

March 2025



University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment
Cooperative Extension Service



Agriculture and Natural Resources Newsletter

Greetings All,

Spring is in the air! As we enter into this busy time of year remember the Boyd County Extension Service is here to assist you with your farming endeavors.

Please enjoy your newsletter!

Sincerely,

County Extension Agent
for Agriculture and Natural Resources

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Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.

Timely Tips

Dr. Les Anderson, Beef Extension Professor, University of Kentucky

Spring-Calving Cows

- Observe spring-calving cows closely. Check cows at least twice daily and first-calf heifers more frequently than that. Be ready to assist those not making progress after 1 to 2 hours of hard labor or 90 minutes after the “water bag” is observed. Chilled calves should be dried and warmed as soon as possible.
- See that each calf gets colostrum within an hour of birth or administer colostrum (or a commercial colostrum replacement) with an esophageal feeder, if needed.
- Identify calves with ear tags and/or tattoos while calves are young and easy to handle and record birthdate and Dam ID. Commercial male calves should be castrated and implanted as soon as possible. Registered calves should be weighed in the first 24 hours.
- Separate cows that have calved and increase their feed. Energy supplementation to cows receiving hay is necessary to prepare them for rebreeding. For example, a 1250 lb cow giving 25 lb/day of milk would need about 25 lb of fescue hay and 5 lb of concentrate daily to maintain condition. If you need to go from a condition score of 4 to 5, you will need to add about 2 more lb of concentrate. Cows must be in good condition to conceive early in the upcoming breeding season.
- Watch for calf scours! If scours become a problem, move cows that have not calved to a clean pasture. Be prepared to give fluids to scouring calves that become dehydrated. Consult your veterinarian for advice and send fecal samples to diagnostic lab to determine which drug therapy will be most effective. Try to avoid feeding hay in excessively muddy areas to avoid contamination of the dams’ udders. Cooperative Extension Service University of Kentucky Beef IRM Team Published Monthly by UK Beef IRM Team and edited by Dr. Les Anderson, Beef Extension Specialist, Department of Animal & Food Science, University of Kentucky
- Continue grass tetany prevention. Be sure that the mineral mix contains high levels (~15%) of magnesium and that cows consume adequate amounts. You can feed the UK Beef IRM High Magnesium mineral.
- Plan to vaccinate calves for clostridial diseases (Blackleg, Malignant Edema) as soon as possible. You might choose to do this at the pre-breeding working in late April or early May.
- Obtain yearling measurements on bulls and heifers this month (weight, height, pelvic area, scrotal circumference, ultrasound data, etc.) if needed for special sales. Heifers should be on target to be cycling by the start of the breeding season.
- Prepare bulls for the breeding season. Increase feed, if necessary, to have bulls in adequate condition for breeding. Obtain Breeding Soundness Evaluation (BSE) on bulls, even if they were checked last breeding season.
- Finalize plans for your spring breeding program. Purchase new bulls at least 30 days before the breeding. Order semen now, if using artificial insemination.

Timely tips Continued...

Fall-Calving Cows

- Bull(s) should be away from the cows now!
- Plan to pregnancy check cows soon. You can also blood test for pregnancy as early as 30 days after bull removal.
- Creep feed calves with grain, by-products or high-quality forage. Calves will not make satisfactory gains on the dam's milk alone after about 4 mos. of age – since there isn't much pasture in March, fall calves need supplemental nutrition. Consider creep grazing on wheat pasture, if available. Calves can also be early weaned. Be sure that feed bunks are low enough that calves can eat with the cows.
- Calves intended for feeders should be implanted.
- Consider adding weight and selling your fall calves as "heavy" feeder calves. Keep them gaining!

General

- Repair fences, equipment, and handling facilities.
- If you have a dry, sunny day, use chain-link harrow to spread manure in areas where cattle have overwintered. This may be done in conjunction with renovation.
- Renovation and fertilization of pastures should be completed.
- Start thistle control. They can be a severe problem in Kentucky pastures. Chemical control must be done early to be effective.
- Watch for lice and treat if needed.



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Extension Service**

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Time to Begin Control Efforts for Buttercup

J. D. Green, PhD, is an extension weed scientist within UK's Department of Plant and Soil Sciences in the Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment.

Buttercups mostly grow as winter annuals, although some species are classified as short-lived perennials. In Kentucky there are different species of buttercups that are known to impact pasture fields, such as hispid buttercup (*Ranunculus hispidus*), tall buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), bulbous buttercup (*Ranunculus bulbosus*) and small flower buttercup (*Ranunculus arbotivus*). These plants typically produce five shiny, yellow petals beginning in the early spring.

Although different species may have somewhat similar flower heads (Figure 1), each of these buttercup species differs somewhat in their vegetative leaf characteristics. During the time petals are showy new seed has already begun to develop. Waiting until after flowers appear can be too late to implement control tactics. This is one reason buttercups survive year to year and new plants emerge each year.

Some buttercup plants may emerge in the fall but most plants emerge from seed during the late winter months when temperatures begin to warm. Buttercup is a cool season weed and often flourishes in over-grazed pasture fields with poor stands of desirable forages. Therefore, pasture management practices that improve and promote growth of desirable plants during these months are among the best methods to help compete against the emergence and growth of this plant.

Conversely, livestock allowed to overgraze fields during the fall and winter months is one of the main factors that contributes to buttercup problems. Mowing fields or clipping plants close to the ground in the early spring before buttercup plants can produce flowers may help reduce the amount of new seed produced, but mowing alone will not totally eliminate seed production.

For chemical control, herbicides registered for use on grazed grass pastures that contain 2,4-D alone will effectively control buttercup. Depending on other weeds present, herbicide products that contain dicamba+2,4-D (eg. Weedmaster, Brash, Rifle-D, etc.), aminopyralid (eg. GrazonNext, Duracor) or triclopyr (eg. Crossbow) can also be used. However, legumes such as clovers interseeded with grass pastures will be severely injured or killed by these other herbicide products. For optimum results, apply a herbicide in the early spring (March or early April) before flowers are observed, when buttercup plants are still small and actively growing in a vegetative growth stage. For best herbicide activity, wait until daytime air temperatures are greater than 60 F for two to three consecutive days. Consult the herbicide label for further information on grazing restrictions, precautions or other possible limitations.

For fields heavily infested with buttercup, a variety of control tactics may be needed. Apply an herbicide to help reduce the population of buttercup plants in the spring and use good pasture management techniques throughout the year to help improve and thicken the stand of desirable forages.

Changes to CAIP Beef Bull Cost-share Program

Dr. Darrh Bullock, University of Kentucky, Extension Professor

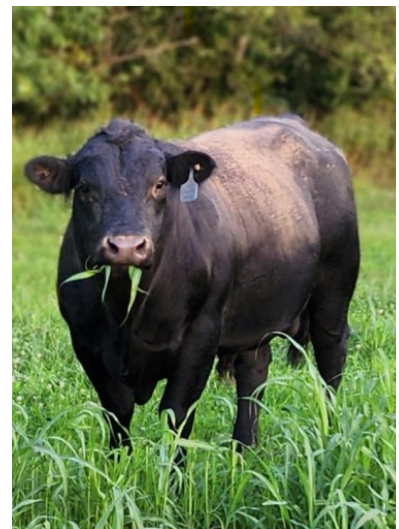
Significant changes to the CAIP Beef Bull Cost-share program have been approved for 2025. Both Kentucky and Tennessee have similar programs but have traditionally had different Expected Progeny Differences (EPD) requirements. The guidelines committees of the two states met and came to consensus on a set of guidelines that are now uniform across the state line.

Some of the major changes are highlighted in this article, however, pay close attention to the full requirements before purchasing a bull for cost-share funding.

- The number of bull categories has been reduced to 3; Balanced Trait/Maternal, Terminal Sire and Carcass Merit. There is no longer a Heifer Acceptable category, however, recommended minimal Calving Ease Direct or Birth Weight EPDs are provided for those that plan to breed the bull to heifers.
- There are only EPD requirements for CED/BW and Growth traits OR CED/BW and an appropriate Economic Selection Index value depending on the breed. There is no longer a milk requirement for Balanced Trait/Maternal, however a range is recommended for producers to consider staying within. There are also recommendations for maximum Mature Weight EPDs and minimum Docility EPDs.
- The formatting has changed. Instead of all breeds' requirements being listed in a table for each bull category, they are now listed by breed with the requirements and recommendations for each category.
- All bulls will still be required to be genomically tested and have Genomically Enhanced EPDs!

Contact your breed association for more information on how to accomplish this.

These new requirements will be implemented starting January 1, 2025. Please bear with us as we make this transition, we will try to work through any issues that arise. In the long run this will simplify bull purchases across the KY/TN state line and will improve the program overall.





Recipes from the 2024 Food and Nutrition

Recipe Calendar

UK Cooperative
Extension Service

Taco Pie

- 1 small white onion, chopped
- 1 pound lean ground turkey or ground beef
- 3 tablespoons reduced-sodium taco seasoning
- 1 can (15 ounces) unsalted tomato sauce
- 1 can (15 ounces) black beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 (8 inch) whole-wheat tortillas
- 1/2 cup shredded cheddar or Mexican blend cheese
- **Optional:** serve with taco toppings such as salsa, cilantro, jalapeno, onion, low-fat sour cream

1. Wash hands with warm water and soap, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds.
2. Wash fresh produce under cool running water, using a vegetable brush to scrub veggies with a firm surface. Dry and cut to prepare for this recipe.
3. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.
4. Over medium-high heat, add onion to a large skillet. Sauté 1-2 minutes until slightly softened.
5. Lower the heat to medium. Add ground turkey to the skillet, allow it to fully cook and reach an internal temperature of 165 degrees F using a food thermometer, about 7 to 8 minutes.
6. To the skillet, add taco seasoning, tomato sauce, and black beans. Stir to combine and allow to simmer for about 2 to 3 minutes until heated through. Remove from heat.
7. Using a 9-inch round glass baking dish, add one-third of the meat mixture. Place one tortilla on top of mixture. Next, add the same



amount of meat mixture. Place the second tortilla on top of mixture. Finally, add the remaining meat mixture on top of tortilla.

8. Bake for 20 minutes. Remove from the oven, top with cheese and bake for an additional 5 minutes or until cheese is melted.
9. For best results, allow it to cool 5 minutes before serving. Slice and serve alone or with your favorite taco toppings.
10. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Makes 6 servings
Serving size: 1/6th of pie
Cost per recipe: \$10.20
Cost per serving: \$1.70



This institution is an equal opportunity provider. This material was partially funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program — SNAP.

Nutrition facts per serving:
300 calories; 5g total fat; 2g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 45mg cholesterol; 600mg sodium; 34g total carbohydrate; 7g dietary fiber; 6g total sugars; 0g added sugars; 28g protein; 0% Daily Value of vitamin D; 6% Daily Value of calcium; 10% Daily Value of iron; 10% Daily Value of potassium

Source:
Kristi Shive, Warren County Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service

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