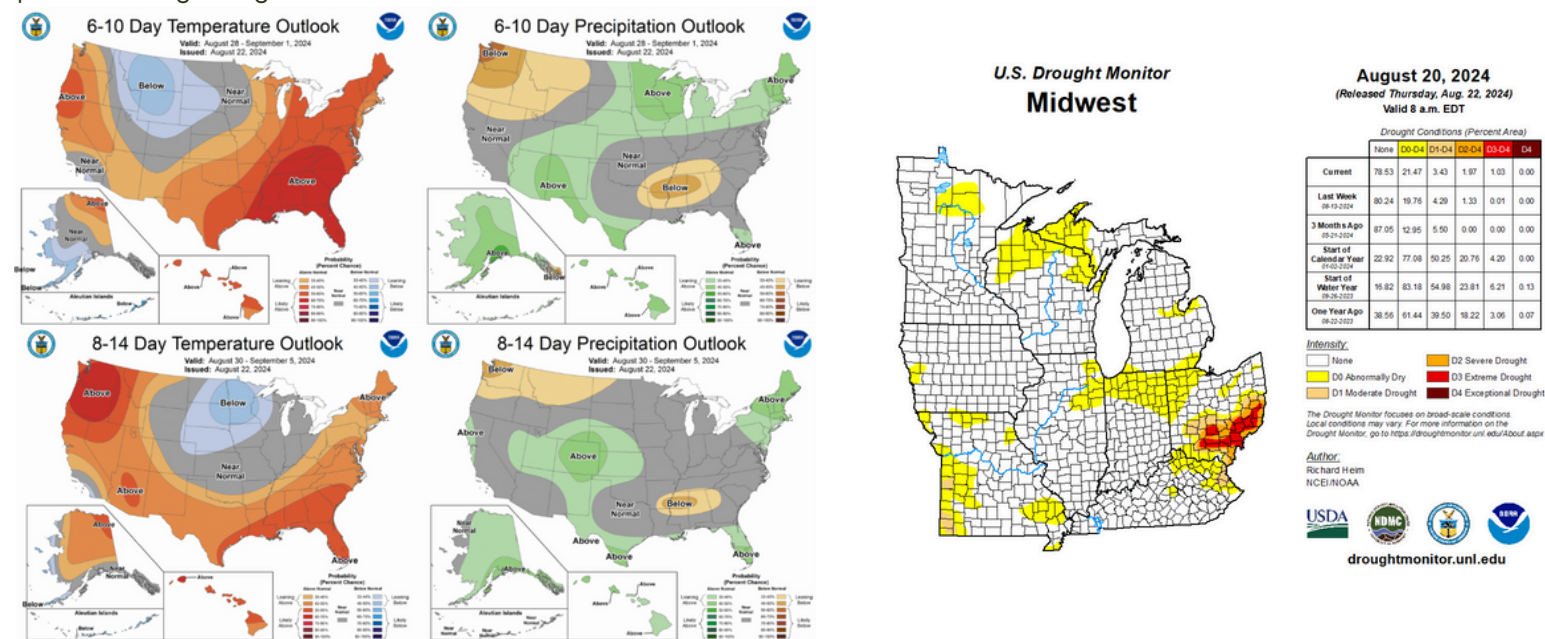
Source: Matt Dixon, Meteorologist - UK Ag Weather Center

Date: 8/23/24

So, what can we expect moving forward? If you're looking for some rain, the forecast isn't very promising. As it stands now, with high pressure expected to remain in control, there's a good chance that most of Kentucky will stay dry over the upcoming week. Unfortunately, as high pressure moves east today, our winds will shift to a southerly direction, pushing highs back into the mid to upper 80s, and even into the low to mid-90s this weekend and into next workweek. I wouldn't be surprised if some of the driest areas in Western Kentucky hit 100. These temperatures WILL push the livestock heat stress index back into the danger category, so be sure to take necessary precautions.

Long-range outlooks suggest that this warm and relatively dry trend will continue through the start of September (see images below). While the Climate Prediction Center indicates that we are favored to see near-normal precipitation, it's important to remember that "near normal" for this time of year is not particularly significant and likely won't be enough to alleviate drought conditions. In doing so, many of us will start monitoring the tropics, but currently, there is nothing in the picture (which is somewhat unusual for this time of year).

As much as I hope to avoid a repeat of 2022 and 2023, it's something that remains a possibility. Dry conditions combined with high heat are a concerning combination. We saw the impacts of this in August and September of 2019. Below is the latest U.S. Drought Monitor, released yesterday. Currently, the spatial coverage of abnormally dry conditions and moderate drought is relatively sparse. However, as mentioned earlier, some areas are already starting to go in the wrong direction. For instance, the Fulton County Mesonet Station has only recorded 0.38 inches of rain for the entire month of August so far, and this amount is unlikely to change much given the current forecast and outlooks. That number only increases to 1.17 going all the way back to July 10th. Shallow soil moisture levels have been tanking and we still have a sizable portion of the growing season ahead.



Moving forward, be sure to take a proactive approach in case conditions deteriorate again. The Climate Prediction Center has just released the latest 8-14 day U.S. Hazards Outlook and Western Kentucky is under an elevated risk for rapid drought onset (map below).

UK Extension Specialists, Drs. Bob Coleman and Jimmy Henning, recently highlighted some drought mitigation tips in an article from M-G CAFE Communications titled "[Smart feeding and planning: Tackling hay challenges for horses amid Kentucky's drought.](#)" In summary, hay prices are rising due to what appears to be a "looming scarcity." If necessary, now is the time to secure hay for the upcoming winter and/or implement efficient hay management systems to reduce waste. As a sidenote, UK Forage Specialists are also receiving an increased number of reports regarding fall armyworms and advise producers to scout fields and pastures, "treating if numbers exceed a threshold of 2 to 4 larvae (caterpillars) per square foot on average". More information will be available in their September issue of [UK Forage News](#).

In some closing thoughts, although we've seen five of our top-10 wettest years on record since 2011, the fall seasons haven't necessarily followed this trend. In fact, the fall seasons of 2022 and 2023 rank as the 9th and 12th driest falls ever recorded in Kentucky. 2016 is 6th on the list, and September 2019 was the driest September ever recorded in state history. A dry fall in Kentucky isn't necessarily unusual (it is our driest season of the year), but the dryness has been taken to another level over recent years.

Unsure what is going on in your field? Call me at 270-933-1386. I would be happy to come scout your crops with you to discuss what to do next.

Upcoming Office Events

	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5
MON	2: 	9: District Board Meeting 11 (RSVP)	16: Four Rivers Homeschool 4-h Club and Cloverbud Clubs 2-3	23:	30: Better than Ever Barn Quilting 1-4 (RSVP by 9/27, \$25-\$45 fee size dependent)
TUE	3: Game Day 9-12 Adult Sewing 9-11 Toolbox: Hydrangea 5-6	10: Adult Sewing 9-11 4-H Rocket Club Info Night 5	17: Bags of Love 9:30-1:30 Interracial Women's Group 12-1 (\$5 donation for lunch)	24: Adult Sewing 9-11 Laugh and Learn 11-12 (at Library)	
WED	4: McCracken Co Beautification Board Meeting 10-11:30	11: Tech Class: Pinterest Basics 10-11 Paint Fan Dance 1-3	18: Scrapbooking 9-3	25: Air Sculpt Yoga 1-3	
THURS	5: Needlework Club 10-12 Crochet Alley & Knit Row 1-3	12:	19: Game Day 9-12 Needlework Club 10-12 Crochet Alley & Knit Row 1-3	26:	29:
FRI	6:	13: Arts & Crafts Day 9:30 (RSVP, \$3-\$5 fee)	20:	27: Taste of McCracken 5:30-7 (\$10/person, tickets on sale until 9/7)	

Event Calendar for September 2024

If you have questions or would like to RSVP, call the office at 270-554-9520.

The full calendar with event descriptions is located on our website. <https://mccracken.ca.uky.edu>

Recipe of the Month



Apple Cranberry Waldorf Salad

1 cup chopped Granny Smith apple	1 cup halved seedless green grapes	½ cup chopped walnuts
1 cup chopped Red Delicious apple	1 cup halved seedless red grapes	8 ounces non-fat vanilla yogurt
1 cup diced celery	1½ cups dried cranberries	2 tablespoons honey
		¼ teaspoon cinnamon

1. Combine chopped apples and diced celery and put in a medium sized bowl. Add grapes, cranberries, and walnuts to the mixture. Stir ingredients together.

2. In a separate bowl, add the yogurt, honey, and cinnamon. Stir together and pour over the fruit mixture. Cover and chill before serving.

Yield: 8, 1 cup servings.

Nutrition Analysis: 210 calories, 5 g fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 35 mg sodium, 41 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber, 34 g sugar, 3 g protein.

Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers' market, or roadside stand.



Kentucky Apples

SEASON: Early summer through December.

NUTRITION FACTS: A medium size apple, about 2 to 2½ inches round, has about 75 calories and provides bulk in the diet, which helps the body digest food. The apple is low in sodium and high in potassium, making it a great natural snack.

SELECTION: Look for firm, crisp, well-colored fruit. Avoid those with shriveled skins, bruises, worm holes, and decayed spots. Always handle apples gently to avoid causing bruises, blemishes, or other defects.

STORAGE: Use those with bruises or skin breaks as soon as possible. Apples that are slightly under-ripe should be stored in a cool place to ripen. Once ripe, apples will keep a week or longer stored in the refrigerator vegetable drawer or in a plastic bag.

PREPARATION: Raw apples will darken when the cut surface is exposed to the air. Protect cut or peeled apples from darkening by mixing with ascorbic acid

Source: www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov

such as lemon or orange juice. Only work with about five apples at a time to prevent darkening. Mix 1 teaspoon ascorbic acid with 3 tablespoons of water. Toss gently with apple slices. Apples may be preserved by several methods: freezing, drying, or canning. Please contact your county Extension office for more information.

VARIETIES: More than 2,500 varieties are found in the United States. The following are easily available and popular in Kentucky: Lodi, Red Delicious, Rome, Winesap, Gala, Jonathan, Cortland, and Golden Delicious.

APPLES

Kentucky Proud Project

County Extension Agents for Family and Consumer Sciences
University of Kentucky, Nutrition and Food Science students

September 2011

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of race, color, age, sex, religion, disability, or national origin. For more information, contact your county's Extension agent for Family and Consumer Sciences or visit www.ca.uky.edu/fcs.

COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION
SERVICE

