

# Cumberland County

## Agriculture and Natural Resource Newsletter



### UPCOMING PROGRAMS

- **Community Health Fair:** April 1st, 9:00am–Noon CT at the Burkesville Methodist Church
- **Floral Design:** April 1st, 10:00am CT at the Cumberland County Extension Office
  - Registration required – limited to 15 participants
- **Beekeepers Meeting:** April 8th, 5:00pm CT at the Cumberland County Extension Office
  - Jonathan Shepherd with KY Farm Business Management will be presenting
- **Sheep and Goat Boot Camp:** April 17th, 5:00pm CT at the Cumberland County Extension Office
  - Registration required
- **Cumberland County Gardeners Meeting:** April 24th, 10:00am CT at the Cumberland County Extension Office
  - Matt Springer will be presenting about snakes and wildlife
- **Living with Alpha-Gal Syndrome:** May 29th, 2025, 6:00-7:30pm at the Cumberland County Extension Office
- **Rinse N Return:** The Rinse N Return Program drop off will be on September 2, 2025 at the Cumberland County Extension office from 9am-11am Central time.

Cumberland County  
Cooperative Extension Service  
90 Smith Grove Rd.  
Burkesville, KY 42717  
(270) 433-7700  
Website: [cumberland.ca.uky.edu](http://cumberland.ca.uky.edu)

Chelsey Anderson,



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Resources  
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### In this newsletter you can expect:

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Upcoming Programs

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Preparing for Severe  
Weather

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Strategies for Managing  
the Spring Flush

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Winning the War on  
Weeds

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BQCA Certification

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## Elderberries Survey

To gauge the interest in the emerging crop elderberries, please complete the survey below by scanning the QR code or visiting the link. The survey asks if you may be interested in learning more about the crop and to be notified of upcoming trainings.

Link to survey:

[https://uky.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_3L5ohwPd8wLcsBO](https://uky.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3L5ohwPd8wLcsBO)

SCAN ME



 Cooperative  
Extension Service  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

**May 29th, 2025**

**6:00 pm – 7:30 pm CDT**

**at the Cumberland County Extension Office**  
90 Smith Grove Rd., Burkesville, KY 42717

**TO REGISTER:**

Cumberland County Extension Office

**(270) 433-7700**

# LIVING WITH ALPHA-GAL SYNDROME

This session will cover the basics of AGS, tick bite prevention, and diet/lifestyle management in response to the condition.

*An Equal Opportunity Organization.*

# Preparing for Severe Weather: What You Need to Know

By Tony Edwards – National Weather Service Charleston, WV

In parts of the Deep South, the risk of severe thunderstorms persists throughout the winter months. For us here in the Bluegrass State, however, we're quickly approaching a time when thunderstorms become both more frequent and more intense. As winter storms make way for spring, severe weather—including damaging winds, hail, and even tornadoes—becomes the primary concern.

As I write this article in mid-March, much of the Bluegrass State is already facing the threat of severe weather, a common occurrence for this time of year. Data from the National Weather Service's Storm Prediction Center reveals that the likelihood of severe weather increases as March progresses, peaking in mid-June at around 4%. This means, based on historical data alone, residents of Kentucky have a 4% chance of experiencing damaging winds, hail larger than quarters, or a tornado within 25 miles of their home in the middle of June! The risk then significantly decreases by mid-September.

Given this, now is the time to start preparing for the upcoming severe weather season. The first step is simple: be aware that severe weather is a real possibility. Make checking your local forecast part of your daily routine to stay informed and prepared.

Did You Know? The National Weather Service (NWS) offices that serve Kentucky offer a 24-hour recorded weather forecast, and in many cases, you can even speak to a live person if you have questions about the forecast. Contact

your local NWS office to learn more!

## Preparing for Severe Weather

When severe weather is in the forecast, it's essential to take action ahead of time. Start by ensuring you have access to emergency supplies. This is particularly important if you live in an area prone to flooding and might need to evacuate on short notice.

Make sure you know where your safe spaces are. In most cases, this is the lowest floor of your house—preferably a basement. If you don't have a basement, an interior room with no windows and doors will suffice. If you own livestock, consider moving them to a protected area, especially if hail is in the forecast.

## Stay Informed on Severe Weather Days

When severe weather is expected, it's crucial to stay vigilant. Be prepared to adjust outdoor plans if necessary and remain alert to weather updates.

Did You Know? NOAA Weather Radios are specialized devices designed to broadcast weather information and activate alarms when severe weather alerts are issued. Many models run on battery or solar power and do not include an AM/FM radio. You're likely near a transmitter, making this a reliable option to stay updated. Check out these handy radios at your local store to keep your home prepared.

## Understanding Watches and Warnings

- Severe Thunderstorm and Tornado Watches: Issued when conditions are

favorable for severe weather or tornadoes in the near future.

- Severe Thunderstorm and Tornado Warnings: Issued when severe weather or tornadoes are occurring or imminent. This is when you need to act fast!

When a warning is issued, take shelter immediately. You may only have seconds to respond, so knowing what to do and where to go is essential.

**SEVERE WEATHER HAZARDS**

**TORNADO**  
Take shelter immediately in a sturdy structure

**LARGE HAIL**  
Move indoors away from windows

**SEVERE WIND**  
Move indoors away from windows

**FLOODING**  
Avoid rising creeks and water covered roads

**LIGHTNING**  
Move indoors if you hear thunder

Over 280 fatalities occur each year in the U.S. from thunderstorm related hazards.

[weather.gov/safety](https://weather.gov/safety)





# Strategies for Managing the Spring Flush

Chris D. Deutsch, University of Kentucky Research and Education Center at Princeton

In March and April grass growth in the Commonwealth's pastures goes from 0 to 60 mph in just a few short weeks. We often find ourselves impatiently waiting for grass to start growing and then just a few short weeks later wondering what we are going to do with it all! The following suggestions can help you to optimize spring grass growth and utilization.

- Implement rotational grazing. To fully utilize the spring flush of pasture growth YOU must be in control of grazing. In a continuous grazing system, the cows are in charge. By utilizing rotational stocking, you start to make the decisions. Implementing a rotational stocking system may be as simple as closing some gates or stringing up some polywire.
- Feed a little hay in late winter and early spring. It is tempting to just let cattle roam and pick pastures for early grass growth, but this can set pastures back and reduce overall dry matter production. It is important to restrict cattle to one area, feed a little hay, and allow pastures to accumulate 4 to 5" of growth before starting to graze.
- Start grazing at 4 to 5" of growth. Another common mistake that graziers make is waiting too long to start grazing. If you wait until the first paddock is ready to graze, 8-10" of growth, by the time you reach the last paddock it will be out of control. Starting a little bit early allows you to establish a "grazing wedge" (Figure 1).
- Rotate animals rapidly. It is important to realize that grazing pastures closely and repeatedly as they initiate

growth in early spring can reduce production for the entire season. Therefore, it is important to keep animals moving rapidly through the system. The general rule is that if grass is growing rapidly then your rotation should be rapid. This will allow you to stay ahead of the grass by topping it off and keeping it in a vegetative state.

- Do not apply spring nitrogen. Applying nitrogen in the spring will make the problem of too much grass at once even worse. In many cases you are better off applying nitrogen in late summer or early fall to stimulate growth for winter stockpiling.
- Remove most productive paddocks from rotation and harvest for hay. Graze all paddocks until the pasture growth is just about to get away from you and then remove those productive paddocks from your rotation and allow them to accumulate growth for hay or baleage harvest.
- Increase stocking rate in the spring. An alternative to harvesting excess forage as hay or baleage is to increase your stocking rate by adding more animal units in the spring and then decreasing animal numbers as plant growth slows due to higher temperature during the summer months. While this is a viable approach, it is not practical on smaller or part-time operations.
- Even out seasonal distribution of forage by adding warm-season grasses. Adding a well-adapted warm-season grass that produces most of its growth in July and August would allow you to concentrate grazing on your

cool-season paddocks during periods of rapid growth (spring flush). After cool-season grass growth slows in late spring and early summer, animals can be shifted in the warm-season paddocks for summer grazing.

- Bush-hog out of control pastures. The benefits of clipping include maintaining pastures in a vegetative state, encouraging regrowth, and controlling weeds. Clipping pastures costs money, so make sure that the primary reason for bush-hogging is pasture management, not aesthetics.
- Stockpile out of control pastures for summer grazing. Although forage quality decreases as the plant matures, the quality of spring stockpiled pasture is sufficient for dry cows and in some cases can result in reasonable gains on growing animals during the summer months. This is especially true if using novel endophyte tall fescue and the pastures were clipped at the early boot stage to promote vegetative regrowth. This could be a cost-effective and simple way to provide additional grazing during the summer months.

Managing spring grass can be challenging. It is important to find that "sweet spot" for starting to graze, not too early and not too late! Hopefully one or more of the above tips will help you optimize your spring grass!

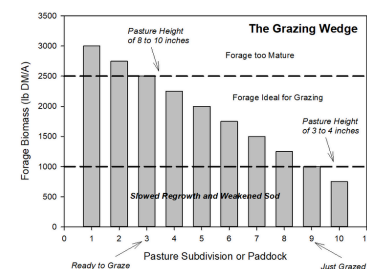


Figure 1. The "grazing wedge" simply refers to having pasture subdivisions or paddocks at varying stages of regrowth from just grazed to ready to graze.



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# Winning the war on weeds: Why Spring preemergence herbicides are beneficial

*Source: Kenneth Clayton, plant and soil sciences extension associate*

Spring is here, and you might be itching to give your lawn a little TLC. While many people think “it’s spring, better grab the fertilizer,” the truth is that the very best time to boost lawn health is actually in the fall. That’s when conditions are prime for the grass to build strong roots. However, one of the most important (and often overlooked) spring lawn care practices is applying a preemergence herbicide.

If you want a thick, healthy lawn this summer, stop weeds before they even get started. If you wait until you can see them sprouting up, you’re already fighting an uphill battle. Postemergence herbicides, which you spray onto actively growing weeds later, can be more expensive and less effective. By applying a preemergence herbicide now, you’ll knock out those weed seeds before they even sprout, saving you time, energy and money down the road.

The best time to apply is when the soil temperature at a two-inch depth averages between 50-55°F for about five consecutive days. You can check soil temperatures online through resources like [Kentucky Mesonet](#), or use a simple soil thermometer. If you’re not into checking soil temps, another trick is to watch for forsythia blooms. When those bright yellow flowers are in full bloom, it’s usually a good sign that it’s time to apply. In Kentucky, this typically happens in March to early April.

For the best results, many lawn care professionals recommend a two-application approach. The first should be made when soil temperatures indicate it’s time, and the second about six to eight weeks later to extend protection

throughout the season. Always follow the instructions on the herbicide label to ensure you don’t exceed the recommended annual use rate.

While a preemergence herbicide is an excellent tool for preventing weeds, it’s not a magic fix. Another great way to keep weeds at bay is by maintaining a thick, healthy lawn that naturally shades out any potential invaders. Raising your mower height can be one of the most effective ways to do this, as taller grass helps block sunlight from reaching weed seeds.

Not every lawn will need a preemergence herbicide every year. If your lawn is already thick and weed-free, you may not need to apply one at all. However, if you’ve had issues with grassy weeds in the past or notice bare patches where weeds might take hold, it’s a good investment. If you skipped fertilizing in the fall, you can apply a moderate amount of fertilizer in the spring along with your herbicide. Just be careful not to overdo it, or you might end up feeding the weeds instead.

Taking a preventative approach now will save you time, money, and frustration later in the season. By applying a preemergence herbicide at the right time and focusing on overall lawn health, you’ll be setting yourself up for a lush, weed-free lawn all summer long.

More information can be found at the University of Kentucky Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment publication here: <https://publications.ca.uky.edu/files/AGR272.pdf>.

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# The right time is **now.** The right way is **BQCA.**

Thanks to the partnership between Kentucky Beef Network and University of Kentucky  
get **FREE BQCA CERTIFICATION** online or through your county  
extension office **April 1st** through **April 30th, 2025.**



Scan the QR Code or visit the link below to  
complete your BQCA certification online!

<https://www.kybeefnetwork.com/beef-quality--care-assurance-bqca1.html>

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