

# Fayette County Agriculture & Natural Resources Newsletter

May 2022



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

## Cooperative Extension Service

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## PUBLICATION SPOTLIGHT

### Fescue Toxicosis (ID-221)

This is an important publication right now since May and June are when the toxins in tall fescue are at their highest. Authored by UK's Drs. Arnold, Gaskill, and Smith, it explains fescue toxicity and describes the ways you can manage around this issue on your farm. The last part of the publication describes the sampling methods and labs to send fescue samples to determine how much endophyte is in your field and the level of toxin (ergovaline) that is present.

The publication is available on-line at <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/ID/ID221/ID221.pdf> or by contacting Beau Neal at [beau.neal@uky.edu](mailto:beau.neal@uky.edu) or (859) 257-5582.

## Upcoming Events

|| **May 7, 2022 ~ Fayette County Extension EXPO**; Fayette County Extension Office, 1140 Harry Sykes Way, Lexington KY; 9:00am-12:00pm; Tour gardens, food demos, activities for kids; Check out Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/FayetteCoANR/> or go online to <http://fayette.ca.uky.edu> for more information.

|| **May 18, 2022 ~ Private Pesticide Applicator Certification**; Fayette County Extension Office, 1140 Harry Sykes Way; 9:00am; To RSVP, please contact Beau Neal at [beau.neal@uky.edu](mailto:beau.neal@uky.edu) or (859) 227-5582.

|| **May 23, 2022 ~ Beef Quality Care and Assurance (BQCA) Training**; Fayette County Extension Office, 1140 Harry Sykes Way; 9:00am; To RSVP, please contact Beau Neal at [beau.neal@uky.edu](mailto:beau.neal@uky.edu) or (859) 227-5582.

|| **June 9-29, 2022 ~ Lexington Lions Club Bluegrass Fair**; Masterson Station Park, 3051 Leestown Rd., Lexington; More information available at <https://thebluegrassfair.com/>

## Forage Timely Tips: May

Source: UK Forage News <https://kyforagenews.com/>

- Start hay harvests for quality forage. Consider making baleage to facilitate timely cutting.
- Seed warm season grasses for supplemental forage once soil temperature is at 60 F.
- Clip, graze, or make hay to prevent seedhead formation.
- Rotate pastures as based in height rather than time.
- Consider temporary electric fencing to subdivide large pastures and exclude areas for mechanical harvesting.
- Scout pastures for summer annual weeds an control when small.

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LEXINGTON, KY 40546



Disabilities  
accommodated  
with prior notification.

# Beef Cow Slaughter Pace Exceeding Last Year's High Levels

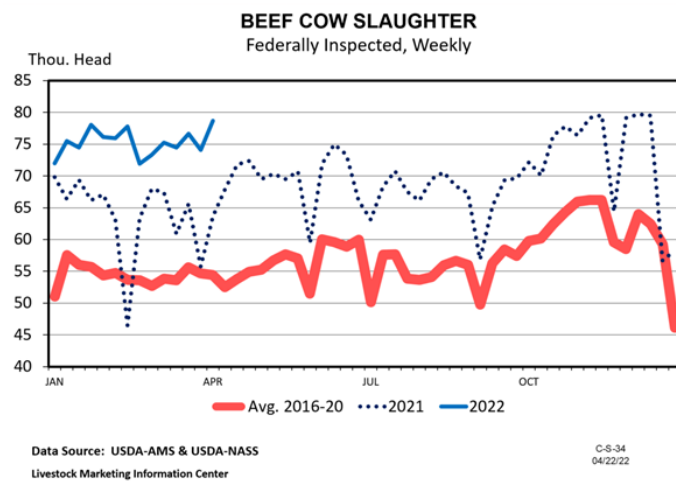
Source: Dr. Kenny Burdine, Extension Professor,  
Livestock Marketing, University of Kentucky

The size of the US beef cow herd was estimated to have decreased by 2.3% during 2021. Steep culling of the cowherd was a major reason why this was the case as beef cow slaughter was up by nearly 9% for the year. A frustrating calf market and drought in much of the US led to herd reductions as a lot of cows were sent to market. Year-over-year, the increase amounted to almost 300 thousand cows, which probably accounted for about 40% of the total reduction in beef cow inventory last year.

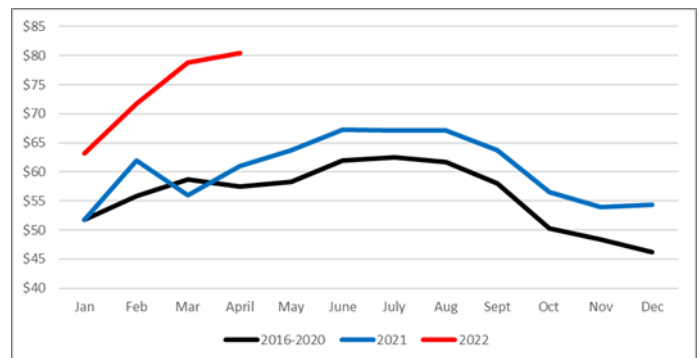
While calf prices have been higher in the first few months of 2022, a large portion of the US remains in significant drought. Most significantly for the cattle sector, drought moved into the Southern Plains during the fall of 2021 and has seemed to intensify this spring. The first chart below shows beef cow slaughter for 2022 (blue line), which has been running well ahead of 2021 (dotted line). Year-to-date, beef cow slaughter has been over 18% higher than year-ago. This is slightly biased by an extremely low cow slaughter week in February 2021, which was the result of a significant ice storm. However, even taking that week out of the comparison, harvest levels are still more than 15% higher so far this year.

While drought conditions are likely the major driver behind current cow slaughter levels, price levels are adding fuel to the fire. The second chart below shows 80-85% boning cow prices in Kentucky, which have been running much higher than last year. For the month of April, slaughter cow prices were more up over 30% from 2021. On a 1,300 lb cow, this difference is about \$250 per head.

Beef heifer retention was lower coming into 2022, which suggests continued contraction in beef cow numbers. Although it is still early in the year, beef cow slaughter through early April is pointing to another year of heavy culling. The combination of dry weather and strong cull cow prices are likely to keep cows moving and encourage producers to pull the trigger a little sooner on those cows as they approach the end of their productive lives. This is definitely something to watch as we move through the current year and it is hard to imagine that we won't be discussing another significant decrease in beef cow numbers at the start of 2023.



## Kentucky Auction Prices 80-85% Boning Cows



Source: USDA-AMS, author calculations

## Beef Cattle Timely Tips

**Source:** Dr. Les Anderson, Beef Extension Professor, University of Kentucky

### Spring-Calving Cow Herd

- Continue supplying a high magnesium mineral until daytime temperatures are consistently above 60 degrees F.
- Improve or maintain body condition (BCS 5) of cows before breeding season starts. If necessary, increase energy intake even on pasture.
- Bulls should have a breeding soundness evaluation (BSE) well before the breeding season (at least 30 days). Contact your local veterinarian to schedule a BSE for your herd sires. They should also receive their annual booster vaccinations and be dewormed. I often get questions regarding deworming and reduced fertility in bulls. Dr. Phil Prater at MSU and I examined this and found no effect of deworming on bull fertility.
- Schedule spring “turn-out” working in late-April or early-May; i.e. at the end of calving season and before the start of breeding season. Consult with your veterinarian about vaccines and health products for your herd.

“Turn-out” working for the cow herd *may* include:

- Prebreeding vaccinations
- Deworming
- Replacing lost identification tags
- Sort cows into breeding groups, if using more than one bull
- Insecticide eartags (best to wait until fly population builds up)

“Turn-out” working of calves may include:

- Vaccinate for IBR-PI3, Clostridial diseases and Pinkeye
- Dehorn, if needed (can be done with electric dehorner and fly repellent during fly season)
- Castrate and implant male feeder calves (if not done at birth)
- Deworm
- Insecticide eartags

- Consider breeding yearling replacement heifers one heat cycle (about 21 days) earlier than cows for “head-start” calving. Mate to known calving-ease bulls.
- Record identification of all cows and bulls in each breeding group.
- Begin breeding cows no later than mid-May, especially if they are on high endophyte fescue. Cows should be in good condition so that conception occurs prior to periods of extreme heat.
- Consider synchronizing estrus in all cows. Exposing late-calving cows and first-calf heifers to a progestin (MGA feed or CIDR device) for 7 days before bull turn out increases pregnancy rates and shortens the next calving season.
- Choose best pastures for grazing during the breeding season. Select those with the best stand of clover and the lowest level of the fescue endophyte, if known. Keep these pastures vegetative by grazing or clipping. *High quality pastures are important for a successful breeding season.*
- If using **artificial insemination**:
  - Use an experienced inseminator.
  - Make positive identification of cows and semen used. This will permit accurate records on date bred, return to heat, calving date and sire.
  - Good handling facilities and gentle working of the cows are essential.
  - Choose AI sires that will meet your goals and resist the temptation to get your cows bigger. Using sires with higher accuracy EPDs will reduce risk.
- Observe breeding pastures often to see if bulls are working. Record cows’ heat dates and then check 18-21 days later, for return to heat.

*Continued on next page*

Continued: Beef Cattle Timely Tips

### Fall-Calving Herd

- Contact your veterinarian and pregnancy diagnose the cow herd. If a large animal veterinarian is not available in your area, consider taking blood samples for pregnancy diagnosis. Remove open cows at weaning time.
- Plan marketing program for calves. Consider various options, such as maintaining ownership and backgrounding in a grazing program, or precondition and sell in a CPH-45 feeder calf sale.
- Initiate fly control for the cows when fly population builds up.
- Calves may be weaned anytime now but you can take advantage of the spring grass by leaving them on the cow a while or weaning and grazing.

### Stockers

- Keep calves on good pasture and rotate pastures rapidly during periods of lush growth. Manage to keep pastures vegetative for best performance.
- Provide mineral mix with an ionophore.
- Implant as needed.
- Control internal and external parasites.

### General

- Harvest hay. *Work around the weather and cut early before plants become too mature. Harvesting forage early is the key to nutritional quality.* Replenish your hay supply!
- Rotate pastures as needed to keep them vegetative.
- Clip pastures to prevent seedhead formation on fescue and to control weeds.
- Seed warm season grasses this month.

For Cook Wild Kentucky recipes, visit:

<https://www.planeatmove.com/recipes>



## Nutty Sweet Potato Biscuits

1 cup all-purpose flour	¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon	potatoes
½ cup whole wheat flour	¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg	6 tablespoons sugar
1½ teaspoons baking powder	⅓ cup chopped walnuts	¼ cup butter, melted
½ teaspoon salt	1 cup mashed sweet	½ teaspoon vanilla
		1 tablespoon milk

1. In a large mixing bowl, **combine** flours, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg and walnuts. **Set** aside.
2. **Combine** sweet potatoes, sugar, butter, vanilla and milk; **add** to flour mixture and mix well.
3. **Turn out** onto a floured surface; gently **knead** 3 or 4 times. **Roll** dough into ½ inch thickness. **Cut** with a 2 inch biscuit cutter and **place** on a lightly greased baking sheet.
4. **Bake** at 450°F for 12 minutes or until golden brown.

golden brown.

**Yield:** 18 biscuits

**Nutritional Analysis:** 4 g fat, 2 g saturated fat, 5 mg cholesterol, 210 mg sodium, 14 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 4 g sugar, 2 g protein.

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



For Plate It Up! recipes, visit:

<http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/plate-it-kentucky-proud>



**Weekly Kentucky Cattle and Grain Summary**

**USDA Livestock, Poultry and Grain Market News**

Frankfort, KY

Monday, May 2, 2022

For Week Ending:

Saturday, April 30, 2022

Receipts: 22,460

Last Week: 21,229

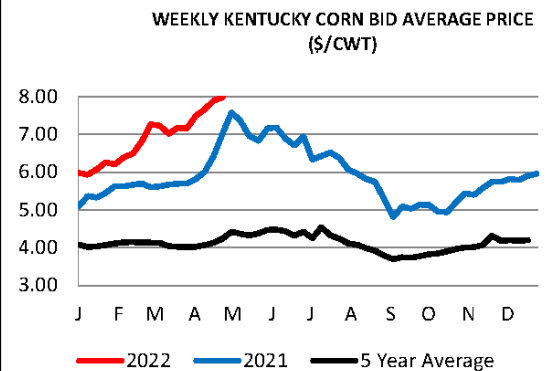
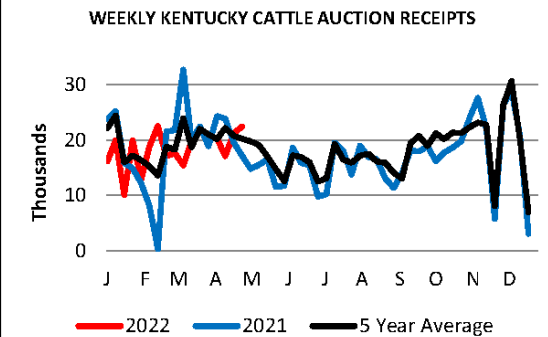
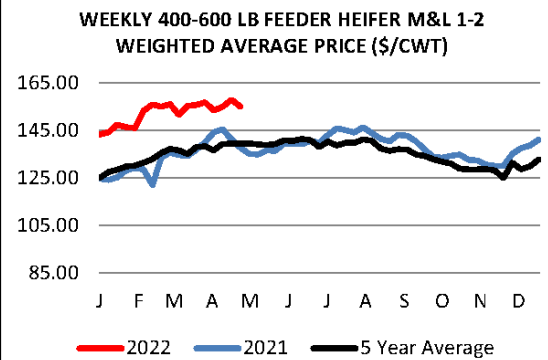
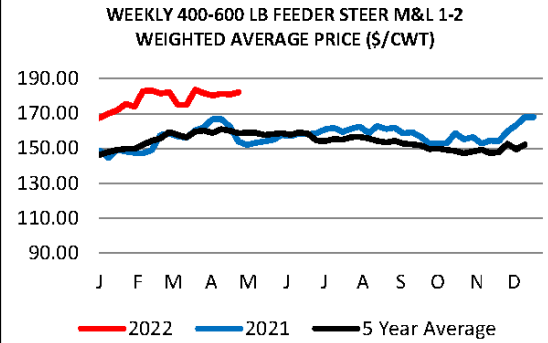
Last Year: 17,146

Compared to last week feeder steers and heifers sold mixed trending mostly steady to 4.00 higher through midweek with trends shifting to 2.00 to 4.00 lower by week's end. Yearlings were unevenly steady. There was mostly moderate to good demand for all feeder and yearling classes except weaned and preconditioned packages which were very good. Slaughter cows and bulls were unevenly steady. Prices ranged from 2.00 lower to 2.00 higher with moderate to good demand.

[View Full Summary](#)

**STATE AVERAGES**

	<u>This Week</u>	<u>Prior Week</u>	<u>Last Year</u>
<b>Steers (M&amp;L 1-2)</b>			
350-400 lbs	189.57	195.46	169.04
400-450 lbs	185.14	187.69	160.62
450-500 lbs	180.00	179.72	158.37
500-550 lbs	173.44	175.82	151.68
550-600 lbs	173.92	172.16	147.45
600-650 lbs	160.78	161.84	138.92
650-700 lbs	156.76	155.62	133.75
700-750 lbs	147.60	147.95	127.82
750-800 lbs	145.87	147.22	126.44
800-850 lbs	138.00	139.89	121.09
850-900 lbs	138.66	137.94	119.38
<b>Heifers (M&amp;L 1-2)</b>			
300-350 lbs	166.62	164.35	150.11
350-400 lbs	165.55	167.33	147.56
400-450 lbs	160.77	161.33	143.03
450-500 lbs	157.64	159.27	140.54
500-550 lbs	149.79	153.12	133.67
550-600 lbs	149.25	149.03	133.57
600-650 lbs	137.77	139.45	125.13
650-700 lbs	138.90	136.82	120.79
700-750 lbs	131.68	130.29	113.21
750-800 lbs	129.93	130.21	116.38



**WEEKLY COW SUMMARY**

	<u>Average</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Low</u>
<b>Slaughter Cows</b>			
Breakers	67.50-89.00	76.00-99.50	67.00-78.00
Boners	60.00-89.00	76.00-105.00	60.00-77.00
Lean	50.00-81.00	60.00-95.00	44.00-68.00
<b>Slaughter Bulls</b>			
Yield Grade 1&2	88.00-122.00	110.00-144.00	82.00-108.00

**April 28, 2022**

**Bowling Green, KY**

**SLAUGHTER GOATS: 83**

**Kids-Selection 1-2:** 56 lbs 470.00; 70 lbs 440.00. **Selection 2:** 48 lbs 410.00; 50 lbs 440.00; 65 lbs 330.00. **Selection 2-3:** 50 lbs 400.00; 70 lbs 260.00; 80 lbs 330.00.

**SLAUGHTER SHEEP: 550**

**Woolled-Choice and Prime 1-2:** 55 lbs 365.00; 68 lbs 345.00; 70 lbs 355.00; 80-88 lbs 310.00-330.00; 108 lbs 295.00. **Choice 2:** 48 lbs 320.00. **Hair Breeds-Choice and Prime 1-2:** 53 lbs 357.50; 60-66 lbs 360.00-365.00; 87 lb 335.00. **Choice 2:** 53 lbs 340.00; 66 lbs 340.00; 90 lbs 325.00; 125 lbs 180.00.

[View Full Report](#)

[View Latest Grain Report](#)

<b>GRAINS</b>	<u>This Week</u>	<u>Prior Week</u>	<u>Last Year</u>
<b>Corn</b>	7.59-8.33	7.50-8.22	6.54-7.55
<b>Soybeans</b>	16.47-17.58	16.59-17.74	14.97-16.03
<b>Red Winter Wheat</b>	9.81-10.43	9.86-10.81	7.23-7.50

USDA-KY Livestock, Poultry & Grain Market News  
 Frankfort, KY  
 Levi Geyer, OIC 502-782-4139  
 Email: [Levi.Geyer@usda.gov](mailto:Levi.Geyer@usda.gov)  
[USDA Livestock, Poultry, and Grain Market News](#)



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# Fayette County Cooperative Extension Agriculture & Natural Resources Newsletter

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KENTUCKY COUNTIES, COOPERATING



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