THE Farmer's Pride

HOMETOWN NEWS FOR KENTUCKY'S FARM COMMUNITY JUNE 4, 2020 1-800-489-9454

File photo

ADB commits $1 million to help meat processors expand

For decades, Kentucky has proudly claimed to be the largest beef cattle producing state east of the Mississippi, but bragging rights had to stop where processing began.

Kentucky beef cattle have historically been finished in other states, and beef cuts in grocery meat cases across the commonwealth could come from almost anywhere.

Following the tobacco buyout in 2005, Kentucky's farming enterprises looked for ways to diversify, and a new emphasis was put on providing fresh cuts of beef, pork, goat, lamb, sheep and poultry as well as dairy products directly from the farmer to the consumer.

Today, there are more than two dozen USDA inspected processors in Kentucky, many of which run at capacity or are known to stay booked two months in advance.

Recently, the coronavirus has taken a toll on large meat processors, resulting in a meat shortage in retail stores and a new desire by consumers to buy locally produced foods. Livestock producers have been hit with plummeting prices and processing bottlenecks, even as prices in retails stores continued to dramatically increase.

On May 15, the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board took a bold step to help expand Kentucky's meat processing opportunities and committed $1 million to help existing processors expand their operations. Agriculture Commissioner Ryan Quarles chaired that meeting.

"The limitation on processing capacity was an issue well before COVID-19, but it was just magnified as bottlenecks from the processors created a sharp increase in demand in not just meat but locally processed foods," said Quarles. "We are trying to use this momentum, in the short run, to help out Kentucky's meat processing capacity in the long run."

The Meat Processing Investment Program is broken down

SEE **THREE,** PAGE **3**

Local processing facilities shine during pandemic

The coronavirus pandemic has affected the supply chain for goods across the country and empty meat cases have made national headlines.

Consumers stocked their freezers and pantries at the same time a bottleneck in meat processing facilities worsened, partly because some processors temporarily closed due to the virus.

Those troubles led some consumers and some livestock producers in search of local markets, where consumers can buy fresh meats produced by local farmers.

Local processing plants across the commonwealth have reaped the benefit at a time when they, too, must tread carefully to prevent COVID-19 from impacting their business.

"All of our employees are still reporting to work but having to take the extra precautions to ensure their safety by wearing masks," said Allison Bonne Porteus, co-owner of Boone's Butcher Shop, in Bardstown.

Before closures were put in place to reduce the spread of the coronavirus, Boone's was backed up until June. As a precautionary measure, they took steps that impacted their marketing opportunity.

"We have reduced the amount of animals we are processing, in case we have to shut down for any reason," says Porteus. Fortunately, Boone's Butcher Shop has remained open during the pandemic.

Central Kentucky Meats, located in Liberty, is a USDA-inspected processing facility that has doubled their work since COVID-19 made its strike in the United

SEE **KENTUCKY,** PAGE **2**

a Toast to Dairy

JUNE IS NATIONAL DAIRY MONTH:
Fun Kentucky dairy facts. **16**

INSIDE

EDITORIAL	4	MARKET REPORT	11
OPINION	5	CLASSIFIEDS	14

Kentucky processing facilities stay busy during pandemic

FROM PAGE 1

States.

"In previous times I stayed booked out for three months, now I am booking a year out of processing until next July. This is the busiest we have ever been," said owner Jerome Salyers.

Central Kentucky Meats has also remained open during the pandemic.

Following strict guidelines set by the Centers for Disease Control, they are taking precautionary actions seriously, such as following social distancing guidelines and staggering appointments for pick-up.

Salyers fills meat cases on Thursdays and Fridays and cannot keep them full until the next week. He is optimistic new customers will remain long after the pandemic is over.

"I think people are going to transition to a new lifestyle and it could be like this for two years," Salyers said. Once more people eat fresh meat, it will be hard to transition back to the grocery store style meat. While I do not have the data to back me up, fresh meat just has a different taste."

While the demand is there, Kentucky producers know the struggle of finding a way to get local meats to the consumer. Even when they get cattle to slaughter weight, they often have to hold them since they cannot find processing facilities with appointments open.

A central Kentucky cattle farm, Resting Acres Angus, provides farm to table beef for customers throughout the Bluegrass Region.

"One of our main facilities has reduced the amount of animals they are bringing in to slaughter, therefore we are having to hold the majority of our animals until we can find a facility that is not backed up for four months," said Houston McFarland, manager of Resting Acres says.

McFarland hopes consumers now realize that using local producers and local processing facilities helps their local economy.

"Box beef prices are going up by the day whereas local producers are remaining the same. The percentage of people buying beef from local farmers will be above average than your normal year," he said.

McFarland also believes that new customers for local foods are here to stay, and that is good for Kentucky producers and meat processors.

"This is showing that more people are going to be buying from local producers, thus local processing facilities are going to soar over the next few years," he predicts.

By Abigal Smoot
Pride Summer Intern

27th Casey County Community Spring Consignment Auction

Saturday, June 6, 2020 @ 9AM (EDST)

Information Contact: 606-787-7894
Location: 7 miles south of Liberty on U.S. 127 at KY 910-501 Junction

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FARM MISCELLANEOUS - 5 ton feed bin w/ Auger, 100 Cedar Fence Posts, New Bunk Feeders, cattle panels, gates, corral panels, shoe stocks, tools and all sorts of farm related items.
BUILDING MATERIALS - New and used building materials expected
PORTABLE BUILDINGS - Expecting various rabbit hutches, mini barns, dog houses & more
HORSE & LIVESTOCK - As Always large selection of cattle, sheep, pigs and horses. All horses require negative coggins test and health (CVI) papers.
There will be a vet on premises Sat. morning to issue coggins test & health papers
ABSOLUTELY NO ANIMALS WILL BE ACCEPTED TILL AFTER 2PM FRIDAY!
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TACK & MISCELLANEOUS - New & used tack of all types
HAY & STRAW - Various lots of small square and large round bales!
YARD & GARDEN - Wood Stove like new big enough for a greenhouse and more
NURSERY STOCK & PLANTS - Garden plants, shrubs, trees, flowers, and herbs
HOUSEHOLD - Always a large selection of furniture, kitchen wares, appliances, and small misc items

NO BUYERS PREMIUM!

NO GUNS or LICENSED VEHICLES WILL BE SOLD! PLEASE no dogs or cats. Committee reserves the right to refuse any consignments. Any announcements on sale day take precedence over printed matter. Not responsible for accidents or no shows. Thank you for helping make this sale a success!

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MARKET REPORT: WEEK OF MAY 26, 2020
Mammoth Cave Dairy Auction, Inc.

Cattle: 581 Supply included 25% feeder cattle (9% steers, 80% dairy steers, 6% hiefers, 6% bulls); 46% slaughter cattle (84% cows, 16% bulls); 29% replacement dairy cattle (9% fresh/milking cows, 10% springer heifers, 4% open heifers, 55% baby bull calves, 21% baby heifer calves).
Feeder cattle supply over 600# was 18%.

Steers: Medium and Large 1-2: 881# 112.00. Medium and Large 2-3 480# 119.00.
Dairy Steers: Large 3: 312-335# 89.00-93.00, 370-389# 88.00-91.50, 409# 83.00, 483-498# 78.00-93.00, 563-598# 76.00-86.00, 625# 78.00, 745# 73.00, 790# 84.00, 870# 79.00.
Fresh Milking Cows: (2-4 years old) Approved 1225.00-1250.00, Medium 1050.00-1100.00, Common 700.00-900.00.
Bred Heifers: Common 650.00-725.00.
Springer Heifers: Supreme 1300.00-1350.00, Approved 1175.00, Mediu, 950.00-1075.00, Common 700.00-800.00.
Open Heifers: Supreme 275# 240.00, Approved 425# 335.00 Jersey, Approved 550# 400.00-450.00, Common 625# 375.00.
Bull calves: 29 head 25.00-100.00, 17 head 140.00-300.00 beef cross, 10 head 70.00-130.00 crossbred, 8 head 30.00-70.00 Jersey.
Heifer calves: 12 head 30.00-100.00, 11 head 130.00-230.00 beef cross, 1 head 80.00 Jersey.
Slaughter Cows: Breaker 75-80 percent lean 1490-1805# 56.00-63.00, H.Dr. 1480-1610# 64.00-68.00, L.Dr. 1705# 48.00, Boner 80-85% Lean 1105-1470# 54.00-63.00, H.Dr. 1145-1425# 64.00-73.00, L.Dr. 1110-1555# 44.00-53.00, Lean 85-90 percent lean 760-1090# 44.00-53.00, H.Dr. 875-1080# 54.00-60.00, L.Dr. 790-1125# 35.00-43.00.
Slaughter Bulls: Y.G. 1-2 290-535# 127.00-109.00.

NO SATURDAY SPECIAL AUCTION: June 6, 2020 with Open and Short-Bred Dairy Heifers beginning at 12 noon with the Holstein Steer Sale IMMEDIATLY FOLLOWING the Heifers.

Three-tiered investment approach will help processors expand

FROM PAGE 1

into three levels and provides funding based on the level of expansion planned by the owner of the facility.

In level 1, processors could receive up to $20,000 per facility, with incentives based on the increased number of head of livestock processed. In level 2, up to $37,500 could be paid to reimburse costs for expanding a facility that leads to increased capacity. In level 3, owners could receive up to $250,000 for large-scale expansion.

"This three-tiered investment approach incentivizes our processors to do more with what they have to increase the volume of meat processed in Kentucky," said Warren Beeler, executive director of the Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy, which oversees the fund. "I am very proud of the board's bold action that will help grow an area of our food chain that has been overwhelmed due to the pandemic."

Commissioner Quarles said he has been in contact with Kentucky based meat processors over the past several months as consumers look more toward local options for their food supply.

"We are experiencing an explosion of Kentucky Proud and 'buy local' demand by Kentuckians, many of whom before COVID were not buying local. So that is a positive thing. The pandemic has put an emphasis on supporting Kentucky farmers," Quarles said.

Some processors are now booked through January 2021, Quarles said, "so we want to help increase the kill capacity in-state so that more Kentucky farmers and Kentucky consumers have the ability to participate in 'buy local.'"

Quarles said they have already seen interest from processors to use the Agricultural Development Funds to expand their capacity.

"In the long run we hope the buy local movement for Kentucky Proud is not a fad, but is something that lasts as we fight our way out of this pandemic," he said.

In addition to the new incentives, processors will also have access to low interest loans through the Kentucky Agricultural Finance Corporation and technical assistance through the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture and the Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development.

The board and GOAP staff worked with KCARD and Dr. Gregg Rentfrow, at UK, to develop the new program. While the new program does not address new facilities, the board has made it clear that it would be receptive to helping new facilities as well as existing ones.

"The end goal is to help farmers not be so reliant on out-of-state processors for the marketing of their animals," Quarles said.

Project manager for level 1 and level 3 is Danielle Milbern, who can be reached at 502-782-1771 or danielle.milbern@ky.gov.

Project manager for level 2 is Renee Carrico, who can be reached at 502-782-2719 or renee.carrico@ky.gov.

By Sharon Burton
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Perfect timing for the Kentucky Hunger Initiative

ONE VOICE

Sharon Burton

It's not unusual for an interview with someone to take multiple attempts, and my conversation with Agriculture Commissioner Ryan Quarles last week was no exception. The commissioner is always willing to talk with The Farmer's Pride, but on this particular day he had to stop long enough to take part in an announcement that 48,000 Kentucky Proud beef burgers and 114,000 slices of cheese were being donated to Feeding Kentucky.

The Kentucky Beef Council and The Dairy Alliance teamed up to donate the food during National Beef Burger Day. The beef burgers came from Beef Solution, LLC, which produces Kentucky Cattlemen's Ground Beef, a natural beef product raised by Kentucky farmers. Kroger donated the cheese as part of its Zero Hunger Waste Initiative.

As I talked with the commissioner, I thought about the timeliness of his efforts to address food insecurity. Quarles launched the Kentucky Hunger Initiative in 2016. I'm sure at that time he had no clue that our economy would be dramatically impacted as our nation experienced a pandemic.

Because of the Kentucky Hunger Initiative, our industry has an infrastructure in place to help our communities as this pandemic continues.

In April, Kentucky Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company and the Kentucky Farm Bureau Insurance Foundation announced the donation of $500,000 to hunger-relief charities as part of the Hunger Initiative.

As a result, Feeding Kentucky purchased 3,408 pounds of Kentucky ground beef using some of those funds, which not only helped hungry citizens but also helped cattle producers as the pandemic dramatically impacted livestock prices and meat processing.

In May, feeding Kentucky purchased 10,080 pounds of Kentucky Proud pork sausage from Purnell's "Old Folks" headquartered in Simpsonville using those funds. Also in May, Cal-Maine Foods donated more than 560,000 eggs to Feeding Kentucky.

That same month, the Kentucky Department of Agriculture secured a grant that allowed for the purchase of 56 freezers and refrigerators to help food pantries preserve donated foods. The program was also a participant as Farm Credit Mid-America and CoBank later donated funds to expand mobile meals distribution to Kentucky school children.

"When we started the Kentucky Hunger Initiative years ago, the goal was to build a network to connect farmers and agribusinesses to Kentucky's food bank system," said Commissioner Quarles. "Little did we imagine that the infrastructure we built for reducing hunger would create a framework for helping Kentuckians during a global pandemic."

The Hunger Initiative was a great idea in 2016, but in 2020 it has become a vital program during a time of need.

The government-ordered closure of schools, businesses, and other organizations has led to an estimated 35 percent increase in hunger in Kentucky, according to Feeding America. The state affiliate, Feeding Kentucky, reports Kentucky households with children are more likely to be food insecure.

While organizations and individuals are reaching out to help families who need assistance to gain access to food, they are also able to help farmers who have been impacted by low prices and restricted markets. The Hunger Initiative was a great idea in 2016, but in 2020 it has become a vital program during a time of need.

Congratulations to Commissioner Quarles, the companies and organizations that have donated and everyone involved in the Kentucky Hunger Initiative. You are sending a message to consumers across the commonwealth that Kentucky farmers care about their neighbors.

The Farmer's Pride

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PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID at Columbia, Ky. 42728 with additional entries. (ISSN 1056-7666) The Farmer's Pride is published every first and third Thursday of each month with an additional publication in February by Farmland Publications, Inc.

STREET LOCATION: 316 Public Square, Columbia, Ky. Mailing address: P.O. Box 159, Columbia, KY 42728.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATE: $25. Send check or money order to Circulation Manager, The Farmer's Pride, P.O. Box 159, Columbia, KY 42728 or subscribe online at thefarmerspride.com

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Farmer's Pride, P.O. Box 159, Columbia, KY 42728.

DEADLINES: Advertising and news deadlines are 4 p.m. Thursday prior to Thursday publication.

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Not much meat on the bull's carcass

MARKET WATCH

Dewey Strickler

After a period of absence, China came back this week to purchase 264,000 tons of soybeans from the U.S.

There is not much meat left on the bull's carcass for the bears to pick as evident from the funds short corn position rising to 1.45 billion bushels. The record is 1.67 billion bushels. Meanwhile, the bulls have little incentive either.

That said, the market will keep searching for input. Looking at exports, they are slow to improve. Inspections last week were 42.9 million bushels and must average 49.8 million bushels to reach USDA's target of 1.775 billion bushels. Currently, they are on track for 1.737 billion bushels.

In the meantime, planting is winding down at 88 percent complete compared to 82 percent a year ago. North Dakota is only 54 percent done, 15 percent below their average. The first crop rating of the season shows 70 percent of the crop in good to excellent condition. According to Ag Watch's yield model, this translates to a national yield of 174.5 bushels per acre compared to USDA's current estimate of 178.5 bushels per acre.

After a period of absence, China came back this week to purchase 264,000 tons of soybeans from the U.S. A 216,000 ton sale was made to an unknown destination that may be China. Most of their purchases recently have been from Brazil. Last week, export inspections were 12.2 million bushels and must average 27.5 million bushels each week to achieve USDA's projection of 1.675 billion bushels. Right now, they are on track for 1.482 billion bushels.

In other developments, planting is running ahead of speed at 65 percent complete versus the average of 55 percent.

Wheat is searching for a story but there is little to tell as the dollar remains in a broad trading range and harvest is a few weeks away. Exports are nominal with inspections last week 16.8 million bushels. Last week, the rating for the winter wheat crop improved 2 points to 54 percent in good-to-excellent condition. Planting of the spring crop remains slow at 81 percent done versus 90 percent for the average.

DEWEY STRICKLER is president of Ag Watch Market Advisors, LLC. Email Strickler at agwatchdls@comcast.net or go online at www.agwatch.biz.

Letters to the Editor

Letters to the editor are welcomed. Letters must include the author's name, address and phone number for verification purposes. Letters should be no longer than 500 words and will be edited for clarity.

Send letters to:
Letter to the Editor
The Farmer's Pride
P.O. Box 159
Columbia, Ky. 42728

This bloody business

FOOD & FARM FILE

Alan Guebert

And that's only if a second round of Covid-19 – a likely possibility, warn experts – doesn't slam livestock growers this winter.

If you've ever butchered anything from a rabbit to a hog – and butchered is the right word, not the bleached "harvested" – you know there will be blood. Butchering, after all, is a bloody business.

While 95 percent of Americans are carnivores, it's a safe bet that nearly 99.9 percent of them haven't thought much about where their meat comes from or how it gets to them so… well, clean.

COVID-19 changed that willful blindness and put America's industrialized and exploitive meat delivery system on the front page of every newspaper because it wasn't just killing hogs, cattle, and poultry. It was – is – also killing the people doing most of the butchering.

As of May 26, according to in-depth reporting by Leah Douglas of the Food and Environment Reporting Network, or FERN, 73 U.S. "food processing" workers have died since the beginning of the coronavirus outbreak in America. Sixty-seven of them, or nine out of 10, were meatpacker employees.

In the broader picture, reports Douglas, of the 19,785 food processing workers that tested positive for the virus, 17,893 of them, again, nine out of 10, worked in animal disassembly – or meatpacking – factories.

Meat industry titans know they have a terrible problem. Most are now spending mega-millions on worker facemasks and shields, workplace dividers, personal health monitoring, and other long overdue measures to protect the health and safety of its shoulder-to-shoulder workforce.

All the money, monitoring, and motivation, however, will never overcome the weakest link in today's meatpacking chain: its success rises and falls on a river of quickly trainable, overwhelmingly immigrant labor who are low-wage cogs in an international protein machine oiled mostly with blood.

And little of this is by accident. Since the early 1980s, meatpackers have used two powerful tools, industrial innovation and the lack of government oversight – and, more often than not, government complicity – to regain the dominating market power they enjoyed a century ago.

In fact, "Exactly 100 years ago," noted Politico on May 25 "… the five biggest U.S. meatpackers… were responsible for 82 percent of the beef market." After years of litigation – and decades of new "competition" because of government intervention – "the top four firms controlled only 36 percent of cattle slaughter… by 1980."

Then came the near-complete abandonment of corporate ag antitrust action by the Reagan, Bush I, Clinton, Bush II, Obama, and Trump administrations. When it comes to antitrust, White Houses aren't white, red, or blue; they're green – as in green lights.

No surprise then that now the top four beef packers again "… control about 85 percent of the U.S. (beef) market," noted Politico. The market concentration is similar for poultry and pork slaughterers.

Equally impressive is the industry's political power. For almost 30 years, the federal government has conceded to meatpackers' calls for cheaper, in-house inspection regimes, the speeding up of kill lines to increase throughput, and cuts in the number of federal meat inspectors.

That power was on full display when the White House empowered Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue, through the Defense Production Act, to get at-risk meatpacker workers back on the job, pandemic or not, a month ago. Today, U.S. meat plants are running at 91 percent capacity.

And for what?

Definitely not for the benefit of independent hog farmers, cattle ranchers or feedlot finishers. In May, livestock industry groups forecast pandemic-fueled, 2020 hog losses at $5 billion and cattle losses at $13.5 billion.

And that's only if a second round of COVID-19 – a likely possibility, warn experts – doesn't slam livestock growers this winter.

Whatever happens in the market, Congress needs to reexamine meatpacker concentration after allocating some of the $3 trillion of government COVID cash to build express lanes for smaller, local, independent meatpackers to form and grow.

Congress did it for ethanol and corn farmers and it can do it for livestock and poultry farmers. Call it what it is: job creation, rural development, smart use of taxpayer money.

Let's just stop calling it harvesting because, in fact, it's a very bloody business.

ALAN GUEBERT publishes a weekly column Farm and Food File through the U.S. and Canada. Past columns, events and contact information are posted at farmandfoodfile.com. Contact Alan Guebert by email at agcomm@farmandfoodfile.com.

KDA licenses hemp growers for 2020 season

FRANKFORT – Agriculture Commissioner Dr. Ryan Quarles has announced the Kentucky Department of Agriculture has licensed 960 hemp growers to grow up to 32,000 acres and 150 hemp processors and handlers for 2020. The Department has also licensed 4.6 million square feet of greenhouse space for production.

"Hemp continues to draw much attention, and these new numbers reflect an industry that is still maturing," Commissioner Quarles said. "The nation's hemp industry is reacting to a market which is evolving in the face of supply chain issues and the uncertain future of cannabidiol products after the Food and Drug Administration's years-long struggle to provide a regulatory framework for nutraceutical or food products. We will continue to work with our Cabinet for Economic Development to draw new investment for every sector of the hemp economy, including fiber and grain, into our state."

Of the 960 licensed growers, 157 have not requested growing sites, but intend to store hemp from last year's harvest for marketing in 2020. The department is waiting on completion of about 60 additional processor applications. The online application portal is open year-round for processors and handlers and the KDA reviews these applications on a rolling basis. The KDA oversaw 978 licensed growers and 210 processors in 2019. Kentucky growers reported growing 26,500 acres of hemp in 2019.

The deadline to apply to grow for the 2020 season was March 15, significantly later than the November deadline from previous years in an effort to allow growers more time to plan for the 2020 season.

The KDA also announced economic data from 2019 provided by licensed hemp processors as part of an end-of-year filing with the agency. Processors and handlers reported $193.9 million in gross product sales in 2019, according to reports licensed hemp processors provided to the department. That compares with $57.75 million in gross product sales in 2018. Processors reported spending $207.3 million on capital investment projects in 2019, as compared to $23.4 million in 2018.

Processors reported paying Kentucky farmers $51.3 million for harvested hemp materials in 2019, up from $17.75 million in 2018 and $7.5 million in 2017. Hemp processors said they employed 1,304 people in 2019.

"While these numbers show growth, they likely do not account for the national volatility in the hemp market over the last few months," Commissioner Quarles said. "It is important for growers and processors to remember what we have been saying for years: proceed with caution, as you would in any new business. We urge everyone to move forward in a cautious manner, especially in the face of the uncertainty from FDA."

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THE Farmer's Pride

Fair board submits proposal to governor

The Kentucky State Fair Board has submitted a draft proposal to Gov. Andy Beshear that would allow a modified Kentucky State Fair to take place in August.

Agriculture Commissioner Dr. Ryan Quarles, who serves on the fair board, said the proposal is more of an outline than providing specifics, but would help set public health guidelines for the event to be held.

"I want a state fair that preserves the traditional agricultural roots, and that includes livestock showing," Quarles said.

Board member Ryan Bivens, a LaRue County farmer, said he believes the fair can make a way for youth exhibitors to display the hard work they have done over the summer.

"Public safety is first and foremost our number one concern, but at the same time, we want the show to go on," Bivens said.

Bivens noted that there would be a different atmosphere but that every situation has been looked over and they have tried to make all scenarios work with the proposal.

"This proposal is a working plan; everything is subject to change but I am hoping within the next two weeks, the governor gives us a response," Bivens said.

As regulations are being put in place to allow other public events in Kentucky, including the Kentucky Derby, Commissioner Quarles said he believes safety precautions can also work for the state fair.

"I don't want an asterisk next to the 2020 state fair. If the Kentucky Derby can plan to have a modified derby we can plan to have a modified state fair," Quarles said. "We're determined to the best of our ability to have livestock shows. That's a special part of growing up in rural Kentucky. For me it's just as important as youth sports, and we know they did provide guidelines for youth sports. I know we can do livestock shows as well."

2020 Beef Improvement Federation Symposium moves online

LEXINGTON – For Kentucky producers who could not make plans to attend the 2020 Beef Improvement Federation Symposium in Florida, good news — the meeting is now set to happen virtually on Zoom, and it's free.

"Kentucky producers will get a chance to hear from some of the nation's beef industry leaders," said Darrh Bullock, beef specialist for the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment. "The live, online format is a great opportunity to listen to some great speakers talk about improving the beef industry through performance evaluation."

The symposium is set for June 8-12, beginning at 1 p.m. EDT each day. The first day, June 8, is geared toward young producers and will include information about what the purebred cattle industry will look like in 20 years and financial planning. The Beef Industry Federation will also announce board and officer election results at 2:45 p.m. EDT.

General sessions on June 9 and 10 include information about beef sustainability, consumer market research and end-user perspectives, and the announcement BIF awards program recipients for Commercial Producers of the Year, Seedstock Producers of the year and the Pioneer Award.

The last two days, June 11 and 12 will feature three, two-hour breakout sessions each day on topics such as end-product improvement, emerging technology, selection decisions, efficiency and adaptability, producer applications and genomic and genetic prediction.

Register online via the Beef Improvement Federation website, beefimprovement.org. As the symposium nears, participants will be able to find a detailed schedule and Zoom tutorials on the BIF website.

By Aimee Nielson
University of Kentucky

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The tenacity of buttercup

The Forage Doctor

By Jimmy Henning

Kentucky pastures have exploded with the signature yellow flower of buttercup. Buttercup is the common name for a group of species from the genus Ranunculus.

Buttercups are sometimes classified as short-lived perennials but often grow as winter annuals. Four species of buttercups that may be found in Kentucky: bulbous buttercup (Ranunculus bulbosus), creeping buttercup (Ranunculus repens), tall buttercup (Ranunculus acris), and small flower buttercup (Ranunculus arbortivus).

Each of these species have somewhat similar flower heads but differ in their leaf characteristics. New seed are produced during the time petals are showy. Waiting until after flowers appear can be too late to implement control tactics. This is one reason buttercups can survive year to year.

Buttercups are more than an unsightly weed. They can also be toxic. Grazing or mowing will release a powerful vesicant, which causes blistering of the skin, mouth, and digestive system on contact. The blistering agent is detoxified rapidly by drying, such that it is not generally a problem in hay.

Less is known about whether ensiling has a similar detoxification effect. Death of livestock due to buttercup is rare – A review of University of Kentucky Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory records over the last 13 years found no cases of livestock deaths attributable to buttercup ingestion.

If other forage is available, grazing livestock will usually avoid buttercup because the leaves, flowers, and stems have a sharp, acrid taste.

Most buttercup plants emerge from seed during the fall or late winter months. Therefore, pasture management that maintain thick stands and promote growth of more desirable plants during these months is one of the best methods to help compete against the emergence and growth of this plant.

Mowing fields or clipping plants close to the ground in the early spring before buttercup plants can produce flowers may help reduce the amount of new seed produced, but mowing alone will not totally eliminate seed production.

Chemical Options

Herbicides registered for use on grass pastures that contain 2,4-D will effectively control buttercup. For optimum results apply herbicide in the early spring (February - March) before flowers are observed and when buttercup plants are still small and actively growing. For best herbicide activity wait until daytime air temperatures are greater than 50 degrees F for two or three consecutive days. Consult the herbicide label for further information on grazing restrictions, precautions, or other possible limitations.

Applying broadleaf herbicides like 2,4-D will damage clover. However, buttercup is able to germinate and grow because of insufficient ground cover of desirable forage species. In these cases, clover stands are likely not that thick or need rejuvenating.

Management Options

To prevent or inhibit buttercup germination in the fall, manage grass pastures to retain residual heights of three or four inches. Realistically speaking, pastures used for overwintering, hay feeding or calving will always be overgrazed and therefore will be prime spots for buttercup and other winter weeds encroachment.

Overseeding these pastures in early spring with forages that establish aggressively (like red clover or ryegrasses) will add some desirable forage species to the spring flush of growth even though they will not eliminate buttercup emerging at the same time. Follow up with an early spring mowing to clip the buttercup and release the desirable species.

Cover up bare ground. Fall applications of nitrogen will produce taller grass (shading the ground) and will stimulate existing grasses to thicken up or tiller out the following spring. Timely mowing in the spring followed by nitrogen application can reduce buttercup seed production and will stimulate spring forage growth that helps shade the lower growing buttercup.

No matter how you go about it, controlling buttercup is not a "once and done" project. Nor will one method work alone – chemical control alone with leave bare ground unless there is a strategy to replant or fill in that area. However, we can manage pastures to reduce buttercup incidence and improve your pasture productivity at the same time.

Happy foraging.

Buttercups are very visible across Kentucky. This aggressive weed can be toxic to cattle and horses, but livestock will generally avoid it if other forage is available. Both chemical and cultural controls are needed to manage buttercup.

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Owensboro, KY

Farmers' markets reopen under new guidelines

"Crowds are prohibited but everyone is welcome" is the 2020 motto for the Lexington Farmers' Market. With locations open every day but Monday and Friday around the city, Josh England, Market Manager, has worked with the Fayette County Health Department to insure that the markets are safe for farmers and their customers.

New guidelines request that customers limit the size of their parties, preorder from farmers, limit the time at each booth, ask farmers to hand out the products, ask all to wear a mask, use the free hand-washing stations, and practice social-distancing.

The Saturday downtown market has been moved to the Rupp Arena parking lot, which last Saturday, was doing brisk business, despite the absence of ready-to-eat food and free samplings.

Beth Tillery of Tillery Family Farms in McKee secured her booth with yellow caution tape around its borders. Bottles of bleach and hand-sanitizer shared space on her flower arranging station at the back of the booth. She wore a mask.

Tillery sells cut flowers by the stem, bouquets, and potted herbs. Her bouquets brought a steady stream of customers eager for the bright fragrance of peonies as well as their creamy pink blooms.

Sara Adams, a science teacher at Carter-Woodson Academy in Lexington, said through her mask, "It smells amazing even though I've got my mouth completely covered."

Lindsie Nicholas of Lexington bought a bouquet to celebrate her birthday this week and Victoria Ahrens of Louisville was thrilled with her custom-made bouquet, which included hostas, baptistia, and three ruffled peonies.

Tillery and her husband Doug have been farming for 46 years.

"We've done it all," she said. "We started in dairy back when prices were good. We did feeder pigs until there wasn't a market for that. Tobacco and you know what happened to that."

They raise beef cattle on their 300 acre farm in Jackson County. Beth Tillery has a hoop house and a greenhouse where

SEE **FARMERS'**, PAGE **10**

Photo by Lynn Pruett

Beth Tillery of Tillery Family Farms in McKee sells a bouquet of peonies at the Lexington Farmers' Market.

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Farmers' markets reopen under new rules

FROM PAGE 9

she raises flowers and plants. She also has blueberries and raspberries but this year's late freeze decimated those crops. Doug left farming recently to work in a factory.

Tillery was active in the Community Farm Alliance when it began. She took advantage of the courses offered at Kentucky State University to educate farmers on diversification. The Tillerys were among the first farmers to do chickens on a big scale. They had 250 layers and 100 Cornish Rock hens and helped introduce the practice of "free-range" production. To further diversify, Beth went into pumpkins and gourds and selling at festivals. They sold dried flowers and vegetables and freezer beef while raising two children "who know how to work."

Their best profits came from raising tobacco plants on waterbeds. She's converted that greenhouse to one third waterbed for plant starters and uses the rest as a regular greenhouse. The hoophouse is full of raised beds because their "clay soil is so wet."

All in all, Tillery appreciates the health benefits and the range of knowledge she has gained in her decades of farming. She's been selling for 21 years at the Lexington Farmers' Market. She praises the market for the things that make it user-friendly, such as the booth where a customer can use a credit card to get tokens to use in place of cash.

"I like coming here where I have friends and regular customers," she said.

The customers clearly appreciate her bouquets and were especially pleased with the thoughtfulness of the bouquet containers: repurposed Gatorade bottles "that will fit in your car's cupholder," both "green" and practical.

For updates on the Lexington Farmers' Market and locations: https://www.lexingtonfarmersmarket.com.

In Versailles on Saturday, there were 16 booths set up at the Lexington Plaza, which had plenty of space for parking and keeping social distance. Customers were greeted with a hand-washing station and a list of guidelines to follow.

A popular market, many items were sold out within an hour of opening. All the baked goods and farm fresh eggs, for example. Capital City Beekeepers of Frankfort displayed flavored honeys and Bluebird Hill Farm of Lawrenceburg offered flowering annuals and iris and daylily bulbs. Strawberries, local meats, asparagus, and compost tempted customers who adhered to the guidelines as they talked though masks and kept their distance.

By Lynn Pruett
Field Reporter

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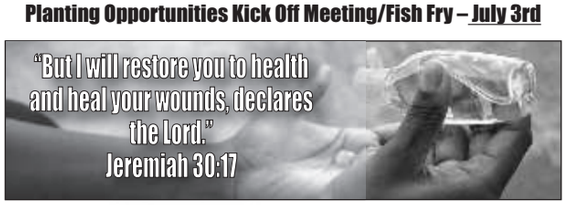

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AUCTION/MARKET

Producers Livestock Auction Co, San Angelo, Texas May 26, 2020

Compared to last week slaughter lambs firm to 5.00 higher, instances 10.00 higher. Slaughter ewes weak. Feeder lambs steady. Nannies steady; kids 5.00-10.00 higher. Trading fairly active, demand good.

SLAUGHTER LAMBS WOOLED & SHORN: Choice and Prime 1-2 40-50 lbs 206.00-208.00; 50-60 lbs 204.00; 60-70 lbs 190.00-196.00; 80-90 lbs 158.00-162.00. Choice and Prime 2-3 179-188 lbs 81.00-88.00. Choice 1-2 60-70 lbs 176.00; 80-90 lbs 142.00; 90-100 lbs 120.00-144.00. HAIR BREEDS: Choice and Prime 1-2 40-50 lbs 200.00-218.00; 50-60 lbs 192.00-221.00; 60-70 lbs 180.00-208.00; 70-80 lbs 170.00-190.00; 80-90 lbs 162.00-180.00; 90-100 lbs 154.00-174.00; 100-105 lbs 150.00. Choice 1-2 40-50 lbs 180.00-190.00; 50-60 lbs 188.00-190.00; 60-70 lbs 170.00-174.00; 70-80 lbs 150.00-172.00; 80-90 lbs 158.00; 90-100 lbs 134.00; 100-101 lbs 138.00.

SLAUGHTER GOATS KIDS: Selection 1 40-50 lbs 316.00-326.00; 50-60 lbs 316.00-332.00; 60-70 lbs 312.00-345.00; Selection 1-2 40-50 lbs 278.00-314.00; 50-60 lbs 290.00-316.00; 60-70 lbs 260.00-262.00; 70-80 lbs 258.00-294.00; 80-90 lbs 296.00. Selection 2 40-50 lbs 230.00-250.00; 50-60 lbs 238.00-264.00; 60-70 lbs 235.00; 70-80 lbs 238.00.

New Holland Sales Stables - New Holland, PA May 26, 2020

NOTE: No Current Report available due to market conditions. This report is suspended due to current conditions and will resume at a future date. Please note this report is not a reflection of the operations or business hours of the market.

Statewide Produce Prices updated 05/26/2020

Variety	Unit Size	Price Range	Avg. Price
Tomato #1	20 lbs	31.00-54.00	44.20
Tomato#2	20 lbs	18.00-50.00	34.41
Tomato small/canner	20 lbs	9.00-45.00	22.35
Asparagus	.5 lbs	1.75-2.25	1.98
Cabbage	per hd.	0.35-1.65	0.98
Cauliflower	per hd.	1.00-2.85	1.99
Cucumbers- slicing	peck	12.50-17.00	14.43
Green Beans	.5 bu	22.00-27.00	24.83
Strawberries	quart	4.85-6.00	5.35
Zucchini	.5 bu	2.50-20.00	10.72

Prices and Quotes furnished by Wholesale and Retail Markets

NATIONAL BOXED BEEF CUTOUT LM_XB403 https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/lm_xb403.txt Estimated composite cutout value of Choice 1-3 600-900 lbs carcasses down 5.07 at 396.74: Select 1-3 600-900 lbs carcasses down 8.35 at 374.18; based on 46 loads of Choice cuts, 14 loads of Select cuts, 9 loads of trimmings, and 32 loads of coarse ground trimmings. Choice/Select Spread 22.56.

CARCASS PRICE EQUIVALENT INDEX VALUE NW_LS410https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/nw_ls410.txt Estimated carcass price equivalent value of Choice 1-3 600-900 lbs carcasses down 2.44 at 282.52; Select 1-3 600-900 lbs carcasses down 4.08 at 262.19.

Current index reflects the equivalent of 124,705 head of cattle.

AUCTION/MARKET

KENTUCKY GRAIN PRICES

LOUISVILLE AREA: Louisville & Bagdad; PENNYRILE AREA: Allensville, Auburn, Franklin, Hopkinsville & Pembroke; BLUEGRASS AREA: Bardstown, Lexington & Winchester; GREEN RIVER: Caneyville & Livermore; NORTHERN KENTUCKY AREA: Silver Grove at Cincinnati; PURCHASE AREA: Clinton & Mayfield.
Opening bids at elevators and processing plants.

05/26/2020 4:00 pm est Bids for next day Cash Bids	Louisville	Pennyrile	Purchase	Bluegrass	Green River	Northern KY
Corn #2 Yellow	3.35-3.49	3.24-3.31	3.21	3.29	3.34	3.33
Corn #2 White		NA				
Soybeans #1 Y	8.09	8.32-8.47	8.47	8.22	8.52	8.48
Wheat #2 SRW	NA	4.97-5.17	NA	NA	NA	NA
Barley						
New Crop Delivery Contract						
Corn #2 Yellow	3.14	3.09-3.19	3.14	3.09	3.16	3.16
Corn #2 White		NA				
Soybeans #1 Y	7.95	8.15-8.30	8.45	8.05	8.35	8.37
Wheat #2 SRW	4.65-5.24	4.97-5.22	5.12	4.92	5.15	5.29
Barley						

Eastern Combelt Ethanol Plant Report 05/26/2020 Indiana Ohio Illinois

Yellow Corn Spot Bid 2.93-3.46

Dried Distillers Grain ($/ton) 10% moisture 133.00-165.00

Modified Wet Distillers ($/ton) 50-55% moisture 35.00

Kentucky Weekly Cattle Receipts as reported at local markets:

05/02/20	15,916
05/09/20	15,497
05/16/20	19,853
05/23/20	17,190

USDA ESTIMATED DAILY LIVESTOCK SLAUGHTER

	CATTLE	CALVES	HOGS	SHEEP
Friday 5/22/2020 (est)	102,000	1,000	380,000	7,000
Week Ago (est)	91,000	1,000	375,000	7,000
Year Ago (act)	120,000	3,000	404,000	8,000
Week to Date (est)	499,000	7,000	1,980,000	39,000
Same Pd Lt Week (est)	449,000	7,000	1,853,000	37,000
Same Pd Lt Yr (act)	601,000	9,000	2,271,000	42,000

Weekly Feed Ingredient Price Wholesale prices, $ per ton Rail or Truck FOB Location 05/26/2020	Owensboro Grain 05/26/2020	Commonwealth Agri-Energy Hopkinsville 05/26/2020	St. Louis Weekly Feed Prices 05/26/2020	Memphis Weekly Feed Report 05/26/2020	Corn Belt Feedstuffs Report 05/26/2020
Soybean Meal 48% Sol	293.90	—	311.00-316.00	283.90-305.90	277.90-290.90
Soybean Hulls	135.00	—	—	115.00	—
Corn Distillers Grain Dried	—	148.00	—	—	133.00-165.00
Distillers Grain Modified	—	82.00	—	—	—
Distillers Grain Wet	—	52.00	—	—	—
Corn Condensed Solubles	—	NA	—	—	—
Corn Gluten Feed 20-21 pct	—	—	180.00	—	120.00-140.00
Corn Gluten Meal 60 pct	—	—	450.00	—	400.00-415.00
Cottonseed Meal 41 pct	—	—	NA	250.00-255.00	—
Whole Cottonseed	—	—	—	195.00	—
Wheat Middlings	—	—	90.00-100.00	—	—

Eastern Combelt Hog Prices 05/26/2020
Barrows & Gilts
Receipts: 4,344
Base Price: $32.00-$42.50.00
Wt. Avg. $38.81
Compared to prior day, wt. avg. prices were 0.99 lower to 1.84 higher, the market trend is not well established.

Slow market activity with light demand.

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AUCTION/MARKET

Blue Grass South
Stanford, KY
May 21, 2020
Feeder Steers: Medium & Large 1-2
47 hd. 681# 139.95 blk-charx
65 hd. 785# 127.75 blk-red
64 hd. 825# 132.00 blk
65 hd. 840# 123.25 charx-blk
62 hd. 876# 120.00 charx-red
60 hd. 899# 121.20 blk-charx
52 hd. 926# 117.95 blk-charx
105 hd. 931# 121.90 blk
Holstein Steers: Large 3
66 hd. 813# 90.40
50 hd.1117#83.00
51 hd.1118#82.50
Feeder Heifers: Medium & Large 1-2
22 hd. 590# 124.75 blk-charx
60 hd. 707# 122.60 blk-charx
49 hd. 747# 119.00 blk
20 hd. 758# 117.00 blk
135 hd. 827# 113.60 blk-charx
27 hd. 859# 107.50 blk-red
27 hd. 867# 107.75 blk

Russell County Stockyards
Russell Springs, KY
May 20, 2020
Feeder Steers: Medium & Large 1-2
62 hd. 756# 130.00
65 hd. 831# 126.75
38 hd. 853# 115.00
57 hd. 872# 116.85
55 hd. 933# 114.85

Mid-KY Livestock Market
Upton, KY
May 19, 2020
Feeder Heifers: Medium & Large 1-2
67 hd. 704# 116.40 mixed

Farmers Livestock
Glasgow, KY
May 18, 2020
Feeder Heifers: Medium & Large 1-2
24 hd. 457# 137.50 blk
20 hd. 460# 127.0 mixed
22 hd. 518# 127.50 blk
Feeder Bulls: Medium & Large 1-2
28 hd. 380# 164.00 blk
20 hd. 465# 144.00 mixed
20 hd. 513# 137.50 blk

KY-TN Livestock Auction
Guthrie, KY
May 21, 2020
Feeder Steers: Medium & Large 1-2
30 hd. 553# 140.50 bbwf
23 hd. 626# 130.25 bbwf
Feeder Heifers: Medium & Large 1-2
21 hd. 442# 137.75 bbwf
63 hd. 496# 130.50 bbwf
44 hd. 560# 126.00 bbwf
Feeder Bulls: Medium & Large 1-2
23 hd. 446# 146.00 bbwf
45 hd. 494# 142.00 bbwf
38 hd. 553# 135.25 bbwf
42 hd. 621# 125.25 bbwf

Kentuckiana Livestock Market
Owensboro, KY
May 18, 2020
Feeder Steers: Medium & Large 1-2
27 hd. 773# 117.00 blk
Feeder Heifers: Medium & Large 1-2
22 hd. 508# 136.00 blk
Feeder Bulls: Medium & Large 1-2
23 hd. 368# 183.00 blk
30 hd. 666# 118.50 blk

Blue Grass Stockyards
Lexington, KY
May 18 & 19, 2020
Feeder Steers: Medium & Large 1-2
21 hd. 655# 136.75 blk
40 hd. 676# 143.75 blk-mixed
146 hd. 832# 127.95 blk-mixed
36 hd. 878# 121.25 blk
45 hd. 925# 112.25 blk
51 hd. 958# 109.75 rwf-blk
101 hd.1025#108.90 blk-mixed

Washington Co. Livestock
Springfield, KY
May 18, 2020
Feeder Steers: Medium& Large 1-2
44 hd. 606# 146.50 blk
47 hd. 641# 140.00 blk
32 hd. 732# 122.90 blk-charx
61 hd. 774# 126.95 blk
26 hd. 855# 119.75 blk
24 hd. 909# 114.95 blk
Feeder Heifers: Medium & Large 1-2
22 hd. 510# 126.25 blk
20 hd. 542# 125.25 blk-charx
37 hd. 572# 135.00 blk
39 hd. 713# 119.10 blk
48 hd. 756# 110.00 blk
45 hd. 758# 118.40 blk

Blue Grass East
Mt. Sterling, KY
May 20, 2020
Feeder Steers: Medium & Large 1-2
29 hd. 610# 148.00 bbwf
42 hd. 863# 118.25 blk-mixed
Feeder Heifers: Medium & Large 1-2
37 hd. 563# 130.00 bbwf

Paris Stockyards
Paris, KY
May 21, 2020
Feeder Steers: Medium & Large 1-2
22 hd. 601# 140.00 blk
Feeder Heifers: Medium & Large 1-2
30 hd. 452# 137.50 blk
35 hd. 619# 127.25 mixed
104 hd. 649# 134.60 blk
82 hd. 659# 132.00 blk

Blue Grass of Richmond
Richmond, KY
May 22, 2020
Feeder Steers: Medium & Large 1-2
48 hd. 935# 116.20 mixed

United Producers Irvington
Irvington, KY
May 18, 2020
Holstein Steers: Large 3
49 hd. 978# 86.00

Livingston County Livestock
Ledbetter, KY
May 19, 2020
Feeder Steers: Medium & Large 1-2
51 hd. 754# 122.50 blk
28 hd. 757# 124.50 blk
26 hd. 827# 116.00 blk
Feeder Heifers: Medium & Large 1-2
49 hd. 629# 124.00 blk
71 hd. 715# 117.00 blk

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GOAT SALE
2nd Monday of each month at 1 p.m.

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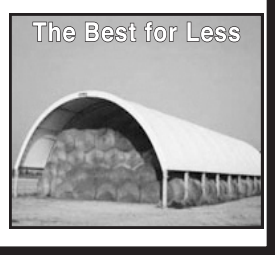

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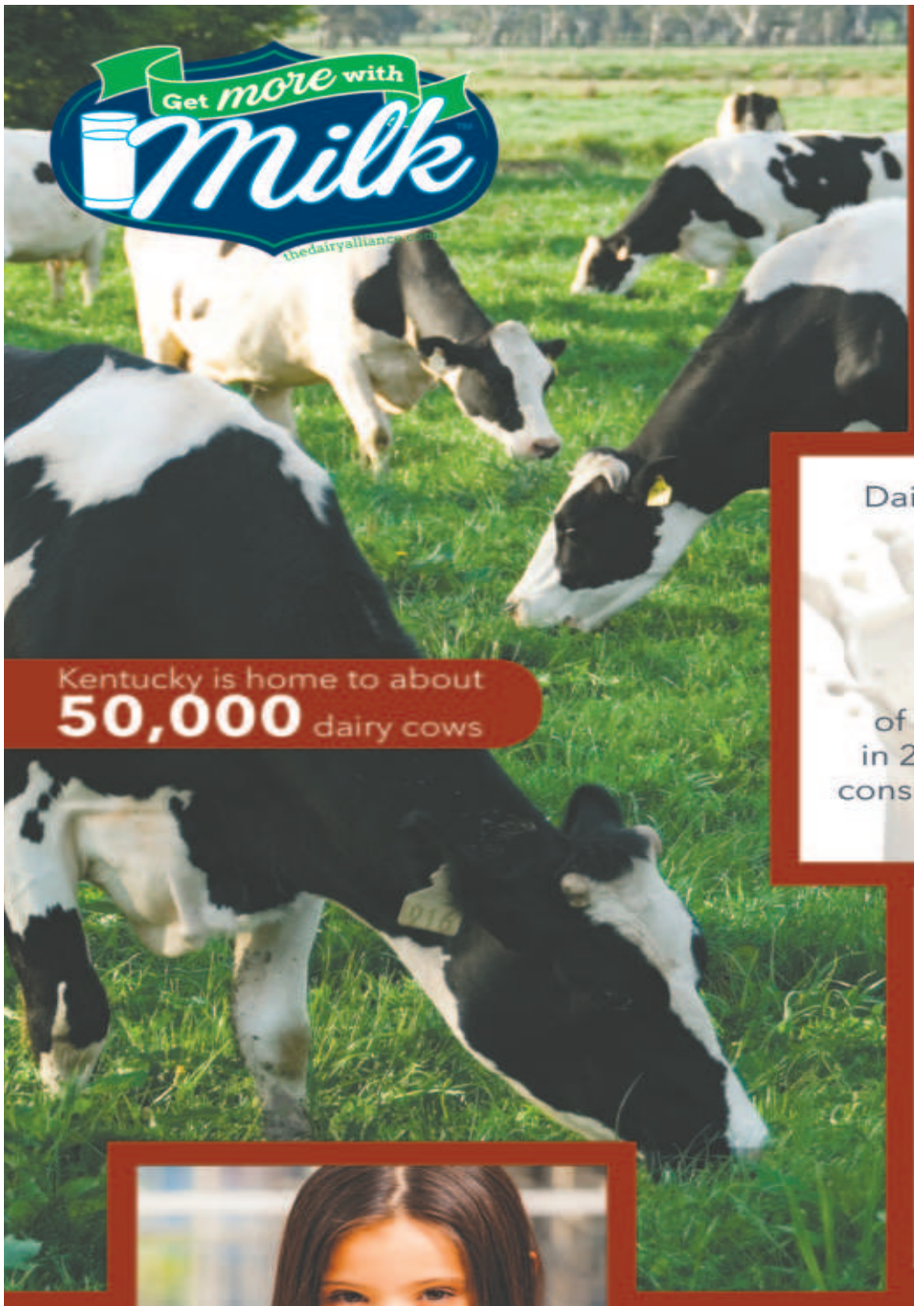

2020 Dairy Facts
Kentucky

Learn more by visiting **thedairyalliance.com**

Kentucky is home to about **50,000** dairy cows

Dairy cows produced an average of **7.2** gallons of milk per day

90.5% of all milk produced in 2019 was used and consumed in the form of fluid milk

Kentucky has **480** dairy farms and a typical dairy farm has a herd of about **104** milking cows

The average value of a day's milk per cow was about **$11.24**

In 2019, a dairy cow in Kentucky cost about **$1,030**

The top five milk producing counties:

1. **Barren**
2. **Logan**
3. **Adair**
4. **Warren**
5. **Christian**

Each dairy cow in Kentucky provides an average of **2,188** gallons of milk per year

The total amount of milk produced equaled **109 million** gallons

Kentucky rankings

27th in milk production,
27th in number of milk cows,
37th in milk output per cow, and
14th in the number of licensed dairy operations during 2019 in the United States.

*All facts are based on 2019 USDA and AGI data.

Brought to you by the dairy farm families of the Southeast and Kentucky Dairy Development Council.