Agriculture & Natural Resources Newsletter
October 2023

Cooperative Extension Service

Cooperative Extension Service
Robertson County
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IT IS BACK! We are bringing back the Deer Harvest again this November!

Be sure to check out the flyer on the next page and share with anyone that you know who hunts. This program is very beneficial to our county in so many ways, and we thought it would be even better to open it up to surrounding counties!

Also in November, we will have the Cattlemen's Annual Meeting. More information about that will be in my November Newsletter, so be sure to keep an eye out! This is when you can pay your Cattlemen's dues, order shirts/hoodies/hats, and meet with your fellow cattlemen.

Don't forget about fall soil sampling as well! The first 10 samples are free and you can stop by the office to borrow a probe.

Samantha Saunders

Samantha Saunders
Robertson County Agriculture & Natural Resources/
4-H Youth Development Agent

Inside this edition:

Paper copies of the survey will be available to pick up at the Robertson County Extension Office.

We appreciate any and all feedback!

Robertson County Cattlemen's Annual Meeting

Date & Location—TBD

Keep an eye out for my November Newsletter for more information

Join/Renew your Cattleman's Membership Dues!

Kentucky Cattleman's Membership—$30/year

Kentucky Cattleman's Couple Membership—Add $15 to your KCA Membership

Kentucky Junior Cattleman's Membership—We will pay your dues! Just register!

Dues can be brought to the Extension Office or paid at the Annual Meeting

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Robertson County Deer Harvest 2023

Cooperative Extension Service

If you are interested in helping to process deer or if there are any questions about the program, please call

(606)-724-5796 or (606)-261-0894

What: This is a program designed to help farmers and landowners thin down the population of deer in our county and surrounding counties by giving them a place to donate their legally harvested deer (doe or buck)

Why: This will help control the number of deer in our area while also giving back by supplying our local food banks with ground venison.

When: *The following times are when there will be volunteers at the Ag Barn to accept donated deer*

Friday, November 17th 7:00 PM—9:00 PM

Saturday, November 18th 9:00 AM—12:00 PM and 5:00 PM—9:00 PM

Sunday, November 19th 9:00 AM—12:00 PM

Where: Robertson County Ag Barn (Located behind Robertson County School)

Program Sponsors:

- $500 Gift Certificate to Shep's Sports World—Sponsored by Robertson Co. Farm Bureau, Robertson Co. Soil Conservation, and Shep's Sports World
- Shoulder Mount—Donated by Martin's Taxidermy
- 20 ft. Ladder Tree Stand— Donated by Rural King, Maysville
- Deer Blind— Donated by Tractor Supply, Cynthiana
- Kern Food Distributor

We will only accept deer that has been harvested on these days, that are the whole deer, field dressed with the skin on. If the temperature is warm, use a bag of ice to protect the meat. No deer will be accepted that does not meet food safety standards.

Confirmation number must be presented upon arrival

****NEW—Deer killed in surrounding counties will be accepted****

If you need to reach someone during the event, please call Samantha at (606)-261-0894.

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Lexington, KY 40506

Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.

Beef Timely Tips

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

Spring-calving herds

- Schedule a pregnancy examination of cows if not done previously. Winter feeding costs can be minimized by eliminating open cows prior to winterfeeding. Pregnancy status (pregnant versus open) can be determined using palpation, transrectal ultrasonography, or blood sampling. Stage of pregnancy can only be determined by palpation or ultrasonography (performed by your veterinarian). A new chute-side blood sampling kit (Alertys from IDEXX) is available for use. It provides yes/no pregnancy data in 20 minutes for about $8-10 per cow.
- Evaluate the body condition of your cows and improve their condition prior to winter. It takes about 75 pounds to increase body condition a full score.
- If you have already done a preweaning working, revaccinate (booster) calves as needed. Treat calves for internal and external parasites. If you vaccinate calves yourself, be sure to store, handle, and administer vaccines properly.
- Wean calves before cows lose body condition.
- Obtain weaning weights of your calves and remember weaning is the time to do your first round of culling and selecting breeding stock. You can eliminate obviously inferior calves, especially those with wild or nervous dispositions. Consider the number of heifers that you will need to save for your cow herd. Bulls that are old, unsound, roguish, etc. can be culled now. It is not too early to begin thinking about replacements.

Fall-calving herds

- The calving season should be in full swing for fall-calving cows. Check cows frequently. Identify calves and commercial males should be castrated and implanted.
- Take accurate records of calving and calving performance. Our new app (Stocket at Stocket.us) makes data collection and reporting simple, easy, and convenient.
- Put fall-calving cows on accumulated pasture before the breeding season. Be sure to save some grass in the breeding pastures.
- It is time to get everything ready for the fall-breeding season, too. Line-up semen, supplies, etc. now and get your bulls ready to go (don't forget their breeding soundness evaluation). Breeding soundness exams are a vital component to reducing the risk of reproductive performance and need to be conducted 30-45 days before EVERY breeding season. Contact your herd veterinarian to schedule the exams.
- Obtain yearling measurements (weight, hip height, scrotal circumference, etc.) on replacement animals - especially for registered ones.
- Contact your herd veterinarian and schedule pelvic area examinations and reproductive tract scores for your potential replacements. Use pelvic area to identify larger heifers with smaller than normal pelvic areas so you can remove them from the breeding pool. Reproductive tract scores can be used to identify immature heifers for culling. Typically, heifers with a reproductive tract score less than 3 have limited ability to conceive early in the breeding season.

Stockers

- If you are purchasing weaned/stressed calves, have your receiving/feeding program in place. Feed a stress ration which contains at least 13% protein and is fairly energy dense.
- Manage to keep newly weaned and/or purchased calves healthy. Calves should be penned in a small lot with adequate feed, water, and shade to reduce stress. Careful handling and comfortable, uncrowded conditions can decrease stress.
- When newly weaned calves are purchased in the fall, sickness and death loss can be a big problem. Work with your veterinarian on a health and receiving program. Consider purchasing CPH-45 feeder calves that are preweaned, vaccinated, bunk-adjusted and treated for parasites.
- Watch calves closely for a few weeks after their arrival. Calves will normally break (get sick) 5-7 days after arrival, but they can break up to 14 days after they arrive. Have a treatment program ready for any health problems. Early recognition of sick cattle improves their chance of recovery. Watch for drooped ears, hollow appearance, reluctance to rise, stiff gait, coughing and dull or sunken eyes. A good "receiving" program is essential to profitability.

General Reminders

- Avoid prussic acid poisoning that can happen when frost ruptures the plant cells in sorghums, sorghum-sudan hybrids, sudangrass, and johnsongrass releasing prussic (hydrocyanic) acid. Fields can be grazed after the plants have dried up after a frost. New growth that occurs in stalk fields is potentially dangerous whether frosted or not.
- Take soil samples for soil analysis to determine pasture fertility needs. Apply phosphate, potash, and lime accordingly.
- Test hay quality and make inventory of hay supplies and needs. Adjust now - buy feed before you run out in the winter.
- Do not harvest or graze alfalfa now in order for it to replenish root reserves.
- Remove fly-control eartags from all animals, dispose of according to instructions on package. Treat for grubs/lice.

2023 Farmland Values

Isaacs, S. Economic and Policy Update (23):9, Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Kentucky, September 8, 2023.

Each August the USDA releases the results of their survey of farmland values. The survey includes data from approximately 9,000 tracts of land of about one square mile each across the continental United States. The survey takes place in early June and reports the separate values of cropland and pastureland, and the value of all land and buildings (i.e., farm real estate value). The average farm real estate value is the widely reported farmland value. This year the national average is $4,080/acre, an increase of 7.4% from 2022. State-level values are also reported. The complete Land Values 2023 Summary is available from the National Agricultural Statistics Service of USDA.

Kentucky's farm real estate values increased 8.0% to $4,700/acre. Kentucky's average cropland values increased from $5,000/ac to $5,450/ac (9.0%) while Kentucky's pastureland value was up 4.6% from $3,250/ac to $3,400/ac.

Nationally, average cropland values increased 8.1% to $5,460/ac from $5,050 a year earlier. US pastureland value increased 6.7% to $1,760/ac. These are the June survey averages. They do not represent the per-acre prices for specific tracts nor are they an average of sale values. Land values are determined by a number of factors including productivity, local demand, and other quality or location attributes. Simply put, land prices are set locally. The USDA averages are a broad indicator of changes in land values.

Land value changes are widely reported in the farm literature, usually in the format of Figure 1. This graphic captures data since 1970 when farm real estate was valued at $196/acre. Figure 1 includes nominal as well as inflation-adjusted values. The 2023 inflation-adjusted value is $1,364/ac. The 1970 inflation-adjusted value was $519/ac. For this analysis 1984 is the index value of 100. Inflation-adjusted values before 1984 are greater than nominal values. After 1984 inflation adjusted values are less than the observed nominal values. While land value changes generally exceed the rate of inflation, it is noteworthy that after the farm financial crisis began in 1982, nine of the next eleven years saw negative inflation-adjusted values.

Land values do not "…always go up because they don't make any more of it." Nominal land values decreased during the Great Depression, during the farm crisis of the 80s, and on a few other occasions…most recently in 2009 and 2016. Figure 3 is a graphic updated each year with the August survey results. This is the percentage change in the nominal value from the previous year and tends to reflect the economic health of the ag economy. In good times land values get bid up because it is true that "… they don't make any more of it." But, it does not "…always go up."

The values in Figure 3 are the percentage change in the observed (nominal) values from the year before. Recall from Figure 1 that inflation-adjusted values are quite different. If we subtract the annual inflation rate from the nominal percentage change we see the results reflected in Figure 4. The pain of the 80s farm financial crisis is quite evident and lasted for over a decade.

Since 2000 nominal farmland values have decreased only twice, 3.7% in 2009 with the Great Recession and another 0.3% decrease in 2016 reflecting lower commodity prices compared to previous years. From $1,090/ac in 2000, farmland values rose nearly three thousand dollars per acre to $4,080 in 2023, a 274% increase. Adjusted for inflation farmland values still doubled since 2000, from $646/ac to $1364. There have been five years since 2000 when land value changes failed to cover inflation.

Again, these are survey values from a broad area. Have local changes been more or less? Absolutely! All land prices are local.

Is land a good investment? The trend lines in nominal and real values are upward, but don't go up every year. Since 2000 nominal land values have increased an average of 6.0% per year and even accounting for inflation, land values have increased 3.5% per year on average.

But for the third time in this article, "land prices are local." Use this information to follow broad trends in the value of US cropland, pastureland, and farm real estate.

Figures are on next page

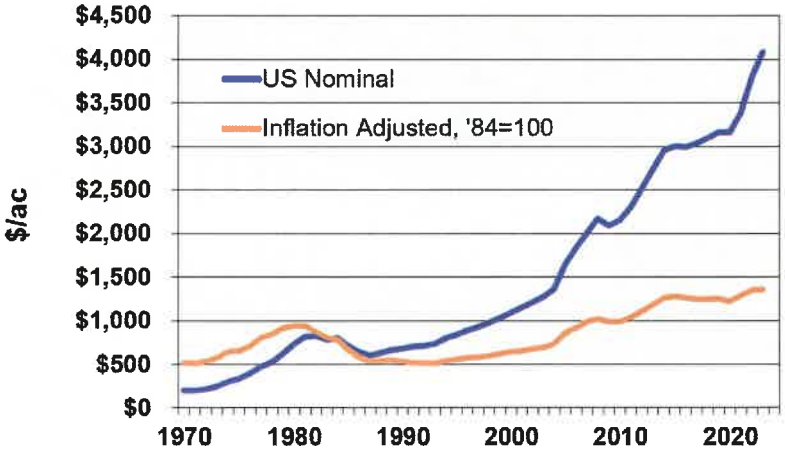

Figure 1: United States Farm Real Estate Values ($/ac) 1970-2023

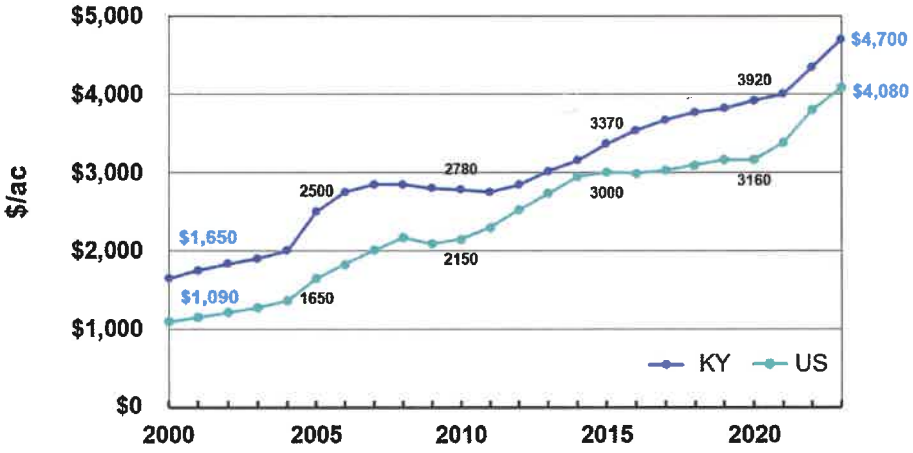

Figure 2: Kentucky & U.S. Farm Real Estate Values ($/ac) 2000-2023

Figure 2 is a comparison of Kentucky land values with the national trend since 2000. Kentucky's values trend generally with national values but exceed the national average while trailing most Midwestern states.

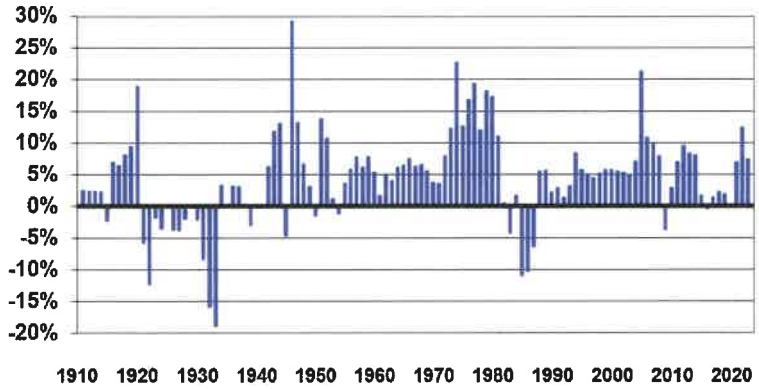

Figure 3: Annual Percentage Change in U.S. Farm Real Estate Values 1910-2023 (nominal values)

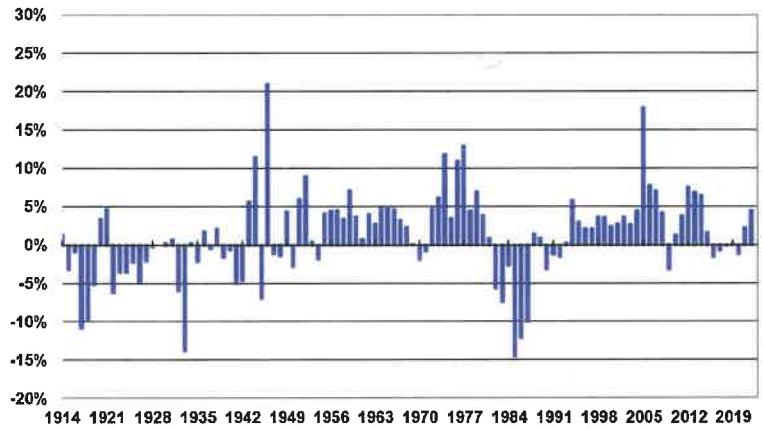

Figure 4: Annual Percentage Change in U.S. Farm Real Estate Values 1914-2022 (inflation-adjusted)

Fall Grazing Dos and Don'ts

Amber Friedrichsen, Hay and Forage Grower.

Although it's fall now, KY and many regions of the US are still experiencing the aftermath from an exceptionally dry summer. Even as milder temperatures bring cool-season forages out of their drought-induced dormancy, producers must continue to be mindful about grazing management. A recent article by Craig Shaeffer at Univ. of MN reminded producers to avoid overgrazing, reduce stocking rates, give pastures adequate rest, and control weeds this fall.

- Avoid overgrazing. Some species can tolerate more defoliation than others, but in general, plants must not be grazed lower than 4 inches. This is typically advised at any time of year, but it is especially critical following a dry growing season. When cool-season forages go dormant during drought, plant leaves and stems stop growing but growing points and crowns remain active. Overgrazing removes these growing points and drains root reserves.
- Orchardgrass and other perennial cool season grasses store energy in stem bases and are especially susceptible to combined stress of overgrazing and drought. Shallow rooted species like KY bluegrass and clovers are also damaged by overgrazing.
- Reduce stocking rates. With less forage available, reducing the number of animals on pasture will stretch feed supplies. This can be achieved by culling cattle from the grazing herd and/or relocating livestock to a dry lot or sacrifice paddock and feeding them hay. Assess feed costs and cull prices to determine the most cost-effective solution. If feeding hay, calculate how much forage will be needed through the winter. For example, one 1,200-pound cow that eats 2% of its bodyweight in hay will eat approximately 2.5 tons of forage from Oct through May.
- Give pastures rest. Even if pastures start to green up after some precipitation, drought-stressed plants are likely not strong enough to withstand regular grazing. Giving livestock access to a pasture before it has sufficient time and moisture to make a full recovery can reduce stand persistence.
- It takes 4 to 6 inches of water to produce a ton of cool-season grass or alfalfa. Smaller amounts of rainfall may stimulate regrowth, but grazing should be delayed until there is 8 to 10 inches of regrowth. While grazing regrowth before plants reach these minimum heights may provide forage, it can weaken plants and reduce the long-term productivity of the pasture.
- Control weeds Some weed species can take advantage of drought conditions and proliferate when cool-season forage goes dormant. Many weeds are low nutritive value, and some weeds like lambsquarters and pigweed can accumulate high levels of nitrates during drought. To successfully eliminate weeds, it is best to apply herbicide around a rainfall event. Always read the herbicide label prior to use.

Cheese and Corn Chowder

Ingredients:

- 2 medium potatoes, diced
- 1 small onion, diced
- 1 medium celery stalk, diced
- 1 (15.25-ounce) can no-salt-added whole kernel corn, drained
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon ground thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 cup skim milk
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese

Directions:

1. Wash hands with warm water and soap, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds.
2. Gently scrub potatoes and celery using a clean vegetable brush under cool running water before preparing. Gently rub onion under cool running water before preparing.
3. Put all ingredients except milk, flour, and cheese into a 2-quart slow cooker.
4. Stir to combine.
5. Cover and cook on high for three hours or until vegetables are tender.
6. Whisk milk and flour together. Make sure no lumps remain and the flour has fully dissolved. Add to slow cooker. Mix well.
7. Cover and cook on high 30 minutes longer.
8. Stir. Ladle into bowls, and sprinkle cheese evenly on each bowl.
9. Store leftovers in the refrigerator within 2 hours.

Cooperative
Extension Service

Robertson County Extension
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Mt. Olivet, KY 41064

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Robertson County
Agriculture & Natural Resources
Newsletter— October 2023

Forage Timely Tips: October

- Feed hay to allow cool-season pastures to accumulate forage growth for winter grazing.
- Do NOT harvest or graze alfalfa fields in Oct.
- 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 Johnsongrass when frost is expected (also sorghum-sudangrass and sudangrass) Even small patches of johnsongrass that have been frost can cause prussic acid poisoning.
- Begin strip grazing early planted small grain and brassicas (turnips and rape) mixes by the end of this month.