

AG NOTES
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FARMERS MARKET

The market continues, but we have had some vendors to run out of produce due to the continued weather damage to production. We'll continue to monitor available products and we'll let you know about the market.

Remember, it's on Thursday afternoons at 2:30 pm at the big blue water tower at the Celebration Grounds.

GRAZING PLANS

I've had more interest in alternative grazing due to the shortage of hay this summer. While some folks are recovering with a better late summer/fall hay harvest, there are still some concerns out there. We do have some options that are old-time for some and new for others.

Small grain crops are widely used in Tennessee for pasture, silage and hay. These crops produce high-quality forage during the fall, winter, and spring. Including ryegrass will result in growth longer into the spring, while adding crimson or arrowleaf clover will decrease the amount of nitrogen that needs to be applied.

All these crops are cool season annual plants, meaning they germinate in the fall, grow during the fall, winter and spring and then die in the late spring or early summer. Even though these crops live for only one year, they have potential for use in several ways.

We've got a really good publication that discusses all of these options. It's titled Small Grains, Ryegrass and Clovers for Forage, and it includes a lot of information. The planting dates that are recommended are right here on us. I'll be happy to send you the link. Just email me and I'll reply it. Or give me a call and I'll get it for you. Take a look if you think this will fit into your operation.

BEEF MEETING

The Middle Tennessee Beef Producer Association will meet on Thursday, September 8, at 6:30 pm at the Bedford County Ag Center. The sponsor is Trans Ova, one of the businesses that specialize in bovine reproduction. There will be a meal, so we ask that you call in to the office here at 684-5971 to let us know you are coming. This should be a good program.

SOIL TESTING

Now is an excellent time to soil test and add the needed lime to pastures, gardens, lawns, or any soil. With the increased cost of fertilizer, lime becomes a great investment. Lime increases the efficiency of N, P and K.

For example, the efficiency of applied phosphate may be more than doubled when soil pH is increased from 5.0 to 6.1 because of less fixation or tie-up in the soil. Lime enhances microorganism activity.

Acid soils slow the growth and multiplication of certain microorganisms, which in turn reduces soil processes such as the release of nutrients from organic matter decomposition (mineralization) and nitrogen fixation in legumes. Low pH levels also impede root development that effects uptake of plant nutrients.

Lime is one of the less expensive soil treatments available. And with the costs of actual plant nutrients, we need to do everything we can to improve nutrient efficiency. We also cannot afford to just guess with fertilizer prices being what they are.

The UT soil center recommendations are made on a least-cost basis, and results are based on literally years of test data and correlated performance data.

Now is a good time to get this done, instead of waiting 'til the last minute.

WISDOM

The August issue of the Progressive Farmer's Cornerstone section had quotes on rainfall. This has been a big topic with the cold wet spring, the hot dry summer, and the big wash-out at the Celebration this past Saturday night. (I was there and got soaked, but I enjoyed every minute...just about.)

Here are some good thoughts on rain. Dolly Parton said "The way I see it, if you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain." Roger Miller said "Some people walk in the rain, others just get wet." Fran Lebowitz said "Do not, on a rainy day, ask your child what he feels like doing, because I assure you that what he feels like doing, you won't feel like watching."

Maya Angelou said "Every storm runs out of rain." Mark Twain said "It is best to read the weather forecast before praying for rain." John Steinbeck said "One can find so many pains when the rain is falling." Benjamin Franklin said "The person who deserves most pity is a lonesome one on a rainy day who doesn't know how to read."

Clint Eastwood said "If you think it's going to rain, it will." And Aesop said "After the rain cometh the fair weather." These last two make me think of a saying that I've heard about Tennessee weather over and over. "If you don't like the weather, just stay still. It's going to change."