

AG UPDATE

for Ag and Natural Resources



Tom Miller, Ballard County Ext. Agent

Bale Grazing: A Winter Feeding Strategy That Works

Source: Greg Halich, Extension professor in agricultural economics

The winter feeding method known as bale grazing can reduce tractor use by more than 50%, keep cattle clean and out of mud and improve pasture fertility without buying fertilizer. This method will also allow livestock producers to take a worry-free winter vacation.

Many believe these benefits sound too good to be true, but they have been consistently observed on nearly 100 farms across five states over the past decade. With a small investment in portable fencing and a shift in winter management, bale grazing can transform how you feed cattle.

What is bale grazing?

Instead of delivering hay to livestock as needed, one to three months of winter hay



is placed on pasture in large batches. This is typically done in late fall or early winter, when drier ground conditions allow for tractor traffic. Bales are sectioned off by temporary electric fencing, and cattle gain access to new bales as you move the fence every few days, much like rotational grazing. When hay rings are used, they're simply rolled to the next set of bales.

Pugging damage to the soil is minimized because the cattle spend most of their time near the current set of bales. The sod they were just moved to hasn't had any animal impact for months, and that pasture will only be bale-grazed once that winter.

The biggest mindset shift? Instead of moving hay to the cattle all winter, you will be moving your cattle to

the hay. Instead of you doing the bulk of the winter feeding work, your cattle will do the bulk of the work for you.

What are the benefits of bale grazing?

Better fertility, less work. Bale grazing spreads nutrients across the pasture naturally. Many farms have seen dramatic improvements in pasture production within two to four winters. Reduced tractor use.

Hay is distributed in large batches during dry weather, eliminating the need to drive a tractor through wet winter fields. Most farms see immediate reductions in labor and fuel use, with 50% or more time savings by year two or three as confidence grows in setting out more hay at once.

Cleaner, healthier cattle. Cattle stay cleaner because they're moved onto fresh sod every few days rather than standing in accumulated mud near a single hay-feeding area. Cleaner coats mean better insulation and less energy spent navigating muddy ground.

Easier winter travel. Because you only need to move a portable fence every few days — and can even preset

moves — it's far easier to leave the farm for short periods. Helpers don't need to operate equipment; they only need to move portable fencing.

What are the challenges of bale grazing?

The biggest hurdles are planning and cattle training. You'll need to estimate winter hay needs, choose suitable pastures and plan bale layout before winter begins. Cattle must also be comfortable with temporary electric fencing. Training is simple but essential — especially when numerous bales sit behind a single crossfence. Using two fences (current and next move) adds security. And as always, avoid letting cattle get hungry enough to test a fence.

Kentucky's Spring Forest Fire Hazard Season Underway

By Laurna Todd
KPI Writer

Emergency Management officials across Kentucky are reminding residents that the Spring Forest Fire Hazard Season runs from February 15 through April 30, bringing restrictions

on outdoor burning to help prevent wildfires and protect lives, property, and first responders.

State law prohibits burning within 150 feet of woodland or brushland between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. Where local regulations allow, natural vege-

tation such as leaves, brush, and tree limbs may be burned only between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m., when winds are typically calmer and humidity is higher. Residents should burn only when conditions are safe, with calm air and adequate moisture to prevent flames

from spreading.

Burning garbage, plastics, tires, treated wood, or other household waste is illegal at any time. Any permitted fire must be kept small, constantly attended, and fully extinguished before leaving the area. Officials also warn

that recent snow and ice brought down limbs and debris that can become dry fuel for wildfires as temperatures rise. Residents are encouraged to review local ordinances and consult air quality or waste management agencies before conducting out-

door burning.

Emergency officials stress a simple but critical reminder: never leave a fire unattended. Careful adherence to seasonal burn restrictions helps protect communities across the Commonwealth.

FARM MACHINERY AUCTION

Saturday, February 21st, 2026 @ 10:00 AM

901 State Hwy 1181 • Bardwell, KY 42023

Warren & Diane Dunn Retirement Auction

HELD ONSITE & ONLINE!

TRACTORS

1998 John Deere 8300 Tractor: Rear Tires: Michelin 480/80R46 Duals • Front Tires: Firestone 420/90R30 • Features: Quick Hitch, (10) Front Weights • Ag Leader Auto Steer • SN# RW8300P022752 • Hours: 8,863

2012 Challenger MT655D Tractor: Model: MT655D • Type: K30G22KR313K • SN#: B319045 • Hours: 4,852 • Monitor: Ag Leader Integra • Hydraulics: 4 Remotes • Add'l Equipment: Front Weights Included

Challenger MT675D Tractor: Model: MT675D • SN#: Z08J00964 • Rear Tires: Goodyear 480/80R50 Duals • Front Tires: 420/85R34 • Guidance: Ag Leader Guidance • Weights: (12) Front Weights • Hours: 5,658

HARVESTING EQUIPMENT

2011 Case IH 8120 Axial-Flow Combine: Drive: 2-Speed, 4WD • Monitor: Pro 700 • Front Tires: Dual 20.8R42 • Rear Tires: 28L26R • SN#: 380/90R46 • Engine Hours: 4 784 • Separator Hours: 3,457

2010 Drago 12-Row Corn Head: Rows: 12 • Row Spacing: 20" • Model: S12 • Compatibility: Case IH Flagship • SN#: NMA272410

2010 Case IH / MacDon 2162 Header: Width: 35 ft • SN#: 2033965

PLANTING EQUIPMENT

Case IH 1200 Pivot Planter: Rows: 24 • Row Spacing: 20" • Type: Pivot Planter • SN#: CBJ036594

APPLICATION & FERTILIZER EQUIPMENT

2008 John Deere 4730 Self-Propelled Sprayer: Hours: 4,261 • Tires: 380/90R46 • Booms: 90 ft • Nozzle Spacing: 15" • Plumbing: Stainless Piping • Tank Capacity: 800 Gallon • Fill: 3" Fill • Features: Section Control, Boom Height Control, Ride Control • SN#: 4730X004649

DMI 15-Shank Nutri-Placer Anhydrous Applicator: Shanks: 15 • Equipped With: Yetter Shanks • Controls: Raven Controls

Tyler 6-Ton Fertilizer Spreader: Capacity: 6 Ton • Controls: Hydraulic Controls

H&S Model 270 Manure Spreader: Model: 270 • Features: Slop Gate

TILLAGE EQUIPMENT

Great Plains Ultra-Till: Model: UT3030 • Width: 30 ft • Equipped With: Gandy Orbit Air • Hydraulics: Yes

McFarlane Dura-Reel: Working Width: 35 ft • Models: RD-4100 / RD-4135-RB • SN#: 18484

Reynolds 8CF Dirtpan: that includes a drawbar that is for a 60 series John Deere tractor. SN#: 19905

GRAIN HANDLING & CONVEYANCE

Killbros 1800 Grain Cart: Features: Roll Tarp Conveyor • Features: Scales, Roll Top • SN#: 062589 • Mounted On: 2-Axle Trailer • Trailer SN: 220306488

Brandt Grain Belt Conveyor: Model: 1585 • SN#: 92523

Kinze 450 Conveyor: Model: 450 • Conveyor Type: Belt Conveyor

TRAILERS & TRANSPORT

1999 Merritt Hopper Trailer: Length: 40 ft • Model: 41X96X68X25X2AXMGS • ID#: 1MT2P412IYH013278 • Suspension: Air Ride • Tires: 11R24.5 • Tarp: Electric EZ-Trail 672 Header Trailer: Includes: (6) Stock Stoppers

Green Unverferth Header Wagon: Length: 42 ft

Rawhide Company, Inc. Cattle Gooseneck: Length: 24 ft • Type: Cattle Gooseneck Trailer

Gooseneck Hay Hauler: Length: 16 ft • Construction: Homemade • Capacity: Approx. 6 Round Bales

40 ft Trailmobile Water Trailer: Trailer Number: 763111 • Model: P3IT-OSAH • Tank Setup: (3) - 1,600 Gallon Tanks • (2) Mixing Tanks • Pump: Honda Pump

2002 Great Dane Box Trailer: Length: 53 ft • Axle: Single Axle • Use: Storage Only • Title: No Title Available

TRACTORS

2010 New Holland T8040 Tractor 3,003 original hours. Features SuperSteer front axle, all-new front duals 480/70/R34, rear duals 480/80/R50, 18-speed transmission with 5-speed creeper, four rear remotes, guidance, quick hitch, and Pro 700 monitor.

TRACTOR WAS BOUGHT NEW.

2009 John Deere 6430 Premium Tractor (Consigned by Neighbor) 8983 hours, equipped with 16-speed transmission, left-hand reverse, three remotes, 540/1000 PTO, front tires 380/85R24, rear tires 480/85R34, and 673 loader with joystick self-leveling loader. SN#: L06430H561729

Case IH 7250 MFWD (Local Consignment) 4,230 hours, 3 Remotes, Front Tires 420/85/R30, Back Tires 520/85/R42 with Duals, Quick Hitch, Front Fenders, 13 Front Weights

COMBINE

2020 John Deere 5780 Combine 945.5 separator hours and 1,325 engine hours, equipped with ProDrive transmission, chopper, PowerCast tailboard, Contour Master, and power fold extension. Equipped with 650/85R38 front dual tires and 750/65R26 rear tires. SN#: 1H05780SELT810615

HEADERS & HEADER SUPPORT

2019 MacDon FD140 FlexDraper Header, 40 ft 40-ft cutting width and John Deere S-Series hookups. SN#: 352251-19

Horst 4-Wheel Steer Header Cart, 45 ft Rated for headers up to 45 ft, equipped with like-new 14-ply tires. SN#: 1302515

2014 John Deere 618C Corn Head, 18 Row, 20-inch Spacing (30 ft) Equipped with knife rollers and new paint. SN#: 1H00618CPEX765223

Unverferth Header Transport, 30 ft SN#: A45060227

Crop Sweeper for 12-Row Corn Head Aluminum 30ft wide crop sweeper down corn attachment designed for a 12-row corn head.

PLANTING & APPLICATION EQUIPMENT

Kinze 3700 Planter, 24 Row, 20-inch Spacing Precision Corn Meters, Kinze brush meters, 48-cell and 60-cell bean plates, canola plates, no-till setup with cast closing wheels, and KPM II monitor. SN#: 750925

Great Plains Precision Seeding System Configured for 30-ft width with 7½-inch spacing; includes wheat and soybean plates. Model: 3N3010P

Schaben Applicator / Side Dresser, 23 Row, 20-inch - Bought New Equipped with Raven controls, stainless steel hydraulic pump, 1,500-gallon tank, and Goodyear 380/90R46 tires. SN#: 1093

GRAIN CARTS & HANDLING

Unverferth 1310 Grain Cart Equipped with roll tarp, Firestone 1250/45-32 tires, and hydraulic-adjust spout. SN#: B29990111

M&W 750 Grain Cart With Shur-Lok Roll Tarp, 800/65/32 Tires, Auger With 2-ft Extension, And 1000 Pto, Auger tube Re-Lined and Auger Re-Flighted.

TILLAGE EQUIPMENT

2014 Kelly Diamond Harrow, 45 ft SN#: 11505

Unverferth 1225 Rolling Harrow, 32.5 ft

Unverferth 1225 Rolling Harrow, 25 ft

Phoenix H11 Rolling Harrow, 25 ft 25-ft working width; good pasture renovator.

DMI Eco-Tiger 730 Ripper Equipped w/hydraulic-adjust coulters & 7 shanks

DMI 2500 7-Shank No-Till Ripper With gauge wheels.

Amco Offset Disc, 14 ft 14-ft working width with 21-inch blades.

TRUCK, TRAILERS & BED

2003 International 9200I Day Cab Truck Detroit Diesel Series 60 (430 HP), 10-speed transmission, air ride, like-new 11R22.5 rubber, 541,882 original miles. VIN: 2HSCAMR93C051305

2006 Single Hopper Bottom Trailer, 30 ft Shur-Lok tarp, air-operated clam doors, aluminum wheels, like-new General 11R22.5 tires. VIN: 1W9H30296M011024

1998 Single Hopper Bottom Trailer, 28.5 ft Like-new General 11R22.5 tires, Shur-Lok tarp, air doors, aluminum wheels.

Omaha Standard Truck Bed - 12 ft

SUPPORT EQUIPMENT & PARTS

2013 Palmer Fiberglass Fertilizer Tank, 20,000 Gallons Measures 12 ft x 24 ft. Tank will be empty. SN#: G24769

6,000-Gallon Fuel Tank with Pump Equipped with 35-GPM Bluffton pump and 1-inch hose.

2 - 3,200-Bushel Hopper Bottom Grain Bins 1 w/unloading Auger and 1 w/aeration tube

Kelley Diamond Parts

DMI 2500 7 New Shanks

DMI Eco-Tiger 730 Ripper Ripper points new

Small Wire Concaves for S-Series Combine

1,000-Gallon Aluminum Tank on Skid

Miscellaneous Kinze Parts

HELD ONSITE & ONLINE!

TERMS & CONDITIONS - BUYER'S PREMIUM: A 10% Buyer's Premium will be added to all final bids and included in the total purchase price. Online purchases are subject to an 11% Buyer's Premium. CONDITION OF SALE: All property is sold AS IS, WHERE IS, with ALL SALES FINAL. Property is available for public inspection, and bidders are solely responsible for determining condition, age, authenticity, and value. Descriptions are provided for convenience only and are not guaranteed. Odometer and hour meter readings reflect inspection-day readings and are not warranted. No warranties, express or implied, including merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose, are made. Buyer is the sole judge of value. PAYMENT TERMS: Payment is due day of sale by cash, cashier's check, personal check, or corporate check. Wire transfers must be received within 48 hours; buyer is responsible for a \$25 wire fee. No items will be released until payment is made in full. Wire instructions and invoices will be emailed following the auction. A bank letter of credit is required for unknown buyers. Announcements made at the auction podium take precedence over all printed or prior statements.

FARM MACHINERY AUCTION

Thursday, February 26th, 2026 @ 10:00 AM

Ronald Smith Farms Retirement Auction

28 Vann Pitt Road • Benton, KY 42025

HELD ONSITE & ONLINE!

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ESTATES - WATERFRONT

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