

MAY 2024

MCCREARY COUNTY EXTENSION

AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES NEWSLETTER



It's about that time...

Hay season is upon us once again. Hay is the most commonly stored forage on most Kentucky farms. Since hay is widely utilized, understanding the factors that affect the quality of hay is important, as well as how to produce high quality hay.

Maturity stage is the most important factor impacting forage quality and the easiest way to significantly improve quality. As grasses and legumes advance from the vegetative (leafy) to reproductive (seed) stage, they become higher in fiber and lignin content and lower in protein content, digestibility, and acceptability by livestock.

Making the first hay cutting early permits re-growth to begin at a time when temperatures and soil moisture are favorable for plant growth. This will generally increase the total yield per acre over the course of the year even though first cutting yield will be lower. Poor weather (i.e. rain, hail) and handling conditions can lower hay quality. Rain can cause leaf loss and can leach nutrients from the plants. Sunlight can lower hay quality by bleaching and lowering Vitamin A content. To reduce leaf loss, rake or ted hay while it



SOUTH-CENTRAL KY

Hay Contest



HAY CONTEST COMING SOON!

Sample collection begins in June.
Hay probes available for checkout
OR ANR Agent can assist with
collection.

Make plans to enter and get your
hay tested & analyzed by
professionals for FREE

You might just win!

Contact
McCreary County Extension at
606-376-2524
for more information



is moist (above 40% moisture) and avoid baling when it is too dry (15% moisture or less). A good rule is to ted hay later than 7 p.m. the afternoon it was cut, or before 10 a.m. the day after cutting. To reduce drying time and help decrease damage, use wider swaths.

Storing twine-tied hay bales outside unprotected can result in losses exceeding one-third of the original crop. Plastic mesh wrap (net wrap) and solid, self-adhesive plastic wrap are recent developments in round bale storage that can provide some extra protection against weather conditions during outside storage. Storing inside or under a roof is recommended to preserve the hay better.

Producing quality hay will help maintain adequate cattle body condition and growth during times when pastures are not growing. Feeding low quality hay can negatively impact body condition, immune system, and weight gain- thus decreasing profit from each animal.

For more information on producing quality hay, contact Tracie Goodman, McCreary County ANR Extension Agent.



Tracie Goodman
ANR/4-H Extension Agent
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UPCOMING EVENTS MCCREARY CO. EXTENSION

May 4th, 9am-1pm
Opening Day

McCreary County Farmers Market
Every Saturday after, 9am-1pm
299 Wilburn K Ross Hwy.
Stearns, KY 42647

May 14th, 12pm
Library Lunch Program
Home Composting

May 14th, 6-8pm
Ag Safety Night
McCreary Cattlemen's Assoc.
Kentucky Dept. of Agriculture
Whitley City Fire Department

May 23rd, 5:30pm
Grow Appalachia
Pest ID & Management

May 29th, 10am
Get Healthy McCreary Hike
Dog Slaughter Falls

Call 606-376-2524 for
registration info

Follow us!



SCAN ME



May Garden Notes

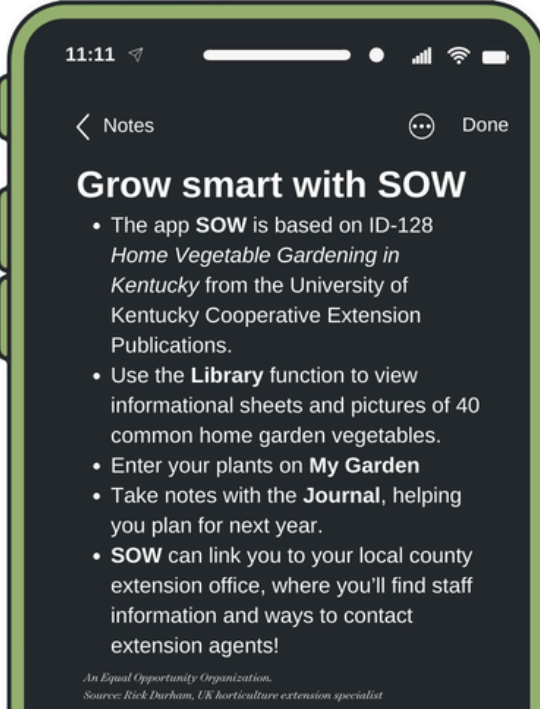


Even if you have not planted beans, sweet corn, and vining crops (cucumbers, squash), you can continue to plant them in May in all parts of the state.

Now is the time to plant crops that are particularly sensitive to cold and frost: this includes tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, and okra. It is very important to protect these plants from frost.

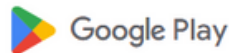
If you are growing in raised beds or containers, the soil will dry out faster than it does in a regular garden. Water when the top of the soil feels dry. Evenly apply water around the bed or container.

For raised beds, apply enough water to wet the soil about six inches deep. Use a garden trowel or shovel to check how deep the water has moved. For containers, apply water until some water drains out the hole at the bottom of the container.



Grow smart with SOW: Kentucky gardeners' ultimate app for planting success!

Visit the Google Play Store or App Store to download!





4-H ANR Spotlight



MCCREARY 4-H FORESTRY & WHEP TEAMS TAKE THE WIN!

Congratulations to our MCHS Forestry Team and new Wildlife Habitat Education Program (WHEP) Team for winning the 4-H State Competitions in April!

They will each advance to the 4-H National Forestry and WHEP competitions in July.

We are so proud to have them represent McCreary County and Kentucky 4-H!



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