



VOL. 3 NO. 6

JUNE 2009

KENTUCKY

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“COMMENT”

The following two pages of this publication features an interesting article about the Robey family of Logan County, who have three generations operating one of Kentucky’s largest dairy farms, with another generation likely to follow.

During a recent visit to Robey Farms, I gained a further appreciation for the commitment and hard work necessary to run an operation of this size. The Robeys are milking more than 1,200 head of Holsteins. They milk around the clock. And as a closely-regulated Confined Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO), Lee and Denise Robey and their three sons devote much attention to properly managing the animal waste.

The Robeys have a comprehensive Agriculture Water Quality Plan developed in tandem with the professionals from the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Equally important, they work on virtually a daily basis to ensure they are following the plan.

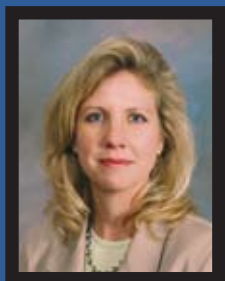
We’re focusing on the Robey operation in this issue of KFB News not only because it’s “June Dairy Month,” but because this family sets a good example for livestock producers to follow. With the long awaited CAFO regulations taking effect this summer, and the Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection poised to enforce those standards, it’s time for livestock operators to re-examine their Ag Water Quality plans to insure they are up to date and are being implemented properly.

The new regulations do not make major changes in the way animal feeding operations are permitted, but they require nutrient management plans for all manure application (which was already mandated by the Ag Water Quality Act). The bottom line, as always, is that manure cannot impact water quality. If so, you are a polluter and in violation of federal law.

Like the Robey family, livestock operations must be managing manure based on a nutrient management plan (which is part of the Ag Water Quality plan). And, farmers do protect water quality – not just because some regulatory agency says so. We do it because it makes economic sense to use our resources correctly. That protects our bottom line and enhances our land’s production capabilities.

KFB is encouraging livestock producers to make sure their Ag Water Quality Plans are up to date. These plans are your first line of defense in the event that some type of violation is cited. With a plan in place, you will be given the opportunity to correct problems before you are penalized as a “bad actor.” This system has worked well for Kentucky agriculture, as well as for protecting our natural resources.

It’s always good to visit farms across Kentucky and know the sentiments and the actions are the same: “Leave it better than we found it.” Keep up the good work Kentucky producers and know that your efforts protect all of Kentucky’s environment!



Laura Knoth

**DIRECTOR
PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIVISION**

ON THE COVER:

ROY CRUNK BUILT THIS COVERED BRIDGE SEVERAL YEARS AGO ON HIS FARM OFF KY. 800 IN CHRISTIAN COUNTY. IT’S 48 FEET LONG WITH A CLEARANCE OF 10 FEET, 9 INCHES. IT SPANS THE WEST FORK OF THE MUD RIVER.

PHOTO BY ROGER NESBITT

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No waste of time . . .

LARGE DAIRY FARM EMBRACES THE VALUE OF NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT

The Robey family near Adairville in southern Logan County has been milking cows for over 50 years. They are widely regarded as excellent managers of their herd of Holsteins – even after an expansion to the 1,250 cows they’re milking today.

Continual growth to a business that supports five households and some 40 employees has presented the Robeys with another daunting challenge: How to manage the enormous volume of waste. Like milking cows, proper waste management is an around-the-clock concern. So much so that Lee Robey can rattle off numbers pertinent to the farm’s waste just as quickly as for the milk production.

After telling a visitor that he views manure as a cost-saving asset rather than a waste-disposing liability, Robey grabbed a calculator to make his point. Punching in numbers relative to fertilize prices and units of nitrogen and phosphorus from the farm’s waste, Robey announced: “We’ve got \$750,000 to \$800,000 worth of nutrients (per year).”

It’s that type of perspective and commitment, says KFB Public Affairs Director Laura Knoth, that will enable large-scale livestock producers to operate within federal and state environmental guidelines. Ms. Knoth and other state agriculture officials have been alerting farmers large and small that the Obama

administration is intent on stepping up requirements for Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs). Meanwhile, the Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Authority is calling for producers to develop and follow nutrient management plans required under the state Ag Water Quality law. New CAFO regulations are prompting state regulators to insure that livestock operations are actively managing manure based on a nutrient implementation plan.

Lee Robey, who has much at stake in the environmental regulatory arena, is on board with those advising farmers to pay attention and take action. He is chairman of the Ag Water Quality Authority’s Livestock Subcommittee and the owner of a Nutrient Management Plan that is three-inches thick; an offshoot of operating one of the state’s largest CAFOs.

“Some people look at this (the required plan) as strictly a regulatory issue when it’s really a management issue,” Robey said. “It’s really a tool to manage your soil fertility. It should be an asset, not a burden. I tell people they should sit down with NRCS and work out a plan.”

Developing a plan for Robey Farms was no small task. It took months for Robey and Craig Givens of the local NRCS office to craft a docu-

ABOVE: CONSTRUCTED IN 2003, THE ROBEYS’ BARN CAN HOUSE UP TO 350 HEAD. THE FARM’S HERD PRODUCES ABOUT 100,000 POUNDS OF MILK PER DAY.

ment that addresses such concerns as soil testing, nutrient production, land management, recordkeeping, land application, handling and storage and dead animal disposal. Water and manure management, in fact, consume much of the workday for Lee, while sons Chris, Adam and Eli are busy with the crops and the cows.

“Dad spends a lot of time with the business end and making sure we’re doing things the right way,” said Adam, “and we’re glad he takes on that part of it.”

“I’m the state trooper around here,” Lee said, laughing.

Although Robey Farms has a huge dairy (especially by Kentucky standards), it’s actually a highly diversified operation with corn, wheat, soybeans, forages plus burley, dark-fired and dark air-cured tobacco. Lee’s brother, Carr, handles the tobacco operation.

Lee’s great grandfather purchased the initial 155-acre tract in 1899. Lee’s father, E.J. Robey, started a dairy there in



ABOVE: THE STATE-OF-THE-ART MILKING PARLOR IS ENERGY EFFICIENT AND CONVENIENT FOR HAULERS. INSET: A DOUBLE PARLOR ENABLES ROBNEY FARMS TO MILK 50 COWS AT A TIME.

1954 after returning from the Air Force.

When Lee realized that his sons wanted to farm for a career, he knew a dramatic expansion was necessary. In 2003, barns were added to handle some 1,100 cows. The milking herd is now up to 1,250 head which are milked three times a day in eight-hour shifts. The spacious state-of-the-art milking facility is a double parlor that can handle 50 cows at a time. There's so much milk flowing – about 100,000 pounds a day – that a piping system was installed to move milk directly from the cows to tank trailers that haul to the processor.

There's more high-tech systems: Computers help the Robeys keep close records on each cow's production, health and reproduction cycle. The farm uses an automated flushing system that moves water through the barns at regular intervals, removing manure. The water then goes through a separation system where the sand is recovered and reused for bedding. The remaining

water then is put to other uses.

The manure application system is equally impressive, dependent on an intricate injection system with pipes and hoses. Three 6,500-gallon tankers are used to dispatch nutrients to sections of their 10,000-acre operation that can't be reached with the pipeline. "We're moving manure seven to eight miles," Lee explained. "We've moved as much as 250,000 gallons a day with the three tankers."

The Robeys have used a GPS system to map fields and they maintain detailed records on manure applications on some 200 fields. They have manure tested on virtually a daily basis; Lee Robey has a file with records on more than 100 samples.

They're also energy-efficient, using a heat recovery system to get the most out of every kilowatt used with the refrigeration units.

They are continuing to modernize -- a six-row free style barn that can house 450 cows is under construction and Lee continues to look at more efficient and effective ways to handle the waste. It's all necessary, says Lee, to sustain the family operation and prepare for the future.

It's a six-generation family farm extraordinary, with four generations

currently residing there. Lee's parents, D.L. and Jane, live just across the driveway from the farm's office. Wife Denise Robey oversees the calves, heifers and bulls. Eldest son Chris, a former state FFA President, focuses on the crop production. He and wife Jessica have four children. Adam mainly deals with the dairy. He and wife Amanda have an infant daughter. Eli, meanwhile, primarily handles equipment and labor issues. He will be married this summer to Laura Lee Winstead, a UK Law School graduate and former Public Affairs intern at KFB.

The three sons all have degrees in Ag Economics from UK.

The Robeys have won numerous state and regional awards for milk production (including a hefty state-best 29,000-pound rolling herd average in 2006). The Robeys want that to continue, but within a safe, clean environment.

"I have grandchildren on this farm -- water quality and other environmental issues are going to be important to me," says Lee.

Ms. Knoth says livestock producers would be well advised to update their Ag Water Quality plans.

"Those plans are your first line of defense if problems occur," she said. "By following it, you have protection from costly fines if something goes wrong. Most importantly, you are given the opportunity to fix the problem before any penalties are assessed."

ANIMAL CARE TASK FORCE TACKLES ISSUES

A new KFB task force has set out to develop recommendations for combating the movement against animal agriculture.

During its initial meeting last month, the Animal Care Issues Task Force received its charge from KFB's Executive Committee. President Mark Haney, who appointed the eight-member committee, said in his welcoming remarks that the battle over animal agriculture "is an issue that has escalated; it's important to agriculture that we

address it."

In recent years animal agriculture has come under fierce attack from groups like the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and PETA. The goal of those well-funded groups, as Haney and others expressed at the meeting, is the demise of animal agriculture and promotion of a vegetarian society.

Task Force Chairman Danny Wilkinson, a swine and beef cattle producer in Adair County, gave the group an overview of the problem, pointing out that five states already have adopted punitive measures against animal agriculture production as a result of advocacy campaigns by HSUS and other radical groups. And now there's evidence that Ohio will be a target, said Wilkinson, a KFB Director who also chairs the swine advisory committee.

KFB's Public Affairs staff provided extensive information about state ballot initiatives and HSUS activities. It was noted that HSUS had 2007 revenues of \$152 million, with PETA at \$24 million.

"We won't win this with money," Wilkinson said.

KFB Executive Vice President David S. Beck acknowledged the seriousness of the issue and told the committee "this gives us an opportunity to develop a long-term, comprehensive strategy." He added: "The organization is fully behind what you are doing."

Haney concurred, telling the members that "our resources are available to you."

The group's next order of business is to adopt a "statement of purpose" and then a timeline for developing recommendations that could be presented to KFB's Board of Directors. Wilkinson said he hopes "substantial work" will be completed to present at KFB's annual meeting in December.

Remaining task force members are KFB Directors Kelly Thurman of Ohio County (dairy), Fritz Giesecke of Hart County (beef cattle), Jay Coleman of Barren County (poultry) and Terry Gilbert of Boyle County (beef cattle); plus Franklin County FB President Sharon Spencer (beef cattle), Oldham County FB Vice President Kevin Jeffries (beef cattle) and Sarah Guffey, women's chairperson in Clinton County (poultry and beef cattle).

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DISTRICT POLICY MEETINGS SET

July marks the beginning of the annual district policy development meetings. All members are urged to attend one of these meetings to review policy positions and proposals for consideration at this year's state convention.

District 1	July 13	7:00 p.m.	Calloway County FB
District 2	July 7	6:30 p.m.	Hopkins County Extension Office
District 3	July 16	6:30 p.m.	Rough River State Park
District 4	July 16	6:30 p.m.	Barren River State Park
District 5	July 16	7:00 p.m.	Stratton Community Center, Shelbyville
District 6	July 20	7:00 p.m.	Trimble County Extension Office
District 7	July 23	7:00 p.m.	Russell County High School
District 8	July 6	7:00 p.m.	Madison County Fairgrounds
District 9	July 7	6:30 p.m.	Blue Licks State Park
District 10	July 13	6:30 p.m.	Grayson Conference Center
District 11	July 20	7:00 p.m.	Harlan County FB

FEASTING ON FISCAL POLICY

LINCOLN COUNTY FB TALKS TAXES WITH ITS LEGISLATORS

With the state legislature heading toward a special session to deal with a budget crisis, Lincoln County FB decided it was a good time for some tax talk with their members of the House and Senate.

Specifically, the Lincoln County contingent wanted to reiterate their views on sales, property and estate taxes to Senator Ed Worley and Representative Danny Ford.

Following lunch at a Stanford restaurant, veteran legislators Worley (D-Richmond) and Ford (R-Mount Vernon) spoke to the small group about budgetary issues and offered assessments of the political landscape on some tax issues important to agriculture. The two-hour meeting concluded with a question-and-answer session.

Worley, the Senate Minority Leader; and Ford, a House member since 1982; said the legislature would be examining potential revenue sources. "We have to figure out what is best – see what we can cut and what taxes we possibly could adjust," said Ford.

Worley said agriculture would be well advised to be on guard for attempts to raid its funds or eliminate tax exemptions.

"Whenever there's a pot of money for agriculture, coal, whatever . . . you'd better be vigilant in watching after it," he cautioned.

The legislators predicted that the agricultural development fund would remain intact with the 50 percent earmark of tobacco settlement money. Worley said legislators realize that the ag development initiative has been effective and "I don't think the political will exists to do away with what's been done."

Ford and Worley described themselves as strong supporters of Farm Bureau's property tax policy which limits annual growth but predicted the issue would be examined at the special session because education gravely needs more revenue.

Sales tax exemptions also will be on the table, the lawmakers added.

To that, KFB Director David Campbell vowed that the organization would work hard to preserve the exemptions because "they are very important to farmers and small businesses. They

help keep our costs down."

Concurring was Sonja Bratcher, the KFB agency manager in Moreland whose husband, David, is a dairy farmer. "When you're buying as much feed as we do, that exemption means a lot,"

she explained.

KFB Executive Vice President David S. Beck thanked Ford and Worley for attending the meeting, noting that both have worked well with KFB and have long records of support for agriculture.



TOP: LINCOLN COUNTY FB DIRECTOR PAUL NAPIER ASKED SENATOR WORLEY A QUESTION ABOUT SALES TAX EXEMPTIONS.

BOTTOM: SENATOR ED WORLEY ADDRESSED THE GROUP AS REPRESENTATIVE DANNY FORD LISTENED.



FARM PRODUCTION NEWS

WOODLAND MANAGEMENT COURSES SET

BY CAROL L. SPENCE
UK COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

The management of privately-held woodlands is a family affair. The 2009 Woodland Owners Short Course reflects that view by offering, for the first time, beginners and advanced programs based on an individual's or family's experience and interest level. A youth program will run concurrently with the day-long adult programs. The course also has moved to Saturdays to accommodate busy schedules.

In this year's short course there is something for everyone. Two concurrent tracks, Green and Gold, have programs for both the seasoned woodland owner and those just beginning. Landowners who may have just

acquired woodlands or who are beginning to think about management should enroll in the Green Track, while more seasoned woodland owners can register in the Gold Track. Past graduates of the short course will also find valuable information by returning to the course through the Gold Track.

The central region's course is scheduled for June 13 at the Curtis Gates Lloyd Wildlife Management Area in Grant County, the east region's course is scheduled for August 29 at the Boyd County Fair Grounds, and the west region's course is scheduled for September 26 at the Breckinridge County Cooperative Extension office.

Green Track sessions include basic forest management; working with a wildlife biologist; non-timber forest products; invasive spe-

cies identification and control; fire and woodland urban interface issues and tree identification. Gold Track sessions cover timber harvesting and marketing; a WoodMizer demonstration and discussion about log values; invasive species mitigation; ponds, native warm season grasses and wildlife damage control; "Food Plots: Myths and Realities"; tree planting, timber stand improvement, and crop tree release and ice damage assessment.

Each session begins at 9 a.m. and concludes around 4:30 p.m. Lunch is included. Pre-registration is strongly encouraged as space is limited. Sessions are \$25 for individuals, \$40 for couples and \$5 for youth.

Registration is available online at <http://www.ca.uky.edu/forestryextension/WOSC.php> or by calling 859-257-7597.

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FARM PRODUCTION NEWS

Hay testing available from KDA

BY KATIE PRATT
UK COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

A wet spring has made for an excellent start to forage production in Kentucky this year, with the Kentucky Ag Statistics Service saying quality is very good for the first cutting in most areas. The Kentucky Department of Agriculture advises forage and livestock producers to test their forages. The department tests samples for \$10 per lot (same field, same cutting). Producers receive a laboratory analysis of their forage's nutritional value and an "Interpreting Forage Quality Report" from the KDA. The analysis helps forage producers deter-

mine a fair market value for their product and helps livestock producers formulate the most nutritious and economical feed ration for their animals.

For producers who wish to sell their forages, a KDA inspector will make a visual evaluation and list the product in the department's online Hay Sales Directory. Each listing describes a lot's type, cutting date and number, bale size and weight, color, odor, relative feed value (RFV) and other characteristics. Listings may be sorted by any combination of county, RFV, bale size and type of hay.

Producers and brokers looking to buy or sell hay also may contact the KDA's toll-free Hay Hotline at (888)

567-9589. The department makes no guarantees or claims to the quality, price or nutritional value of hay and forages submitted through the hotline.

The KDA has a forage testing van used for testing and educational purposes. The van may be booked for hay contests, meetings, fairs and other events by calling 1-800-248-4628.

For more information on the KDA's Forage Testing Program, go to www.kyagr.com, click on "Programs," and then click on "Forage Testing," "Hay for Sale (Tested)" or "Hay Hotline," or contact Kim Field at Kimberly.field@ky.gov or 1-800-248-4628.

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GOVERNOR STEVE BESHEAR SIGNED A PROCLAMATION FOR MAY AS "BEEF MONTH" AS A GROUP OF INDUSTRY OFFICIALS LOOKED ON. IN THE BLUE SHIRT BEHIND GOVERNOR BESHEAR IS KFB DIRECTOR FRITZ GIESECKE OF HART COUNTY, WHO IS CHAIRMAN OF KFB'S BEEF CATTLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

Studies affirm ethanol's benefits in reducing greenhouse emissions

The National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) urged federal policymakers to acknowledge the benefits of corn ethanol in helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. As the debate surrounding the future of biofuels continues, it is imperative that policymakers recognize the important role of corn ethanol as demonstrated through numerous studies.

"There are numerous scientific studies which factually support that corn ethanol results in a net reduction of greenhouse gas emissions," said Steve Ruh, chairman of NCGA's Ethanol Committee and a grower from Illinois. "Opponents of corn ethanol should be clear about their motives and should recognize the mounting scientific evidence that supports the sustainability and environmental benefits of corn ethanol."

Ruh pointed out that in 2005, Argonne National Laboratories reported that 13 out of 17 studies on greenhouse gas emissions concluded that corn ethanol provides a significant reduction compared to conventional gasoline.

Researchers at the University of Nebraska analyzed the life cycles of corn-ethanol systems accounting for the majority of U.S. capacity to estimate greenhouse gas emissions and energy efficiencies on the basis of updated values for crop management and yields, biorefinery operation and co-product utilization. Direct-effect greenhouse gas emissions were estimated to be equivalent to a 48 to 59 percent reduction compared to gasoline, a twofold to threefold greater reduction than reported in previous studies.

A report prepared for the International Energy Agency details the dramatic improvement in greenhouse gas emission benefits offered by corn ethanol and predicts greenhouse gas reductions of nearly 60 percent from corn based ethanol compared to gasoline by 2015. The report found 2005-era corn ethanol offered a 39 percent greenhouse gas reduction relative to gasoline.



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KFB's Haney weighs in with animal ID proposals



KFB President Mark Haney testified at a U.S. Department of Agriculture public meeting on the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). Haney, a beef cattle producer in Pulaski County, offered several recommendations from KFB policy, most notably that USDA put a system in place to effectively protect the data collected from farmers and ranchers.

The Louisville meeting was among several USDA conducted across the nation to gather input on the controversial NAIS program. KFB is on record in support of a program with trace-back capabilities that enhance animal disease control efforts. The organization has, however, repeatedly expressed concerns about implementation, chiefly in regard to cost effectiveness for all types and sizes of producers plus security and liability issues relative to the data collected.

"The database must be secure to ensure confidentiality of producers' information," Haney said. "Who will bear the cost must be determined and establishing a clear delineation of where producer liability ends is critical."

Haney told the USDA officials that KFB recommends more funding for implementation, more clarity as to who will have access to the data collected, privacy assurances, liability protection and an effective educational program. "Producers are much more likely to participate if there is liability protection,"

KFB PRESIDENT MARK HANEY TOLD THE USDA OFFICIALS THAT THE ANIMAL ID PROGRAM "MUST BE SECURE TO ENSURE CONFIDENTIALITY."

he explained.

NAIS is a hot topic in Kentucky because of the size of its beef cattle and poultry industries. USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has issued a report saying the cattle industry represents more than 90 percent of the cost of the NAIS program. The report estimates tags and tagging costs could be as high as \$5.22 per cow, well above that for poultry, swine and sheep.

KFB has voiced concerns about how the costs could impact small producers. In his public comments, Haney wrote: "The financial impact on small farms where margins already are thin could result in many not being able to survive long term."

A number of small scale producers were at the hearing to protest the program.

Season 6

WKAG-TV - Broadcast Channel 43
Hopkinsville

WBKI-TV - Broadcast Channel 34
Louisville, Lexington, Central and Southern Kentucky

WBKO-FOX - Broadcast Channel 13-2
Bowling Green

Fleming Co. Cable - Channel 6
Fleming County

RFD-TV - Satellite, National Coverage
DirecTV Channel 345
Dish Network Channel 231

Insight Cable - Cable Channel 2
Louisville and Oldham County

WPSD-TV - Broadcast Channel 6
Paducah

Insight Cable - Cable Channel 6
Northern Kentucky (Boone, Kenton, Campbell, Gallatin, Grant, Pendleton)

WYMT-TV - Broadcast Channel 57
Beginning April
Hazard

CW - Cable Channels 9 and 6
Paducah

WEHT-TV - Broadcast Channel 25
Evansville/Henderson

WTVQ-TV - Broadcast Channel 32-2
Lexington

Bluegrass & Backroads

Sunday
11:30 a.m. CT

Sunday
10:00 p.m. ET

Sunday
1:30 p.m. ET

Tuesday
7:00 p.m. ET

Wednesday
2:00 p.m. ET
12:00 a.m. ET

Wednesday
9:30 p.m. ET

Saturday
5:00 a.m. CT

Saturday
9:30 a.m. ET

Saturday
12:00 p.m. ET

Saturday
2:00 p.m. CT

Saturday
5:00 p.m. CT

Saturday
5:30 p.m. ET

WORLD WHEAT CROP IS LARGE

World wheat production in 2009/10 is projected at 657.6 million tons, down four percent from the 2008/09 record, but still the second largest wheat harvest in history. Foreign production is projected to decrease only two percent from 2008/09. The slide in wheat prices from historical highs seen in March 2008 had little impact on total world wheat area, which declined only 0.6 percent.

Foreign area even went up one percent and reached the highest foreign wheat area since 1996/97. World wheat yields are projected to decline from the previous year's record, but remain the second highest in history.

The 2009/10 outlook for U.S. wheat is for reduced supplies and use. Total production is projected at 2.026 billion bushels, down 19 percent from last year due to reduced area and lower yields.

HAY STOCKS IMPROVED

Hay stocks in the U.S. on May 1, 2009, totaled 22.1 million tons, up two percent from a year ago. USDA estimated Kentucky hay stocks at 465,000 tons, up from 186,000 on May 1, 2008, and down from 2007's 600,000 tons.

Disappearance from December 1, 2008 to May 1, 2009 totaled 81.6 million tons, compared with 82.5 million tons a year earlier. Roughage consuming animal units (RCAUs) for 2008/09 are down one percent. Hay disappearance per RCAU for the 2008/09 marketing year (May-April) is up 20 percent from the 1.96 tons per RCAU consumed in 2007/08.

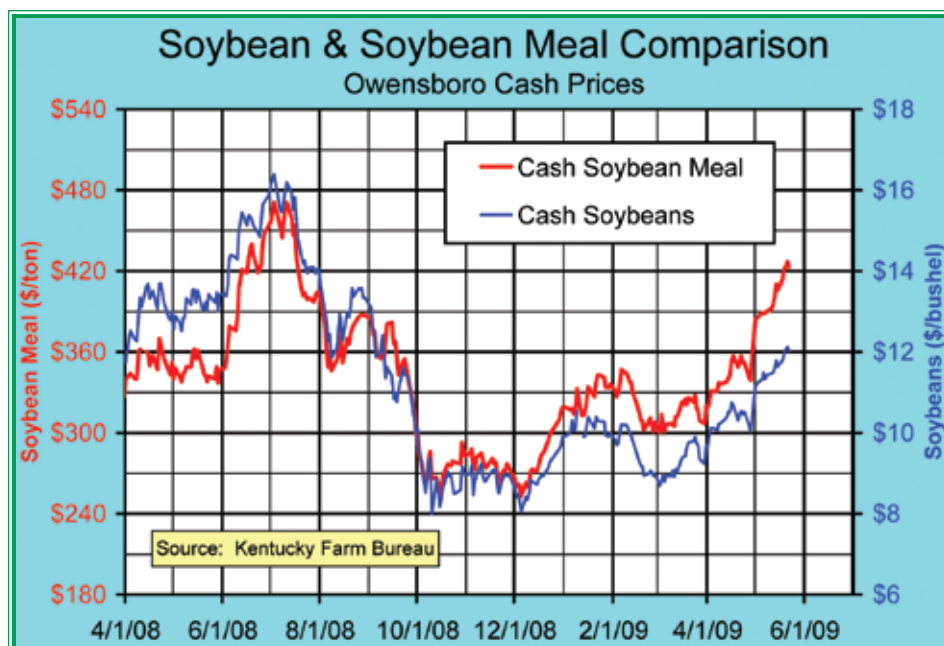
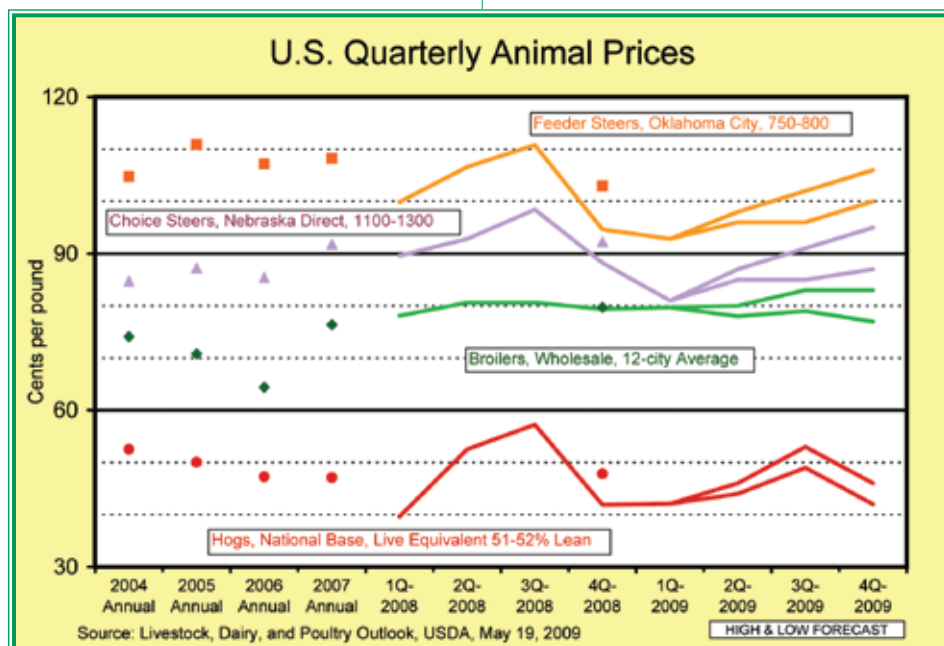
Silage production in 2008 was up five percent. The combined hay and silage supply per RCAU was up seven percent from the previous year.

Given estimated livestock numbers, current pasture and range conditions, and hay stocks, USDA expects prices to remain strong in 2009/10 but be lower than last year's record highs. The simple average of all hay prices from May 2008 to April 2009 was \$149.16 per ton, compared with \$129.33 during the same period a year earlier.

LESS GRAIN TO BE FED THIS YEAR

The 2009/10 feed and residual use for the four feed grains plus feed wheat is projected at 145.9 million metric tons, down 3.53 million from 2008/09. Feed and residual use per grain-consuming animal unit (GCAU) is projected at 1.60 tons in 2009/10, unchanged from 2008/09. Total GCAUs are projected to be down 1.8 percent over the period to

91.5 million because of smaller numbers of cattle and reduced sow farrowings as livestock demand remains weak. For 2010, beef production is expected to be 26.1 billion pounds, down 0.5 billion from 2009. Pork production is projected at 22.6 billion pounds, down from 22.8 billion in 2009. Poultry production is forecast at 42 billion pounds, up from 41.3 billion pounds in 2009.



Agritourism abounds in Kentucky

FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM

Agritourism has become the fastest growing tourism segment in Kentucky, where the industry as a whole ranks as the third largest business. As experiential travel gains in popularity, the variety of agritourism attractions is increasing as travelers seek out changes in scenery and pace and to expose children to nature. A wide array of agritourism attractions are rolling out to welcome visitors to a lively, affordable summer season where memories are created.

Check www.kentuckyfarmsarefun.com, the state's official agritourism web site, to search by type of attraction or location. The site offers listings for stables, working farms, bed and breakfasts, wineries, farmers' markets, orchards, nurseries and many other attractions with descriptions, photos, contacts, directions and operating hours. The site also offers information on creating agricultural itineraries and traveling specialty trails.

Here's a sampling of what's happening at Kentucky's approximately 250 agritourism destinations in coming weeks:

- At Highland Winery in the mountains of Letcher County, you can experience the down-home hospitality of this unique attraction in Seco. Consult the winery's listing on the <http://kentuckywine.com> web site.

- The homemade ice cream at Chaney's Dairy Barn just south of Bowling Green has won national recognition and on weekends is served up with "moovies." Named one of the top 10 "scoop shops" in the country by "Good Morning America," Chaney's is open for tours, and on weekends family-friendly movies are featured using the side of the barn as a screen. Call 270-843-5567 or visit www.chaneys-dairybarn.com to get details on the schedule.

- Sycamore Ridge Farm near Shepherdsville features shearing demonstrations of long eye-lashed alpacas. Located on the banks of the Salt River, Sycamore Ridge offers an up-close-and-personal view of alpacas in various shapes and sizes for visitors to see and

encounter. Visit www.sycamoreridgealpaca-farm.com or call 502-538-2823 for information.

- You can pick fresh berries at Reed Valley Orchard near Paris, a picturesque setting for this palate-pleasing experience. Later in the season, summer's bounty of apples, pears, peaches and nectarines will be ripe for picking, tasting and taking home. Blueberry Jubilee and Pancake Day is set for June 27. Visit www.reedvalleyorchard.com or call 859-987-6480 for information.

- At Historic McNeil's Crossing just outside of Barbourville, you can rent a teepee or tent to camp as you experience a working farm that traces

fascination for you, then Mountain View Farm near Paintsville is the place to go to see zorses, mules, donkeys, and horses (zorses are the offspring of a horse and a zebra). More than 400 animals are on view, and trail riding is encouraged. Owner Paul Stamper said a visit to his farm, which straddles picturesque parts of Morgan, Wolfe and Menifee counties, is like "going to the zoo." Call 606-725-5635 to let him know you're coming.

- Sunflower Sundries close to Mt. Olivet mixes up herbal soap, fruit jams and coarse ground mustard. Take a tour of the soap shop, kitchen and organic gardens at this farm near Blue Licks



THE COUNTRY BARN IN ELKTON, JUST A STONE'S THROW FROM THE JEFFERSON DAVIS MEMORIAL, IS ONE OF KFB'S CERTIFIED ROADSIDE MARKETS. SPRINGTIME MEANS THIS MARKET IS OVERFLOWING WITH BEDDING PLANTS, HANGING BASKETS AND FLOWERS. FRESH VEGETABLES ARE ON TAP FOR LATER IN THE SUMMER.

its roots to the American Revolutionary War era. Besides learning about the cultivation of corn and hay, you can go horseback riding or paddle a canoe on the Cumberland River. Call 606-546-8179 for information or check the farm's listing on kentuckyfarmsarefun.com.

- Evans Orchard and Cider Mill near Georgetown has u-pick strawberries, peaches and vegetables. There's also scrumptious jams, honey, fried apple pies and apple cider donuts. Visit www.evansorchard.com or call 502-863-2255 for information.

- If four-footed animals have more

Battlefield State Resort Park, where you can find overnight accommodations and experience early Kentucky history. Visit <http://sunflowersundries.com> and call 606-763-6827 for an appointment.

Plan ahead and reserve a room at a motel, bed & breakfast or campground within easy traveling distance to your destination. Check www.parks.ky.gov for nearby state parks with lodges and dining facilities, cottages and campgrounds. Visit www.kentuckytourism.com to locate a motel, inn or B&B to make your trip to Kentucky's scenic countryside a relaxing getaway.

OKLAHOMA LAW PROTECTS LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY

Oklahoma enacted a livestock pre-emption bill establishing that the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture is the legal entity in the state responsible for overseeing animal well-being issues in Oklahoma. The measure prevents municipalities, counties, etc., from enacting orders or regulations on animal care that are more restrictive than rules outlined by the department.

Oklahoma Farm Bureau supported the bill. "We don't want an outside group coming into Oklahoma, mandating how we care for livestock," said Mike Spradling, Oklahoma Farm Bureau president. "Our producers have learned through experience and training the proper animal husbandry and they have every intention to care for animals in the best possible way."

Passage of Proposition 2 in California, which outlaws the confinement of certain production livestock, prompted the Oklahoma bill. The Oklahoma legislation is attracting interest in other states as a way to protect agriculture from animal activists attempting to restrict livestock production methods.

FLU SCARE DAMAGING SWINE INDUSTRY

The Congressional Research Service (CRS) released a report pointing out predictions by some analysts that the U.S. pork industry could lose up to \$400 million in the next few months due to lower market prices. Estimates show that 25 percent to 33 percent of U.S. hog producers may be adversely impacted by the swine flu scare.

"Reduced demand for pork could have adverse ripple effects throughout the hog sector, resulting in production changes as producers respond to lower prices," the report states. "Hog producers may choose to curtail planned farrowing and/or decrease their demand for weaned feeder pigs; or they may choose to liquidate or reduce herd sizes, if lower prices result in low/negative meat-to-feed profit margins."

RINSE AND RETURN PROGRAM UNDERWAY

The rinse and return program for pesticide containers is underway for this year. To get the schedule for your county, call the Kentucky Department of Agriculture at 1-800-205-6543.

Containers must be a minimum of 15 gallons and be thoroughly rinsed and allowed to dry. All plumbing, bung assemblies, pumps, meters and any non-

plastic parts should be removed. Call the department at the number listed above with any questions about preparation.

The collection and recycling of crop protection and pesticide containers has exploded from less than a few million plastic containers in the late 1980s to more than 30 million containers a year.

AFBF DISLIKES BEEF AGREEMENT WITH EU

AFBF President Bob Stallman expressed appreciation for the efforts of the U.S. trade representative to expand beef marketing opportunities, but said Farm Bureau is disappointed that the provisional agreement between the United States and the European Union in the beef hormone dispute did not fully open the EU market to U.S. beef.

"Unfortunately, the provisional agreement continues to allow the EU to maintain its restrictions on U.S. beef imports in a manner inconsistent with science-based decision making and world

trade rules," Stallman said. "While the agreement provides new duty-free access for hormone-free beef, it is long past time for the EU to abide by the rules and dispute settlement decisions of the World Trade Organization."

"We strongly support efforts to require our trading partners to comply with international standards and fully open their markets to U.S. beef. The United States must continue to work for the benefit of all U.S. beef producers and support trade through the acceptance and implementation of international trade rules."

FARM CREDIT SERVICES DOING WELL

Farm Credit Services of Mid-America (FCS) announced earnings of \$40.2 million for the first quarter of 2009. Additionally, loan volume, including owned and managed loans, totaled \$13.5 billion at quarter-end, a \$48 million increase from December 31, 2008.

President and Chief Executive Officer Donnie Winters said despite the continued global economic and financial crisis, the association is off to a solid start this year with activity picking up late in the quarter and continuing through the spring. "Farm

Credit staff converted almost \$1 billion in current customer loans to lower interest rates, helping maintain volume levels and saving customers an estimated \$53.7 million in interest expense."

Non-accrual loans were 1.5 percent of the portfolio, up from 1.36 percent from the end of last year but still better than standards. Winters said the overall diversification of FCS's lending portfolio has contributed to the association's ability to deliver net earnings growth at profitable levels.

HOUSE AG CHAIRMAN DEFENDS ETHANOL

House Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin Peterson (D-Minn.) said he will not support any climate change bills and said the Obama administration is unfair to the ethanol industry with its proposals on greenhouse gas reduction. "You're going to kill off the biofuels industry before it even gets started. You are in bed with the oil industry," Peterson told Environmental Protection Agency and USDA officials at a House Agriculture subcommittee hearing on ethanol's impact

on land use and greenhouse gases.

The proposed methods to gauge greenhouse gas emissions, part of EPA's implementation of a 2007 energy law, are based on "ideology" and aren't reliable enough to craft policy, Peterson said.

An initial EPA review found that certain methods of corn-based ethanol production don't meet a requirement to emit 20 percent less greenhouse gas than gasoline.

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