

DECEMBER 2024

# MCCREARY COUNTY EXTENSION

AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES NEWSLETTER

## Managing Winter Mud

If you're a Kentucky farmer, you know winter means mud. Feeding livestock during the winter or moving equipment over unfrozen, wet ground can exacerbate the amount of mud on the farm. Mud is not good for several reasons. It can cause topsoil erosion and increase soil compaction. Livestock that have to walk through mud require more feed for energy but actually eat and drink less because they expel so much energy getting to feed and water. Therefore, mud reduces daily average gains.

Mud on animal's coats makes it harder for them to regulate their body temperature—increasing the amount of energy they need to generate heat for warmth in the winter and cool themselves in the summer. For horses, mud can increase the risk of slipping and falling and can make walking or standing difficult.

Fortunately, you can reduce the amount of mud on your farm by installing hard traffic pads in areas that tend to get the most traffic.

You have many choices for materials to use for heavy-use pads. Some of these include concrete, plastic traffic grid and geotextile fabric and rock. The material you use depends on many factors, including material availability, installation costs and the size of your operation.



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

## NEW TO EXTENSION?

Here are some of the services we offer:

- Farm & site visits
- Agricultural testing (soil, plant pathology, forage, seed, etc.)
- Training programs (BQCA, Master Loggers, Private Pesticide Applicator, & more)
- Shared-use equipment (soil probes, hay probes, fencing tools, incubators)
- Free/low-cost educational programs for all ages.

Pay us a visit!

141 College St., Whitley City, KY

606-376-2524



With the exception of horses which require softer surfaces, concrete pads are by far the strongest, easiest to clean and lowest maintenance material for most livestock producers to use. Concrete pads should be placed in areas that receive heavy animal traffic, such as around waterers, adjacent to feed bunks, in holding areas and near gates. While the installation costs of concrete pads may be higher than other materials, you are going to save money in the long term, because you reduce the amount of wasted feed and get better gains on your livestock.

A hilltop or sloped surface is often the best location for a hard surface pad, as they tend to be away from most waterways and will allow nearby vegetation to filter stormwater runoff. Make sure the location also drains away from feed bunkers, waterers and roads.

-Steve Higgins, Director of Environmental Compliance for the Agricultural Experiment Station

For more information about installing hard surfaces on your farm, contact Tracie Goodman, McCreary County Agriculture & Natural Resources Extension Agent.



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## UPCOMING EVENTS MCCREARY CO. EXTENSION

Library Lunch Program  
 Winter Seed Sowing  
*Dec 10th, 12pm*

McCreary Fun-Makers  
*Dec 10th, 4pm*

McCreary Cattlemen's  
 Association/Jr. Cattlemen's  
 Christmas Dinner  
*Dec 10th, 6pm*

Private Pesticide Applicator  
 Training  
*Jan 14th, 6pm*

*McCreary County Extension will be closed December 25th-January 1st in observance of Christmas and New Years.*

Call 606-376-2524 for  
 more info

Follow us!



# December Garden Notes

Write in your garden journal about plans for next year and any thoughts from this past year.

Consider giving gifts from your garden to family and friends, such as dried herbs or canned goods.

Enjoy some of the items you canned or preserved from your garden.



Check out [planeatmove.com](http://planeatmove.com) for garden info & seasonal recipes!




## JOIN YOUR LOCAL ASSOCIATION!

The McCreary Cattlemen's Association meets on the **second Tuesday** of each month at 6pm EST.

Meetings cover a variety of educational topics relevant to local livestock producers.

Applications for membership available at the McCreary County Extension Office.

 Cooperative Extension Service

## Winter Considerations for Cattle



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



## ***ANR Spotlight***



## **CAMPUS TRAIL**

Thanks to local volunteers, the Campus Trail has been cleaned and cleared and is ready for hikes!

The trail is a 2 mile loop that takes you through diverse landscape.

The trailhead is located at the bottom left corner of the SCC-McCreary Campus (McCreary Extension) parking lot.

Stay tuned for Get Healthy McCreary Hiking Club dates!

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