

Ohio County Farm & Home News

Cooperative
Extension Service

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U.K. BEEF MANAGEMENT WEBINAR SERIES



The “Beef Management Webinar Series” will start again this evening – December 10th – discussing “Winter Feeding Strategies to Extend the Short Hay Supplies” with Dr. Lawton Stewart, University of Georgia.

All webinars will begin at 7:00 p.m. CT. To register, you simply send an email to Dr. Darrh Bullock at dbullock@uky.edu and request joining the Beef Management Webinar. This will allow Dr. Bullock to send you an email invite, with the link and password before each webinar.

The following is the schedule for upcoming webinars:

- December 10, 2024 - **Winter Feeding Strategies to Extend Short Hay Supplies** – Lawton Stewart, Professor, University of Georgia
- January 14, 2025 - **Important Traits for Bull Selection in Kentucky** – Matt Spangler, Professor, University of Nebraska
- February 11, 2025 - **Marketing Opportunities for the Spring** – Kenny Burdine, Professor, and Kevin Laurent, Extension Specialist, University of Kentucky

- March 11, 2025 - **Preparing for a Successful Spring Breeding Season** – Les Anderson, Extension Professor, University of Kentucky
- April 8, 2025 - **Health Update and Internal Parasite Field Study Results** – Michelle Arnold, Extension Veterinarian, and Jeff Lehmkuhler, Extension Professor, University of Kentucky.

Also, participating in one of these webinars will fulfill the educational requirement for the CAIP program for 2025. You must watch the webinar till the end. They will give a code that you place on the Speaker Signature line, on the “Educational Certification Form” for CAIP.

WEST KY AG LENDERS CONFERENCE – DEC. 12TH

Each year Green River Area Ag Extension Agents host the “West Ky Ag Lenders Conference”, to provide an outlook of the agricultural economy for the next year. This conference is free and open to anyone wanting to attend.

The agenda for this years’ conference is:

- US/Kentucky Farm Economy and Tobacco Outlook – Dr. Will Snell/ U.K. Economist
- Grain Outlook – Dr. Grant Gardner/ U.K. Grain Marketing Economist
- Grain Profitability & Implications – Dr. Greg Halich/ U.K. Economist
- Lender Consideration for Livestock Operations – Dr. Kenny Burdine/U.K. Livestock
- Ky Farm Business Management Regional Observations – Ms. Suzy Martin/KFBM

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Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.

CAIP UPDATE



All reimbursement documents have been reviewed and letters sent to anyone missing parts of their reimbursement documentation. If you received a notice, please get those to the Extension Office or Tammy Blacklock, as soon as possible, so the program can be finalized for the year. Also, be sure to run your check through the bank, after you receive the check. The final reports cannot be filed, with the state, until all checks clear the bank.

WHILE LOOKING FOR SIGNS OF HEIFER RETENTION, DON'T IGNORE PRODUCTION LEVELS OF COMPETING MEATS



The following article is from Dr. Kenny Burdine, Extension Livestock Economist at U.K., discussing the current beef market and factors affecting future market prices.

The decrease in feed prices over the last two years has had a significant impact on the beef sector. Cheaper feed has incentivized cattle feeders to push fed cattle to higher slaughter weights. The combination of higher weights and increased imports of live cattle has resulted

in a slight increase in beef production for 2024, despite the fact that federally inspected slaughter has been down by about 3.5%. This stands in sharp contrast to the decrease in beef production seen in 2023 and what USDA-ERS is projecting for 2025.

While increased harvest weights are impacting beef production at the present time, long term production growth will come from increasing the size of the US cowherd. Analysts are closely watching female slaughter, heifers on feed, and other factors for signs of heifer retention, but those signs are not yet present. Once heifer retention is underway and the cowherd actually starts to grow, one can start to predict longer run increases in beef production as calf crops become larger. The lack of these expansion signals in late 2024 paints a very encouraging supply picture and price outlook for the next couple of years.

Now let's focus on USDA-ERS estimates for 2025. USDA is projecting a 2.8% decrease in beef production, but an increase in pork and broiler production of 1.9% and 1.4%, respectively. Those estimates will undoubtedly change as we move through next year, but they speak to less availability of beef and more availability of pork and chicken. This is an important reminder that all animal proteins compete for space on the plate. They are not perfect substitutes, and relative price levels suggest that consumers have a stronger willingness to pay for beef, but one cannot ignore the impact of competition in the meat case.

This brings me full circle to the point I want to make. Over the 20 years prior to 2023, US chicken production increased by an average of 1.8% annually, so the recent increases are not unusual. And breeding hog inventories have been decreasing, which means that pork production increases have been driven by productivity gains. But lower feed prices do impact profitability across all species and have the potential to encourage expansion. For example, if we started to combine productivity gains with increases in breeding inventories, we could see much larger increases in pork production. I am of the opinion that material and construction costs, interest rates, and other factors have limited expansion of hog and broiler operations to some extent. But I think it would be naïve to assume that this can't change in the future.

It is also important to remember that expansion occurs at a very different pace across these species. If beef heifer retention began in 2025, it would likely be 2027 before that would be reflected in higher beef

production levels. Given much shorter gestation and younger harvest age, expansion of the hog breeding herd can lead to increased pork production much faster. And the impact is quicker still for poultry. From my perspective, this was something that got lost a bit during the 2014-2015 time period. Beef production decreased in 2015 as cow and heifer slaughter dropped. But pork production increased by more than 7%, and chicken production increased by almost 4%, that same year. This meant more competition in the meat case and contributed to the decrease in cattle prices seen in late 2015 and 2016.

As soon as the January cattle inventory report comes out, I will quickly look at beef cow inventory and heifer retention estimates. I will also keep watching female slaughter and heifers on feed next year for signs of retention. Each of these will provide perspective on future beef production levels, which is very important. But I also think it is important to keep an eye on the inventory of hogs and chickens the associated production levels of those meats as they will have an impact beef and cattle prices in the coming years too.

UPCOMING Events

- December 10 – Beef Management Webinar Series - “Winter Feeding Strategies to Extend Short Hay Supplies”; 7:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. CT
- December 12 – West Ky Ag Lenders Conference; Daviess Co. Extension Office; 9:00 a.m. till noon
- January 15 – Intensive Soybean Management Workshop w/Mr. Jeff Kazin, Agris Academy; Sloan Convention Center, Bowling Green 11:30 a.m. till 4:30 p.m.
- January 28 – Intensive Soybean Management Workshop; Ky Soybean Office in Princeton; 8:30 a.m. till noon CT
- January 29 – Intensive Soybean Management Workshop; Hardin Co. Extension Office, Elizabethtown; 7:30 a.m. till noon CT (this a repeat of the Jan. 28 workshop)