

DECEMBER 2025/JANUARY 2026

Nicholas County Extension



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

Ag and Natural Resources Newsletter

APPLY FOR A
**BEGINNING
FARMER
SCHOLARSHIP!**

Free registration for those farming
for less than 10 years

KENTUCKY
*Fruit & Vegetable
Conference* 2026

BOWLING GREEN, KY | JANUARY 11-13



KENTUCKY
*Fruit & Vegetable
Conference* 2026

BOWLING GREEN, KY | JANUARY 11-13
SLOAN CONVENTION CENTER

**REGISTER
TODAY**

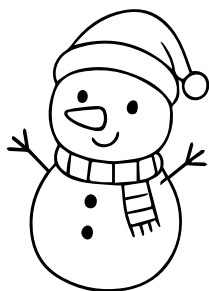


<https://kentuckyhorticulturecouncil.ticketspice.com/2026kyfalltendee>



Winter Considerations for Cattle

- Review winter feeding plan
- Make sure that the winter feeding area is at least 100 to 150 feet away from streams, wells, sinkholes, etc.
- Inspect water systems in preparation for the winter months and protect them from freezing
- Ensure safe, dependable water sources
- Limit access to streams/ ponds



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Cooperative Extension Service

Agriculture and Natural Resources
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4-H Youth Development
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MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

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Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.



How to keep your livestock and fields safer from mud

*Source: Steve Higgins,
assistant adjunct
professor, Department of
Biosystems and
Agricultural Engineering*

As every livestock owner knows, mud is more than a nuisance. It robs animals of energy, wastes feed and tears up pasture. The good news is that a few wise choices about location and surface design can turn the worst trouble spots into firm, drainable ground that holds up month after month.

Start with Placement

Heavy-use areas — feeders, gates, mineral sites and waterers — are best when set on a slight rise, not in a “bottom” or along a ditch. When you place these hubs on higher ground, you deal only with the rain that falls there, not with water flowing through from the rest of the field. That single decision cuts most of the mud before it is able to form.

Build a Layered Pad

Under any rock or gravel, separate soil from stone with felt-like, non-woven, geotextile fabric. Overlap seams by a foot or two, lay it flat, then cover with compacted dense-grade aggregate. Go easy with the first lift so you don’t tear the fabric, then make sure it is well compacted. This simple fabric-plus-rock system spreads the load from hooves and traffic, sheds water and resists rutting. When the surface loosens with use, add a thin layer of stone and compact again.

Choose the Right Surface for the Spot

Concrete earns its keep around waterers, feed bunks and scraping lanes. Give it a rough finish — rougher than a sidewalk — to protect hips and joints. Where you want gravel but need more stability, plastic paver grids (think shallow egg cartons) lock rock in place and stop sloppy areas before they begin. Budget-friendly reinforcements, like filling old tires or cinder blocks with rock, can stiffen lanes and edges. Soil-cement can work for larger pads built in warm weather; use concrete where routine scraping is expected.

Daily Habits That Pay Off

Keep hay off bare soil; once trampled into mud, it’s lost feed and a future weed patch. Scrape manure before it dissolves into sludge. Avoid driving heavy equipment across wet ground to reduce ruts that channel more water during the next rain. Give animals a firm path to and from water and feed so they don’t churn a single patch into soup. Where animals access a stream, build one armored entry or crossing rather than letting the whole bank break down.

Fixing Cow Paths

Grazing animals form contour trails (“cowtouring”) and single-file cow paths to save energy moving to water, feed and minerals. In wet weather, these routes can trough, erode, expose slick clay and become hard to traverse, especially on steeper slopes (cattle struggle above ~30%). An all-weather path solves this by building a drainable base: excavate about eight inches, lay nonwoven geotextile, set recycled tire tread cylinders end-to-end in the trench and fill inside and around them with dense-grade aggregate. The tire tops finish at or just above grade. These paths provide firm footing year-round, cut energy costs for animals and protect fields from rutting and erosion.

BQCA Certification

**January 16th
10AM**

**January 21st
3PM**

Will be held at the Nicholas County Extension Office. \$5 per person (cash or check only)
Please call the office to sign up 859-289-2312, if no one signs up for a date/time they will be cancelled



Private Pesticide Applicator Trainings



To register please call our office 859-289-2312.
These will be held at the Nicholas County Extension office

Dates:
January 21st 10AM
January 28th 3PM

If non of these dates work for you please let me know and we will discuss other options: shelby.cleaver@uky.edu

Deadline to register is a 4 days prior to classes
Classes will be cancelled if no one registers

**Cooperative
Extension Service**



BEEF

TIMELY TIPS

Spring-Calving Cow Herd

- Be sure that weaned heifer calves are on a feeding program that will enable them to reach about 65% of their mature weight before the start of the breeding season. Rations should be balanced to achieve gains sufficient to get heifers from their current weight to that "target" weight. Heifers should reach their target weight approximately 30 days before the start of the breeding season.

- Body condition is important; plan an adequate winter program for cows to be at least body condition score 5 (carrying enough flesh to cover the ribs) before the calving and breeding season. This will help them breed early in the spring. Thin cows should be fed to regain body condition prior to winter. Don't let cows lose weight/condition. Supplementation will most likely be needed. Find low-cost supplemental feeds to meet the nutrient needs of cattle.

- Divide the herd into groups for winter feeding:
 - weaned heifer calves
 - first-calf heifers, second-calvers and thin mature cows
 - the remainder of the dry cows which are in good body condition

- herd sires

- Begin feeding the lowest quality forage to dry cows which are in good condition during early winter and save the best hay for calving time or for weaned calves.

- Order and number ear tags for next year's calf crop this winter. It is also a good time to catch up on freeze branding and replacing lost ear tags.

Fall-calving herds

- The fall breeding season has started. Breeding can best be accomplished on stockpiled fescue pasture; otherwise, cows with calves should be fed 25-30 pounds of good quality hay or its equivalent. Supplement with grain, if needed, and minimize hay waste. DON'T ALLOW THESE COWS TO LOSE BODY CONDITION PRIOR TO OR DURING THE BREEDING SEASON. It is easy to wait too long to start winter feeding.

- If you haven't turned bulls out yet, have a Breeding Soundness Evaluation (BSE) performed on them (even if you used them this spring). A BSE is a risk management tool as BSE's accurately identify infertile bulls.
- Observe performance of bulls during

breeding season. Watch cows for return to estrus, if you see several in heat, try to determine the cause and consider changing bulls.

General

- Complete soil testing pastures to check for fertility and pH.
- Consider putting down geotextile fabric and covering with gravel in feeding areas before you begin hay feeding to minimize waste of expensive hay. Or, perhaps, construct concrete feeding pads for winter feeding areas.
- Another option to consider for winter feeding is bale grazing. Bale grazing helps spread nutrients across the field and can have regenerative effects on your pastures.
- Monitor body condition and increase feed, if needed, for all classes of cattle. It often gets cold in December, and the nutrients needs of cattle increase as temperatures fall below their comfort level. Be especially mindful of cold, wet conditions and increase energy availability. Consult your nutritionist to ensure that your rations are meeting the nutrient requirements during stressful weather.

CAIP Education Opportunities

UK 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. (If you have previously registered, you do not need to re-register). You will receive an invitation and password the morning of the presentation. Zoom will start at 8:00 Eastern/7:00 Central.

November 13

Winter Feeding Approaches: Matching Strategy to Your Herd and Resources - Dr. Katie VanValin, Assistant Professor, University of Kentucky



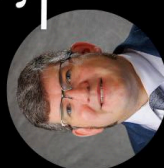
December 11

Shooting the Bull: Answering all your Beef-Related Questions! - Updates and Roundtable discussion



January 8

Making the Most of the Good Years: Profits, Reinvestment, and Tax Management in Beef Cattle - Jonathan Shepherd, Agricultural Extension Specialist, University of Kentucky



February 12

Impact of Bull Nutrition During Development on Semen Quality - Dr. Pedro Fontes, Associate Professor, University of Georgia



March 12

Bull Selection Practices in Kentucky: What are we Doing Right and What Could we Improve! - Dr. Darrah Bullock, 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.

ONLINE ANYTIME ON YOUR OWN:

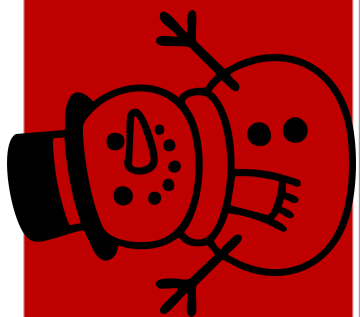
Visit: <https://anr.mgcafe.uky.edu/caip-training> for instructions

Visit: <https://campus.extension.org/login/index.php> to access the online training site

IMPORTANT

Note: If you decide to take an online course for CAIP, you must complete it and bring the certification showing that you have completed it to the office (either a copy or a picture of it), as I don't have any way of verifying that you have completed it.

December



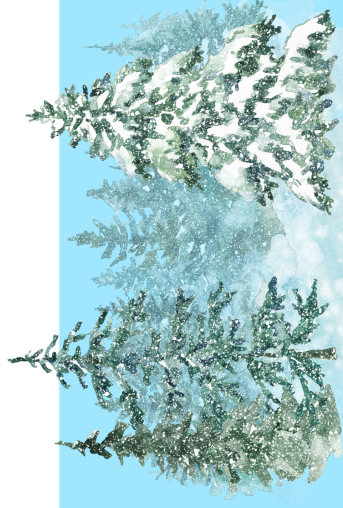
2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 UK VS. UNC	2	3	4 UK VS. Gonzaga	5	6
7	8 UK VS. NC Central	9	10	11	12 UK VS. Indiana	13
14	15	16	17	18	19 UK VS. St. John's	20
21	22 UK VS. Bellarmine	23 Office Closed	24 Office Closed	25 Office Closed	26 Office Closed	27
28	29 Office Closed	30 Office Closed	31 Office Closed			

HAPPY
Holidays!

January

2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Office Closed	2 Office Closed	3 UK VS. Alabama
4 Fruit & Vegetable Conference	5	6	7 UK VS. Missouri	8 Beef Management Webinar	9	10 UK. VS Mississippi State
11 Fruit & Vegetable Conference	12 Fruit & Vegetable Conference	13	14 UK VS. LSU	15	16 BQCA at 10AM	17 UK VS. Tennessee
18	19 Office Closed	20	21 Private Pesticide at 10AM BQCA at 3PM UK VS. Texas	22	23	24 UK VS. Ole Miss
25	26 UK VS. Vanderbilt	27	28 Private Pesticide at 3PM	29	30	31 UK VS. Arkansas





Green Bean and Ham Soup

4 cups fresh green beans, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces	3 whole carrots, peeled and sliced	¼ teaspoon black pepper
3 cups russet potatoes, unpeeled and cubed	1 pound fully cooked ham, cut into bite-sized pieces	1 teaspoon garlic powder
2 small onions, thinly sliced	9 cups water	2 tablespoons corn starch
	1 teaspoon salt	¼ cup cold water

Place green beans, potatoes, onions, carrots, ham and the nine cups water into a large soup pot; **cover** and bring to a **boil**. **Reduce** heat to medium and **simmer**, uncovered, about 45 minutes or until the vegetables are tender. **Remove** the pot from the heat and **add** the salt, black pepper, garlic powder and half and half. **Return** to heat and bring to a **simmer** again. **Combine** corn starch and

the ¼ cup cold water in a small bowl. When simmer begins, **combine** the corn starch mixture into the soup and stir well. Allow the soup to remain on the heat for 5-7 more minutes while it thickens.

Yield: 12, 1 cup servings

Nutritional Analysis: 140 calories, 4.5 g fat, 2 g saturated fat, 25 mg cholesterol, 670 mg sodium, 14 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber, 3 g sugar, 10 g protein



Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers' market, or roadside stand.

<http://plateitup.ca.uky.edu>