

## Agriculture and Natural Resources Newsletter



Washington County  
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**ON AIR**

**Listen for weekly tips on 100.9**

### Notes from the Agent

I am thankful to be back in the office and getting back into the swing of programming after the holiday break and the crazy weather we have had this past month! If you are thinking about applying for the cost-share program now is a great time to get a jump start on completing your educational requirement. Be sure to stay up to date on the latest programs by checking out the **IMPORTANT DATES** below.

I think it's safe to say that we have made up for the lack of rain this fall! Along with the rain we have dealt with a tremendous amount of mud. Mud requires livestock to use more energy throughout the day which results in the loss of average daily gains. To combat mud is no easy feat. It takes time and money which most producers allocate elsewhere. However, there are steps farmers can take to minimize mud around their farms. Interested in learning more? Check out the University of Kentucky publication "Appropriate All Weather Surfaces for Livestock".



# IMPORTANT DATES

## February

- 1st: UK Winter Wheat Meeting, Hopkinsville
- 8th: KY Alfalfa and Stored Forages Conference, Bowling Green
- 8th: Kentucky Crop Health Conference, Bowling Green
- 14th - 17th: National Farm Machinery Show
- 16th-17th: Eastern Kentucky Farmers Conference, Morehead
- 27th-28th: Kentucky Dairy Partners Meeting, Bowling Green
- 29th: Cattlemen's Quarterly Meeting

## March

- 1st-3rd: Kentucky Beef Expo, Louisville
- 4th: Master Cattlemen, Lebanon
- 5th: BQCA Trainings
- 20th: Kentucky Local Food Systems Summit, Lexington
- 23rd: Washington County Livestock Judging Contest
- 25th: Master Cattlemen, Springfield

# WEBINARS

## UK Beef Management Webinar Series

Registration is necessary, please send an email to [dbullock@uky.edu](mailto:dbullock@uky.edu) with Beef Webinar in the subject line and your name and county in the message. You will receive the direct link with a password the morning of each meeting. Each session will be recorded and posted for later viewing.

All meeting times are 8:00pm ET/7:00pm CT.

**February 13, 2024**

What's the Cost of a Cheap Mineral – Katie VanValin, Assistant Extension Professor,  
University of Kentucky

# Hard surfaces can help reduce mud

Steve Higgins, director of environmental compliance for the Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station

If you have been farming in Kentucky for any length of time, you know the winter weather can make your farm quite muddy. 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 on areas of your farm 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.

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.

The thickness of the pad will depend on the type of livestock you have, stocking density and whether the area also gets a lot of equipment traffic. Areas with livestock traffic require a pad that is at least 4 inches thick placed on several inches of gravel. Trucks, tractors and other heavy equipment need concrete pads at least 5 to 6 inches thick.

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.

Concrete pads need to have a solid foundation to be successful. Prepare the site by removing topsoil until you reach soil that is easily compacted and make sure the area is level. Use at least 6 inches of compacted dense grade aggregate to provide a solid base for a concrete pad. Inadequate foundation preparation can cause a concrete pad to fail or freeze or damage water pipes.

Horse owners should similarly prepare their sites but should construct their pads using geotextile fabrics followed by 6-inch layer of crushed limestone and finished with 2-to-3 inches of dense grade aggregate. Create a more durable surface by compacting the dense grade aggregate using a small, smooth-drum roller like those used for asphalt projects.

More information about installing hard surfaces on your farm is available in the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service publications AEN 115: Appropriate all-weather surfaces for livestock and ID-164: High traffic area pads for horses. They are available online or you can get a hard copy from the Extension office.



# 2024 EASTERN KENTUCKY FARMER CONFERENCE

February 16-17

Morehead Conference Center



Join us for a two-day conference focused on a variety of farm topics, including high tunnels, small ruminants, beekeeping, farm funding, marketing, and more!

**REGISTRATION IS OPEN  
UNTIL JANUARY 31**

**REGISTRATION IS \$45**



[tinyurl.com/2024EKFC](https://tinyurl.com/2024EKFC)



Day of registration will be available at 12:30 pm Friday and 8:30 am Saturday, and will accept cash, check, or credit card.



KENTUCKY STATE  
UNIVERSITY

Cooperative Extension Program



# THIRD THURSDAY THING

Every third Thursday of the month,  
January through November, at 10 a.m. ET

~~January 18: Resources and Funding for Farmers~~

**February 15:** Organic Agriculture

**March 21:** Farmers Markets and Local Foods

**April 18:** Cattle and Poultry

**May 16:** Aquaculture

**June 20:** Agriculture Technology | Juneteenth Celebration

**July 18:** Field Day

**August 15:** Forestry

**September 19:** Pawpaw

**October 17:** Small Ruminants

**November 21:** Small, Limited-Resource, Minority Farmers Conference

Join us in person:

Harold R. Benson Research and Demonstration Farm

1525 Mills Lane

Frankfort, KY 40601

Recordings will be available at [youtube.com/kysuag](https://youtube.com/kysuag)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

# WASHINGTON COUNTY CATTLEMEN'S QUARTERLY MEETING FEBRUARY 29TH 6:30 PM



## *Managing Weeds in Pasture Fields*

**JD Green**, University of Kentucky Weed Science Extension Specialist, will be joining us to discuss common weeds and treatment methods. Join us to learn the best plan of action for treating weeds before they appear in your fields!

Washington County Extension Office  
245 Corporate Dr  
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**Call (859)336-7741 to register for a meal.**

 Cooperative  
Extension Service

WASHINGTON  
COUNTY  
  
**CATTLEMEN'S**  
ASSOCIATION



**BEEF QUALITY AND CARE  
ASSURANCE TRAININGS**

**March 5th**

**9:00 AM or 6:00 PM**

**Washington County Extension Office  
245 Corporate Dr  
Springfield, KY 40069**

**BQCA Certification is REQUIRED for purchases in  
the Large Animal Area of the Cost-Share Program.**

**BQCA Training does NOT count for an educational  
credit. You will need to complete your BQCA  
certification and an additional educational course.**

**Call (859)336-7741 to register.**

# BEEF AND BROCCOLI STUFFED POTATOES

## Ingredients

- 4 large potatoes, baked
- 8 ounces lean ground beef
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 10-ounce package frozen chopped broccoli
- 1 cup low-fat shredded cheddar cheese

## Directions:

1. In a skillet, cook ground beef over medium heat, breaking up beef until coarsely chopped; cook until no pink remains.
2. Drain fat off browned beef.
3. Return ground beef to skillet; add onion powder, garlic and frozen broccoli.
4. Cover and cook beef and broccoli mixture 8-10 minutes over medium heat.
5. Sprinkle cheese over mixture; cover pan until cheese melts.
6. To serve, place one baked potato on each plate; cut potatoes widely open.
7. Top each potato with one-fourth of the beef broccoli mixture.
8. Serve immediately.



## AT THE EXTENSION OFFICE

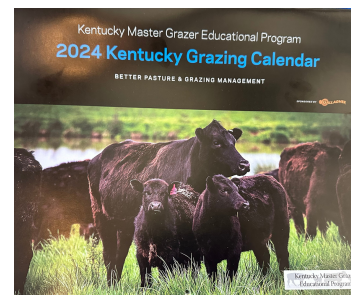
### Cooperative Extension Service

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taylor.graves@uky.edu

*Taylor Graves*

## 2024 CALENDARS AVAILABLE AT THE OFFICE

- Beef IRM
- Kentucky Sheep and Goat
- Kentucky Grazing



We also have Farm Record Books available for \$5