



# Todd County Extension Agriculture Newsletter January 2025

## Kentucky Forage News - Forage Tips

- Begin utilizing stockpiled pastures if you haven't started already. Graze pastures with orchardgrass and clovers first. Save tall fescue pastures for late winter grazing.
- Using polywire, strip graze stockpiled pastures to improve utilization. Start at the water source and allocate enough forage to for 2-3 days. Back fencing is not necessary.
- Make plans to frost seed red and white clover onto closely grazed tall fescue pastures in February. Secure seed now since supplies of good varieties will be tight.
- Some hay can be fed as stockpiled grass is grazed to stretch grass.
- Minimize hay waste by utilizing ring feeders.

## Frost Seeding at-a-Glance

- Legumes are an essential part of sustainable grassland ecosystems.
- Overseeding may be required to maintain and thicken stands.
- Frost seeding is the simplest method for reintroducing clover back into pastures.
- Control broadleaf weeds prior to frost seeding.
- Soil test and apply any needed lime or fertilizer before frost seeding.
- Suppress the existing sod and reduce residue with hard grazing in the fall and winter.
- Choose well-adapted varieties of red and white clover using the UK forage variety testing data.
- Calibrate seeder and check spread pattern.
- Broadcast 6-8 lb/A of red clover and 1-2 lb/A of white clover that has been inoculated in February or early March.
- Control post seeding competition by grazing pastures until clover seedlings become tall enough to be grazed off.
- Put pasture back into rotation once seedlings reach a height of 6-8 inches.



## THE KENTUCKY DAIRY CONFERENCE



Martin-Gatton  
College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environment



THE DAIRY  
ALLIANCE



FEBRUARY 25 - 26, 2025

Sloan Convention Center

1021 Wilkinson Trace

Bowling Green, KY

Todd County Extension · 240 Pond River Rd · Elkton, KY 42220 · 270-265-5659

## Cooperative Extension Service

Agriculture and Natural Resources  
Family and Consumer Sciences  
4-H Youth Development  
Community and Economic Development

## MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

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Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.

## Watermelon Growers — Your Help Is Needed

The UK vegetable team is working to find solutions to the watermelon anthracnose problems experienced in 2023 and 2024. Please help us by answering some general survey questions about your melon production and any disease issues that you experienced. Your responses will help us develop production and spray guides for next year. Thank you so much for your help.

–Nicole Gauthier, UK Extension Plant Pathologist



How many acres of watermelon did you grow in 2024?

What cultivar/variety did you grow?

Were they started from seed or purchased as plugs or grafted plugs?

Where were the plugs grown? Where did you purchase them from?

When were they planted (approximate date)?

Did you confirm anthracnose using your county agent or the diagnostic lab?

When did you start seeing anthracnose leaf symptoms?

When did you start seeing anthracnose fruit symptoms?

What percent of the fruit had anthracnose?

What crop was planted in that field the previous year?

How many years in a row did you plant melons in that field?

Were weeds a problem in that field?

Did you have anthracnose in the field the previous year (if planted two years in a row)?

When did you start spraying fungicides (approximate date)?

What fungicide(s) did you spray for anthracnose?

Optional: include your spray schedule.

Add any notes or explanations on a separate page.

Return your survey by Feb. 28 to the Christian Co. or Todd Co. Extension office or to Deerfield Supplies. You may also mail the survey to: Dr. Nicole Gauthier, 201 Plant Science Building, Lexington, KY 40546

# EVENTS

**Kentucky Cattlemen's Convention**, January 16-17, Owensboro, KY

**Kentucky Commodity Conference**, January 16, Bowling Green, KY

**Private Pesticide Applicator Certification**, January 23 at 9:00 am, Todd County Extension

**Tobacco Production Meeting**, January 28 at 6:00 pm, Todd County Extension

**Winter Wheat Meeting**, February 4 at 9:00 am - 3:00 pm, Bruce Convention Center,  
Hopkinsville, KY

**TN-KY Tobacco Expo**, February 4 at 8:00 am - 1:00 pm, Robertson County Fairgrounds,  
Springfield, TN

**Private Pesticide Applicator Certification**, February 6 at 6:00 pm, Todd County Extension

**Kentucky Crop Health Conference**, February 6 at 9:00 am - 3:00 pm,  
National Corvette Museum, Bowling Green, KY

**KY-TN Grain Day**, February 7 at 7:30 am - 1:45 pm, Logan County Extension

**CPH Advantage Cattle Sale**, February 11, Kentucky-Tennessee Livestock Market, Guthrie, KY

**CAIP Cost-Share Information Meeting**, February 18 at 6:00 pm, Todd County Extension

**CAIP Cost-Share Information Meeting**, February 19 at 9:00 am, Todd County Extension

**Grain Marketing Update & Outlook**, February 25 at 6:00 pm, Todd County Extension

**Kentucky Dairy Conference**, February 25-26, Sloan Conference Center, Bowling Green, KY

**Pasture Seeding & Reclaiming Winter Feeding Areas**, February 27 at 6:00 pm,  
Todd County Extension

**Farm Family Ag Expo, Partnership w/ Todd Co. FFA & Raising Hope**  
March 13 at 7:30 - 11:00 am, Todd County Extension

## ***Want More Event Updates and Ag News?***

Follow Todd County Extension Agriculture on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/toddcountyag>

Sign up for E-mail News: Send message to [traci.johnson@uky.edu](mailto:traci.johnson@uky.edu)

# Use Winter for Preventive Maintenance on Your Sprayers

Source: Ric Bessin, University of Kentucky, Entomology Extension Specialist

As winter begins to wind down, growers need to get their equipment ready for the coming growing season. When it is time to begin spraying and planting, you don't want to spend precious time fixing and repairing equipment. It is during this down time when you should do some routine maintenance on sprayers. Spray equipment in poor repair can lead to poor application, which will cost money.

## Look for Leaks

Before you start, put on a pair of gloves to protect yourself from pesticide residues. Begin by filling your sprayer with clean water, but before you engage the pump, look for leaks from around the pump, hoses, strainers, and nozzles. Pay particular attention to the hoses, as these often show signs of wear sooner than other more durable parts. Besides obvious leaks from hoses, inspect hoses for cracking and signs of dry rot as these can burst when pressurized (Figure 1). Places where hoses might crimp with folding booms are prone to cracking as hoses age. Engage the pump and look again for leaks. Check the pressure gauge and test the cutoff valves to be sure they are working.

## Scrutinize Strainers

The job of strainers is to keep gunk from reaching and plugging nozzles. With just routine use there can be significant debris buildup with the inline strainer from the tank or the individual strainers in front of each nozzle (Figure 2). Sometimes these can be cleaned with a soft brush, other times they need to be replaced.

## Next, the Nozzles

All nozzles wear over time. This leads to increasing and irregular flow rate from nozzles and poor spray patterns. In place of uniform applications across a field, there may be streaks due to places of over and under applications. While some nozzle materials, such as ceramics and stainless steel, may be more resistant to wear, all nozzles will show signs of wear eventually. Sprays containing abrasive materials, such as wettable powders and flowables, cause more wear to nozzles.

Before conducting a catch test, be sure each of the nozzles are of the exact same type and are not mismatched. Start your sprayer with the clean water and observe the pattern from each of the nozzles; look for streaks and clogs. The pattern from each nozzle should be the same. Run a 30-second or 1-minute catch test for each nozzle, output from each nozzle should be within



**Figure 1.** Crimps in hoses may lead to cracking. (Photo: Ric Bessin, UK)



**Figure 2.** Check strainers regularly and clean or replace them as needed (Photo: Ric Bessin, UK).

5% of the average output from all nozzles. Nozzles that are worn or cannot be unclogged need to be replaced and the catch test repeated.

### **Regularly Recalibrate**

Now that your sprayer is working properly, it needs to be recalibrated; new strainers and nozzles can change the spray output. Calibration should be done at a minimum of once a year, but for those who use a sprayer more frequently or after changing to different nozzles (going from flat fan to hollow cone, for example) recalibration must be done more often. Instructions for calibrating a sprayer are in the Recordkeeping Manual for Private Pesticide Applicators, available at [https://entomology.ca.uky.edu/files/2019\\_pesticide\\_application\\_record\\_keeping.pdf](https://entomology.ca.uky.edu/files/2019_pesticide_application_record_keeping.pdf) or at your local extension office.

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## **Changes to CAIP Beef Bull Cost-share Program**

*Source: 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.

# Keep Your Houseplants Healthy During Winter

Source: Frank Amaro, Kentucky Extension Master Gardener & Naturalist

As winter approaches and daylight hours shrink, many gardeners find themselves worrying about the well-being of their houseplants. The colder months can present a unique set of challenges, including reduced light levels, dry indoor air, and fluctuating temperatures. However, with some thoughtful adjustments and care, you can keep your indoor garden thriving throughout the winter season. Here are essential tips for maintaining healthy houseplants when the weather outside turns chilly.

## 1. Adjust Light Conditions

One of the primary challenges for houseplants during winter is the decrease in natural light. Many plants that flourish under bright summer sun may struggle to adapt to the shorter days. To ensure your plants receive adequate light, consider these strategies:

- **Reposition Your Plants:** Move your houseplants closer to windows that receive the most sunlight. South- and west-facing windows typically provide strong afternoon light, while east-facing windows offer gentle morning sun. Be cautious of cold drafts from windows, as they can stress your plants.
- **Supplement with Grow Lights:** If natural light is still insufficient, investing in grow lights can be a game-changer. LED or fluorescent grow lights can mimic the spectrum of sunlight, providing the energy needed for photosynthesis. Aim to provide your plants with about 12-16 hours of light per day, depending on their specific light requirements.



## 2. Monitor Temperature and Humidity

- Indoor heating systems can create a hot, dry environment that is often inhospitable for many houseplants. Most plants thrive in moderate temperatures and enjoy higher humidity levels. To provide a comfortable environment for your indoor greenery, follow these tips:
- **Temperature Control:** Maintain a consistent indoor temperature between 65°F and 75°F (18°C to 24°C). Avoid placing your plants near heaters, radiators, or drafty windows, as sudden temperature fluctuations can lead to plant stress.
- **Increase Humidity:** Many houseplants benefit from increased humidity, especially during the dry winter months. To boost humidity, consider the following methods:
  - \* Use a humidifier near your plants.
  - \* Place water trays filled with pebbles beneath pots (ensure the pot is not sitting directly in water).
  - \* Group your plants together to create a micro-environment with higher humidity.

### 3. Adjust Watering Practices

Winter often prompts a change in your plants' water needs. Cooler temperatures and decreased light can mean that houseplants require less frequent watering. Here's how to properly manage your watering routine during winter:

- **Check Soil Moisture:** Before watering, always check the moisture level of the soil. Stick your finger about an inch into the soil; if it feels dry, it's time to water. Overwatering can lead to root rot, especially in winter when plants are less active.
- **Water Thoroughly:** When you do water, make sure to do so thoroughly, allowing excess water to drain out of the bottom of the pot. This ensures even distribution of moisture and encourages healthy root development.



### 4. Fertilizing Considerations

While houseplants grow vigorously in spring and summer, their growth often slows down in winter. Slowed growth means nutritional needs decrease. Most houseplants don't require fertilization during winter. In fact, over-fertilizing can harm them during this dormant period. It's usually best to hold off on fertilizing until spring, when you can resume normal feeding schedules.

### 5. Keep an Eye Out for Pests and Diseases

Despite being indoors, houseplants can still attract pests and fall victim to diseases. Winter can intensify these problems due to the stress of the season.

- **Regular Inspections:** Take time to inspect your plants regularly for signs of pests such as spider mites, aphids, or mealybugs. Early detection can help you address issues before they escalate.
- **Maintain Cleanliness:** Keep the leaves clean by gently wiping them with a damp cloth. This not only removes dust but also helps prevent pest infestations and promotes better photosynthesis.

Winter doesn't have to spell disaster for your houseplants. By making simple care adjustments, you can ensure that your indoor garden remains vibrant and healthy through colder months. With attention to light, temperature, humidity and watering, your plants will thrive and be ready to flourish come spring.

Call Todd County Extension with your growing questions.



**KENTUCKY**  
Corn Growers Association

## SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Applications are due in the Kentucky Corn Growers Association office by **March 1**, for the upcoming school year.

Two \$1,000

scholarships for high school seniors

One \$2,000

scholarship for an existing college student  
(undergrad or graduate)

One \$2,000

James Barton Memorial Scholarship for existing college students  
(undergrad or graduate)

<https://kycorn.org/programs/scholarshipprogram/>

# Planning for the Future: A Starter Guide to Farm Transition Planning

Source: Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development



Farming is a risky business with significant costs, and one of the most expensive mistakes is failing to plan or oversimplifying the transition of the farm. Transition planning often involves challenging topics like taxes, fair versus equal asset distribution, and unexpected family dynamics, which can stir emotions and tensions. While there's no one-size-fits-all solution, proactive conversations and thorough preparation can ease the process and help families navigate these complexities more effectively.

At its core, successful transition planning boils down to clear, honest communication and planning ahead. When communicating across generations, consider addressing key issues early to build mutual understanding and ensure a smoother transition.

**INCOME STREAM** - After the transition, how will the transferring generation maintain a secure income stream? Will this come from personal wealth, or a combination of personal wealth and farm income? Before reaching a solution, the “retiring” farmers need to honestly determine their living expenses apart from the farm.

**DEFINING ROLES** - The upcoming generation needs to articulate how they want to be involved in the transition process and express their interest in discussing transition plans. The retiring generation must clearly define their role in the operation after “retirement.” For example, will the owner transferring the operation step away entirely, stay involved in day-to-day operations, or only work during planting and harvest seasons? Discussing roles can prevent misunderstandings and unmet expectations after the transfer.

**EXPLAINING FUTURE GROWTH AND IDEAS** - The younger generation should consider how they plan to sustain and grow the operation. If their vision includes changes to traditional practices, they might benefit from drafting a business plan with financial projections to support their ideas—especially if the conversation about change could be tense.

**ADDITIONAL KEY QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER** - Transition discussions should address these topics:

## Ownership Goals

- How do the current owners want to stay involved in the business in the future?
- Do they want to continue living on the farm?
- Do they want to retain ownership of any land?
- Will the operation (in whole or part) transfer within the family to the next generation (heirs)?

## What Needs to Be Transferred?

- **Land:** Current ownership, value, lease agreements, and liens.
- **Equipment:** Value, ownership, and usage liens.
- **Management:** Current decision-making processes, roles, and contacts for grain or livestock operations.



## How Are Your Assets Titled?

- Do you own the land personally, or does an LLC own it?
- Do you jointly own equipment with a spouse or family member?

Understanding how assets are legally titled is crucial for minimizing risks during transition planning. Improperly titled assets can create obstacles in generational transitions or expose the farm business to legal or tax risks. Creating a detailed inventory of machinery, land, crops, livestock, and prepaid inputs is a great starting point.

## Timeline

- Does the current management/owner have enough savings for retirement?
- What are the healthcare plans?
- Are there deadlines that could affect new management/owners?

**TRANSITION ADVISORY TEAM** - Bringing together a transition advisory team can help streamline the process. While each transition process is unique, the advisory team should include the following professionals:

- A lawyer
- An accountant
- A lender
- A business management advisor

These professionals can help achieve the current owners' goals related to financial security for a surviving spouse and minimize taxes and fees associated with asset transfers. KCARD can assist Kentucky-based agricultural businesses by serving as a business management advisor.

**BASIC STEPS TO GET STARTED** - Call a family meeting with those directly involved.

1. **Create an advisory team** that includes a lawyer, accountant, and banker.
2. **Agree on business and ownership goals.**
3. **Create a list of all assets and debts.**
4. **Gather key documents** (e.g., wills, property deeds, stocks/bonds, bank notes).
5. **Create and agree on a realistic timeline** for the process from start to finish.
6. **Implement the plan.**



The University of Kentucky has created a series of publications to help with personal and business estate planning. Part One, *FCS5-420: Estate Planning: Getting Started*, can be found at <https://publications.ca.uky.edu/files/FCS5420.pdf>. The entire series is available at <https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/publications-list/12>.

If you would like KCARD's assistance with your agricultural business's succession plan, contact us at (859) 550-3972 or [kcard@kcard.info](mailto:kcard@kcard.info).

## Be Ready For CAIP Cost-Share Changes

If you read through the events listing on page 3, you may have noticed we have CAIP Information meetings scheduled in February. We anticipate having cost-share applications available at those meetings, pending all administrative paperwork being legally executed by then. There are some significant changes to CAIP cost-share, including:

- Only one individual per household, regardless of county, is eligible to apply for CAIP within a program year. Proof of residency is required to verify that multiple individuals within the same household are not applying.
- All applicants must be a Kentucky resident—residency is determined by a valid Kentucky driver's license or photo ID and one utility bill. The address on both the ID and utility bill must match the address provided in the CAIP application.
- CAIP is no longer an across-the-board 50-50 cost share. Each eligible item in CAIP has been given a cost-reimbursement percentage (75%, 50%, or 25%) denoted in each Investment Area Guideline in red. When producers submit their receipts, the amount they can receive for reimbursement will depend on the item they purchased.  
*Example: A producer purchases a bull and submits receipts for vaccines. The bull is only eligible for 50% of the total cost, up to the county maximum limit. The vaccines are only eligible for 25% of the total cost, up to the county maximum limit.*
- Lime is no longer a cost-shared item.
- There have been changes in the Beef bull requirements, as noted on page 5 in this newsletter. If you have plans to purchase bulls, you will want to review the investment area guidelines closely.

**Note that this is not a complete listing of program changes — we will cover further details of the at the CAIP information meetings in February.** Each applicant is responsible for understanding the guidelines of the program, and these information meetings are designed to help you understand the process.

The CAIP cost-share program monies come from the 1998 Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement. This agreement requires tobacco companies to pay settling states, including Kentucky, billions of dollars in annual installments. These funds are often referred to as the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund. Kentucky is one of only three states that uses funds from the Master Settlement Agreement to directly benefit farmers.

The Kentucky Ag Development Board reviews guidelines for funding annually. The changes made are meant to encourage new and innovative practices to move Kentucky agriculture forward. We are fortunate to have this cost-share program available.

Wishing you a healthy, happy 2025.



Traci Johnson  
Agriculture & Natural Resources Agent

