



Ohio County Farm & Home News

Cooperative
Extension Service

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WINTER WEATHER WILL PUSH LIVESTOCK INTO COLD STRESS

It took longer for winter to truly arrive this year, but it's making up for lost time with a blast of measurable



snow across much of Kentucky, later this week. With significant accumulations expected and temperatures dipping into the single digits, with wind chills in

the negative numbers, conditions will push the livestock cold stress index into the emergency category.

The combination of cold air and wind create wind chills that cause dangerous and emergency-category periods of livestock cold stress.

Livestock producers should make sure animals have adequate shelter, water, dry bedding and feed to make it through cold periods. Pet owners should bring pets indoors. Animals have a higher requirement for energy in the colder months, which means they need high-quality grains and forages.

The average horse, with a lower activity level, should eat between 1.5% and 2% of its body weight in feed per day to maintain its weight, according to UK Equine Specialist Bob Coleman. That feed requirement goes up in the winter, as horses use more calories to keep warm.

Ambient temperatures can impact the amount of dry matter cattle eat, providing an opportunity to compensate for increased maintenance energy needs. Producers either need to increase their animals' feed

intake or increase the energy density of the diet by feeding higher quality hay or adding more grain or fat to the grain mix. Producers should continue to monitor cows during the wintertime and make sure to maintain the animals' body condition.

Poor quality hay may not provide adequate energy to maintain gestating cows that are entering the third trimester. Producers should consider separating younger and thinner cows that may not have the same internal insulation as conditioned older cows and supplement them accordingly or offer them higher quality forage if available.

Producers should move cows to fields with natural windbreaks or provide man-made windbreaks, which are not the same as a barn. Energy or calories are critical. If the protein level in the forage is adequate, do not make supplement decisions based on protein level; rather purchase the most affordable calories. Stay warm and keep the waterers' flowing.

The hair coat acts like home attic insulation—trapping air and enhancing the insulating value. Wet, muddy hair reduces insulating value and increases heat loss. As little as 0.1 inch of rain can immediately impact cold stress severity by matting the hair down reducing its insulating ability. Acclimation time, hide thickness, fat cover and other factors will also influence the degree of cold stress that animals experience.

The lower critical temperature value for cattle is the lowest temperature or wind chill at which no additional energy is required to maintain core body temperature. As the temperature declines below this lower critical value, the maintenance energy value for the animal is increased to maintain core body temperature. Animals maintain core body temperature by increasing their metabolism, resulting in greater heat production, as well as other heat conservation strategies, such as reducing blood flow to the extremities, shivering and increased intake.

According to Dr. Jeff Lehmkuhler, Extension Beef Specialist, both external and internal insulation

influences the lower critical temperature. External insulation is the depth and thickness of the hair coat, condition of the hair coat and thickness of the hide. Thin-hided breeds such as some dairy cattle tend to have a lower insulating factor than thick-hided breeds like Herefords. The condition of the hair coat is extremely important as an external insulation barrier.

The key is to give animals a draft-free place to get out of the wind during extreme wind chill conditions.

Remember, the most important thing producers can do is to take care of themselves in extreme cold. If you get into trouble, you can't be the caregiver your livestock need. Keep an extra set of clothes and a blanket in the truck. Dress in multiple layers of clothing to provide maximum warmth from the cold.

Also, to prevent pipes from freezing in the house, leave the faucets dripping and leave cupboard doors open around the pipes, to allow more heat in!!!!

KY COMMODITY CONFERENCE – JAN. 19TH

Each year, in January, the grain commodity associations gather to hold their annual meeting and educational sessions. On January 19th, at the Holiday Inn, Sloan Convention Center, the Ky Commodity Conference will be held.



They have an exciting program arranged for grain producers, which include:

- Early riser session w/breakfast at 7:00 a.m. – with John McGillicuddy, acclaimed agronomist from Iowa
- Marketing Session/Panel Discussion – with Chris Swift and Bill Biedermann
- Lunch/ w/keynote speaker Jack Uldrich ; acclaimed global futurist

After lunch the Ky Soybean Association, the Ky Corn Growers and the Ky Small Grain Growers will each hold their annual meetings. A new addition will be the Ky Ag Commissioner Candidate Forum, to be held at 3:45 p.m.

This is an excellent program for grain producers to receive update production information, as well as, fellowship with producers from across Kentucky.

Registration is free and open to all grain producers.

To register, go online to:

<http://www.kycommodityconference.org>

2022 CORN & SOYBEAN VARIETY PERFORMANCE TEST AVAILABLE ONLINE

The 2022 Kentucky Corn Hybrid Performance Tests are available online at:

<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/PR/PR815/PR815.pdf>

The 2022 Kentucky Soybean Variety Performance Tests are available online at:

<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/PR/PR828/PR828.pdf>

Both the corn and soybean performance test reports are also linked to the Grain Crops Website at:

<https://graincrops.ca.uky.edu/>

Remember, the summary or all locations averages for each maturity group, is by far the best yield numbers to use for this season, due to rainfall and weather variability. Do not look at a single location and try to compare maturity groups. Differences in yield among maturity groups is most likely to be from timing of rainfall and water than from anything else.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Jan. 3&4 – Ky Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference; Holiday Inn Sloan Convention Center, Bowling Green; Pre-registration is available online at <https://2023KYFruitVegConference.eventbrite.com>
- Jan. 4-6 - Ky Cattlemen's Association Convention; Lexington Convention Center, Lexington
- Jan. 5 – Winter Wheat Meeting; James C. Bruce Convention Center, Hopkinsville; 9:00 a.m. till 3:00 p.m.
- Jan. 19 – Ky Commodity Conference; Holiday Inn/Sloan Convention Center, Bowling Green; 7:00 a.m. till 4:00 p.m.
- Feb. 9 – Ky Crop Health Conference; National Corvette Museum, Bowling Green