

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

Well, the Groundhog seems to be right, as we have been in for more winter weather. February had its own ups and downs with the weather as January did, if not more. Between the torrential downpours leading to flooding and then a quick turnaround frigid temperatures and a blizzard. I have hopes that in the next month it will start to warm up, that the sun will shine brighter for longer, and to spring forward in time inching closer to spring time.

February flew by quicker than I expected between being sick, crazy weather, and many trainings to count. I had the opportunity to work with Paducah Tilghman's Opportunities Group, I served as a guest judge for St. Mary Middle School's Communications Day Speech Competition, I taught and certified 230 high school students at McCracken County High School in Beef Quality Care and Assurance, taught a King Cake Class with our FCS Agent Kelly Alsip, and taught one more Private Applicator Training. March is also going to be filled with many more trainings and events, I hope it goes just as well!

Everyone

Page
2

Livestock

Page
3-4

Row Crops and Forages

Page
5-6

Other Upcoming Events and Recipe

Page
7-8

Ag & Natural Resources Events and News for Everyone

ANNUAL FREE TREE SEEDLING GIVEAWAY

NO HOLDS | LIMITED QUANTITIES

MARCH 27TH | 10-5
MARCH 28TH | 10-1

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

DAILY GIVEAWAY
UNTIL SUPPLIES
RUN OUT

EXPECTED VARIETIES:
WHITE PINE | PECAN | YELLOW POPLAR | KY
COFFEE TREE | PIN OAK | AND WHITE OAK

Martin-Gatton
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment
University of Kentucky.

The Soil is in our Hands

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.
Lexington, KY 40506

McCracken County Farm Bureau
Presents:

CLASS OF 2025 SCHOLARSHIPS!

Offered to current high school seniors whose parents or guardians are Farm Bureau Members.

McCracken County Farm Bureau offers two, \$2,000 scholarships to local high school seniors

One \$2,000 scholarship is given to a high school senior pursuing a diesel mechanics degree

REGISTRATION ENDS:
FEBRUARY 28TH AT 10:59 PM

For more details about the local and state level scholarships available and application information, visit this website:
www.kyfb.com/federation/Programs/youth-development/

For more questions contact Katie Gipson,
McCracken County Farm Bureau Women's Chair:
📞 270-994-6704 ✉ katie.gipson95@gmail.com

Application

Scholarship Information

The Marshall & McCracken Extension Services Present:

WOODLAND CARBON MARKETS

Interested in making income off your woodland property? Curious about voluntary carbon markets for woodlands? Join UK Extension Professor, Jordan Shockley, for a free unbiased informational meeting. Learn what a carbon market is, about the status of carbon markets in the U.S., the opportunities for Kentucky woodland owners, practices required, the value of carbon credits, legal challenges and more!

Guest Speaker
Dr. Jordan Shockley,
UK Extension Economist

MON

March 31 2025

TWO CHANCES:
MARSHALL COUNTY AT 5:30PM
MCCRACKEN COUNTY AT 10:00AM

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Lexington, KY 40506

Livestock Events and News

Price Risk Always Exists, Even in a Bull Market

By: Kenny Burdine, University of Kentucky

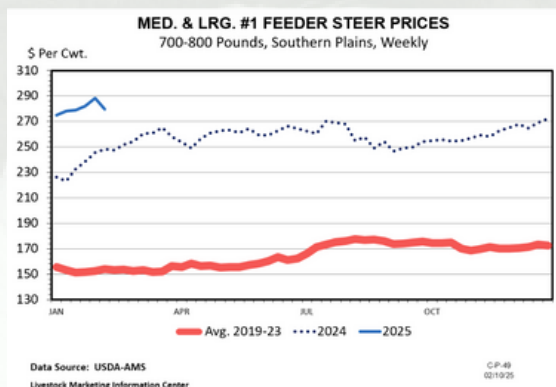
Date: 2/19/2025

Cattle Market Notes Weekly

Josh Maples

James Mitchell

Kenny Burdine



I doubt many would take issue with me calling the last couple of years a “bull market” for cattle. The combination of tight supplies and strong demand has resulted in cattle markets tracing an upward trajectory over the last couple of years. As an illustration, the chart below tracks the daily nearby CME® feeder cattle futures price over the last 26 months. In January of 2023, the nearby feeder cattle futures price was in the \$180’s. As I write this article in February of 2025, the nearby futures price is in the \$260’s.

While it is hard to dispute the overall strength of the recent cattle market, it is also important to note that during the last 26 months there have been multiple times when markets saw significant downward swings. The most recent of these occurred since the end of January and was likely sparked by the resumption of live cattle imports from Mexico, continued talk of trade disruptions, Avian Influenza, and any number of other factors. The market also fell by more than \$40 per cwt from September to December of 2023 and more than \$30 per cwt from late May to early September of 2024. For producers who sold cattle during those pullbacks, the impact on returns was significant.

There are a lot of potential strategies to manage price risk and the simplest may be a forward contract. By forward contracting cattle, price risk is largely eliminated as the seller and buyer agree on a purchase price prior to delivery of the cattle. A similar strategy would be selling cattle through an internet auction and specifying delivery at a later time. In both cases, the seller entering the forward contract still has production risk as they must meet the specifications of the contract (weight, quality, etc.), but market swings are no longer a concern.

Futures and options markets are also common tools for price risk management. Short futures positions allow producers to capitalize on the expectation of cattle prices in the future through CME® futures prices. When utilizing a short futures position to offset potential decreases in cattle prices, farmers are essentially exchanging price risk for basis risk. Producers utilizing short futures positions also need to plan for potential margin calls if markets move substantially higher. Put options give producers the right to sell a future contract if they choose and they pay a premium for this flexibility. This effectively sets a price floor for cattle as the strike price on the put option and the premium paid sets a minimum price for the cattle being sold.

Finally, I have talked more about Livestock Risk Protection (LRP) insurance than any other risk management strategy recently. It works almost exactly like a put option but has the advantage of flexibility on scale. Unlike several of the other price risk management tools, LRP insurance can be purchased on any number of head, which is much easier for smaller operations to utilize. LRP has been made more attractive over the last several years through increased premium subsidies and allowing producers to pay premiums after the ending date of the policy.

The specific tool or strategy that cattle producers utilize to manage price risk is less important than their overall risk management plan. I encourage producers to know what risk management tools are available to them, understand how changes in sale price impact their profits, and plan to cover themselves from downside price risk. I still feel good about the fundamentals of the cattle market, but I think the first couple weeks of February have been a good reminder that price risk always exists, even in a bull market!

Livestock

Both of these in-person programs are coming up quick with short notice! Make sure to call and register to attend!!



Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment University of Kentucky

MAKING ROTATIONAL GRAZING WORK WITHOUT PERFECT INFRASTRUCTURE & ALTERNATIVE WATER SOURCES

When

MARCH 6, 2025
6:00 PM

Where

McCracken County Cooperative Extension Office
2025 New Holt Rd Paducah, KY 42001

CALL TO REGISTER!

270-554-9520

About Our Event!

Interested in rotational grazing, but not sure where to start? Come join us and Associate Extension Professor, Greg Halich, as he talks about how to implement rotational grazing on your farm. Some specific topics include: Consequences of overgrazing, Making basic rotational grazing work without expensive infrastructure, Above-ground water piping, Low-Cost Semi-Permanent subdivision fencing, Cost of County water, Using ponds and springs, Siphoning water, & Using solar water pumps. He has many tips and tricks to share when it comes to finding alternative ways to make things work for you.

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ANNUAL PURCHASE AREA BEEF PRODUCTION MEETING

LOCATED AT THE GRAVES COUNTY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION OFFICE

4200 US-45
MAYFIELD, KY 42066

TUESDAY
MARCH 11TH

TRADE
SHOW
5:30-6:30 PM

MEAL
6:30 PM

\$10 ENTRY FEE FOR RIBEYE STEAK DINNER/REGISTRATION AT THE DOOR

CALL (270) 247-2334 TO RSVP BY MONDAY, MARCH 3RD!



HOSTED BY THE PURCHASE AREA CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION AND AREA ANR AGENTS

Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment University of Kentucky

BEEF MANAGEMENT WEBINAR SERIES

If you are interested and would like to be registered send an email to dbullock@uky.edu with Beef Webinar Series in the Subject and your name and county in the message to receive a Zoom link and password. You will receive an invitation and password the morning of the presentation.

November

12 Shooting the Bull: Answering all your Beef Related Questions!
Updates and Roundtable discussion with UK Specialists

December

10 Winter Feeding Strategies to Extend Short Hay Supplies
Dr. Lawton Stewart, Professor, University of Georgia

January

14 Important Traits for Bull Selection in Kentucky
Dr. Matt Spangler, Professor, University of Nebraska

February

11 Marketing Opportunities for the Spring
Dr. Kenny Burdine, Professor, and Kevin Laurent, Extension Specialist, University of Kentucky

March

11 Preparing for a Successful Spring Breeding Season
Dr. Les Anderson, Extension Professor, University of Kentucky

April

8 Health Update and Internal Parasite Field Study Results
Dr. Michelle Arnold, Extension Veterinarian, and Jeff Lehmkuhler, Extension Professor, University of Kentucky

If you have any questions or need additional information please email dbullock@uky.edu. If you are already registered you will get a Zoom invitation the morning of each session with the link and password.

Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment University of Kentucky

Row Crops & Forages

Events and News

Winter Wheat in February

Source: Dr. Chad Lee,
UK Grain Crops Specialist
Date: 2/14/2025

Most winter wheat survived well during the previous cold weather. While the air temperatures dropped near zero most soil temperatures at 2 inches below the surface remained above freezing (Kentucky Mesonet). In the January USDA NASS Kentucky Crop Progress & Condition Report, 80% of the wheat was rated good or excellent. Wheat from last December to now is mostly at Feekes 3, which is in the tillering phase of growth. At tillering, air temperatures need to get well below freezing before injury is expected. Soil temperatures can vary across a landscape. Normally, we expect colder temperatures at lower elevations. However, in Lexington, we observed the coldest temperatures at the top of the slope. These varying temperatures could result in localized damage to some plants. But even at the temperatures reported in the two charts in Figure 2, no or very minimal damage is expected in the wheat.

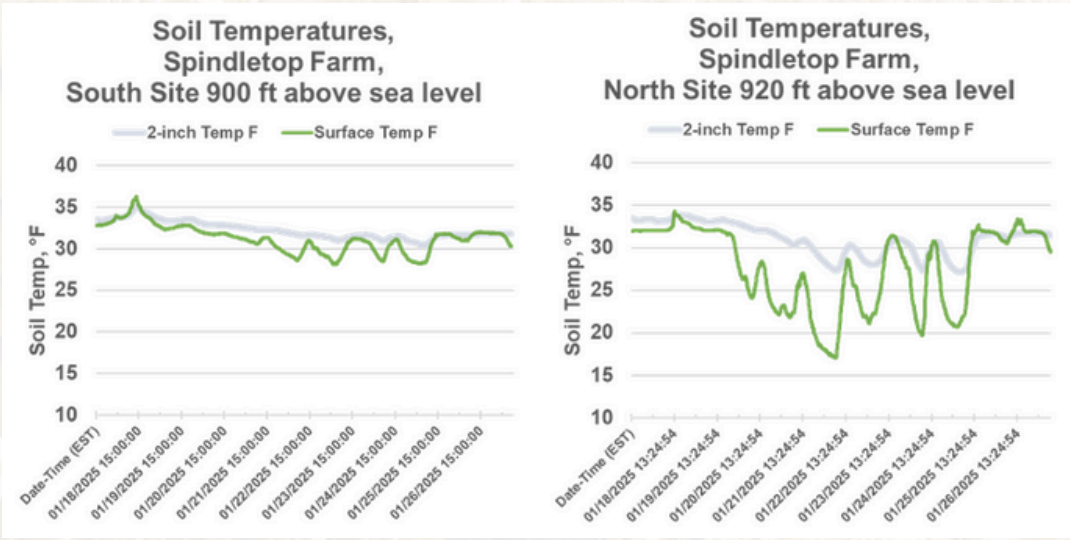


Figure 1. Soil temperatures at surface (green line) and 2 inches below the surface (gray line) for two locations at Spindletop Farm, Lexington, Kentucky from January 18 to January 26, 2025.

Scout for tiller counts to determine the February nitrogen (N) rate. Tillers should be between 70 to 100 tillers per square feet (630 to 900 square yard). If tillers are within this range, then 30 to 40 pounds N per acre should be applied. If tiller counts are below this range, then increase the N rate to 50 to 60 pounds per acre. If tiller counts are above this range, then no nitrogen should be applied in February. Total February and March applications should be about 90 to 120 pounds N per acre. While counting tillers, you also can scout for aphids and any other irregularities such as gaps in stands and any other issues. As of this writing, even though much of Kentucky has abnormally cold temperatures in January, farmers and crop scouts can proceed normally with wheat management. Soil temperature conditions can be monitored at the Kentucky Mesonet site by clicking on “Data” and in the dropdown menu selecting “Soil”. Once the new screen opens, on the left side, you can select the location, then select soil temperature and finally select if you want to see the chart for 1 week, 2 weeks, etc.

Row Crops & Forages

Italian Ryegrass Control Field Tour

Thursday, March 27, 2025

9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. CDT

Please meet at the Caldwell County Extension Office

1025 U.S. Highway 62 West, Princeton, KY

Sign-in begins at 8:30 a.m. CDT

A caravan will proceed to the UKREC in Princeton for plot tours of Italian ryegrass research.

Click link or scan QR Code to register

https://uky.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2c6KX2NmiqEp1TE



Presented by Dr. Travis Legleiter, UK Extension Associate Professor - Weed Science, this field tour will highlight the options available to Kentucky farmers for maximum control of this problematic weed in the fall and spring prior to corn and soybean planting. For more information about the field tour call (859) 562-2569.

Educational credits available:

CCA: 3 CEUs in IPM;

KY Applicator Credits: 3 CEUs for Category 1A (Ag Plant)

Interested in taking soil samples or SCN testing before this growing season begins? Contact me via email at gracey.moffitt@uky.edu or by calling the office at 270-554-9520 and we can get you hooked up.

Upcoming Office Events

	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5
MON	3:	10: District Board Meeting 11-12 (RSVP)	17:	24:	31: Woodland Carbon Credits 10-11 Better Than Ever: Ceramic Planters with Specialty Glaze Technique 10-12 (RSVP) (\$20) 4-H Virtual Voyagers Video Game Club 4:30-5:30 (RSVP)
TUE	4: Adult Sewing 9-11 Game Day 9-12 Toolbox: Native Plants 5-6 (RSVP)	11: Adult Sewing 9-11	18: Bags of Love 9:30-1:30 Laugh and Learn 11-12 (Library) Interracial Women's Group 12-1 (\$5 fee)	25: Adult Sewing 9-11 4-H Communications Day 5:30 (Call to register)	
WED	5: McCracken County Beautification Board Meeting 10-11 Chair Yoga 10-11 (\$3)	12: Tech Class: Spreadsheets 1 10-11 (RSVP) Chair Yoga 10-11 (\$3)	19: Scrapbooking 9-3 Chair Yoga 10-11 (\$3 at the door)	26: Chair Yoga 10-11 (\$3 at the door)	
THURS	6: Needlework Circle 10-12 Crochet Alley & Knit Row 1-3 4-H Hot Shots Info Night 5	13: Cajun Cooking Class 5-7 (RSVP)	20: Game Day 9-12 Needlework Circle 10-12 Crochet Alley & Knit Row 1-3	27:	
FRI	7: Loon Lake Wall Hanging Day 1(3-day class, \$20) 9-12 (RSVP)	14: Arts & Crafts Day: Hardanger Embroidery (Norwegian Embroidery) 9:30-1:30 (RSVP, \$5)	21: Loon Lake Wall Hanging Day 2(3-day class, \$20) 9-12 (RSVP)	28:	

Event Calendar for March 2025

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



Butternut and Acorn Squash Soup

1 butternut squash, halved and seeded	1/3 cup chopped sweet onion	1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 acorn squash, halved and seeded	4 cups chicken broth	3/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 tablespoon olive oil	3 tablespoons peanut butter	1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
	1/3 cup packed brown sugar	Fresh parsley for garnish

Using a vegetable peeler, **remove** the skin from the butternut and acorn squashes and **cut** into 1-inch cubes. In a large soup pot, **heat** the oil on medium high. **Add** the onion, and **cook** 1 to 2 minutes until it starts to become translucent. **Add** cubed squash, and cook 4 to 5 minutes. **Add** chicken broth, and bring to a boil. **Lower** heat, and **simmer** 30 to 35 minutes, until the squash is fork tender. Allow to **cool** slightly, then **blend** until smooth in a food processor or

blender. **Return** mixture to the pot, and **heat** to medium low. **Add** peanut butter, brown sugar, pepper, cinnamon, and nutmeg. **Stir** until well blended. **Garnish** with fresh parsley. **Serve** warm.

Yield: 7, 1-cup servings

Nutritional Analysis:

200 calories, 6 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 5 mg cholesterol, 600 mg sodium, 36 g carbohydrate, 4 g fiber, 14 g sugar, 10 g added sugar, 4 g protein.

Kentucky Winter Squash

SEASON: August through October.

NUTRITION FACTS: Winter squash, which includes acorn squash, butternut squash, pumpkin, and other varieties, is low in fat and sodium and an excellent source of vitamin A and fiber.

SELECTION: Winter squash should be heavy for its size with a hard, tough rind that is free of blemishes or soft spots.

STORAGE: Store in a cool, dry place and use within one month.

PREPARATION:

To steam: Wash, peel, and remove seeds. Cut squash into 2-inch cubes or quarter, leaving rind on (it will remove easily after cooking). Bring 1 inch of water to a boil in a saucepan and place squash on a rack or basket in the pan. Do not immerse it in water. Cover the pan

tightly and steam the squash 30 to 40 minutes or until tender.

To microwave: Wash squash and cut it lengthwise. Remove seeds. Place it in a baking dish and cover with plastic wrap. Microwave until tender, using these guidelines:

- **Acorn squash:** 1/2 squash, 5 to 8 minutes; whole squash, 8 1/2 to 11 1/2 minutes.
- **Butternut squash:** 2 pieces, 3 to 4 1/2 minutes.
- **Pumpkin:** 1 pound piece, 7 to 8 minutes.

To bake: Wash squash, and cut it lengthwise. Smaller squash can be cut in half; larger squash should be cut into portions. Remove seeds, and place squash in a baking dish. Bake at 400 degrees F for 1 hour or until tender. Seeds can be toasted at 350 degrees F for 20 minutes.

WINTER SQUASH

Kentucky Proud Project

County Extension Agents for Family and Consumer Sciences

University of Kentucky, Dietetics and Human Nutrition students

November 2019

Source: www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov

Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers market, or roadside stand. <http://plateitup.ca.uky.edu>



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