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Project largest attempted in Nicholas

By Josh Shepherd
Of The Carlisle Mercury Staff

The Nicholas County Extension office is conducting the largest intensive cattle grazing system ever attempted.

Mike Phillips, County Extension agent, said this experiment, which has its origin in a 4-H project in Jessamine County, involves 870 head of cattle on 400 acres of land at Eagle Stone farm.

The purpose of the experiment is two-fold, Phillips said. First they want to see if cattle can survive on a diet of infected fescue with a significant increase in cattle weight gain, he said.

The fescue is infected with an endophyte that concentrates in the head of the grass. This causes high body temperature in most cattle and some have said this fescue is responsible for aborted calves, Phillips said.

However, by getting cows adapted to the fescue, he said, it might save to decrease the level of its effect.

The second objective of the experiment is to see if concentrating the area cattle feed, they want to see if cattle weight gain is significant, he said.

If the results of the experiment are successful, Phillips said, it can mean costs on feed could be greatly reduced be-

cause the cattle themselves would help perpetuate the grasses on a particular field by fertilizing it with manure and then taken off the area for the grasses to replenish themselves. It also will utilize every bit of the grass rather than have the cattle simply graze where they will.

The experiment has not been without its problems, Phillips said.

Early in the experiment, grass was growing slowly and we were worried that certain areas would not be able to replenish themselves on time," Phillips said.

However, he said, that problem has corrected itself.

When the project began, experimenters weighed the cattle, took their body temperatures, and tagged them for future identification.

"We are in the process now of taking the first census check of all the cattle to see, on average, how much weight gain there has been and what effects the fescue had on the cattle," Phillips said.

A similar idea was applied in certain areas in Africa where grasses are sparse. In some cases they have been successful in re-vegetating areas, he said. African rains come during a certain time of the year and with the cattle remaining in concentrated areas, their hoof prints cre-

ated many small reservoirs that have controlled a lot of the run-off from heavy rains, he said.

The potential of this experiment may result in increased profits on a farm because of the money saved in investing in new grasses and feed, which is a heavy financial burden on many farms, he said.

It could also put the beef cattle industry on an equal scale as tobacco in the state, Phillips said.

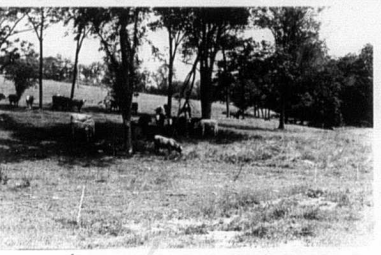
Most alfalfa growers in this area use their grasses as a feed supply to their own cattle, he said. If the experiment pans out, farmers could feed their cattle and use alfalfa as a cash crop, he said.

"But these are only theories now. Many of these ideas are dependent on the success of this and other experiments," he said.

"The intensive cattle grazing intensive has been going steadily for about seven or eight years. Last year we experimented with 200 head and have stepped up to 870."

Phillips said the experiment has been reported widely outside of Kentucky and many people have expressed interest in seeing it succeed.

"We have the basic knowledge and equipment for raising the cattle, now we must refine our techniques to aim for quality," Phillips said.



Cattle graze on a specially plowed field of land at Eaglestone Farm as part of the Intensive Cattle Grazing research project sponsored by the Nicholas County Extension Service. Josh Shepherd Photo

Jones speaking at festival

Agricultural Commission Burnette also to speak

By Carol H. Bond
Of The Carlisle Mercury Staff

Lieutenant Governor Berton C. Jones will be in Carlisle Thursday, July 6, at 9 a.m. offering remarks at the courthouse after the crowning of the 1989 Blackberry Festival Queen.

Also slated to speak is Wood Hutch Burnette, Kentucky Commission of Agriculture.

Burnette will address many of the problems faced by the agriculture community today.

Jones attended the University of Virginia on a football scholarship and while working construction during

the summers, earned a Bachelor of Science degree.

Since 1972, Jones and his wife, the former Elizabeth Lloyd, and their two children, Lucy and Eric, have been residing at Andree Stud Farm in Woodford County.

Jones raises horses, cattle and tobacco on his farm and is also a businessman by developing a construction company and Andree Stud Farm.

Jones holds not only professional interests, but community and civic interests.

Jones is the founder and President of the Kentucky Health Care Access Foundation, and has developed a foundation with health care

professionals which has led to the creation of programs such as the Kentucky Physicians' Care and the Fair Share Programs.

These programs are for Kentuckians who cannot afford medical care that are matched with physicians and hospitals in the patient's community which have volunteered their services.

He has worked to improve medical conditions in Kentucky through his service on the Chandler Medical Center Council of Supervisors, as Chairman of the Governor's 1985 Medicaid Task Force and as Vice President of the McDowell Cancer Research Foundation Board.

Jones also has been active in educational reform through the Frichard Committee for Academic Excellence, the Governor's Council on Educational Reform, the Board of Trustees at the University of Kentucky and the Kentucky State University Foundation Board of Directors.

Jones also serves on the Kentucky Board of Agriculture, the Board of the University of Kentucky Equine Research Foundation, the boards of the Citizens Fidelity Corporation and the Citizens Fidelity Bank of Lexington.

Festival Highlights in next week's Mercury

NICHOLAS NEWSMAKERS
Meetings last week
Planning and Zoning and
Fiscal Court hold sessions
See Details
on Page 6

Nicholas collections tops in 11 county area

By Josh Shepherd
Of The Carlisle Mercury Staff

Nicholas County has the best enforcement of child support collections in an 11 county area, Joan Conley, Child Support Coordinator in the Nicholas County Attorney's office, said.

In 1986, the county attorney's office collected \$60,634.62 in child support

payments and the totals have risen steadily over the past two years, she said.

In 1988, in both the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and non-AFDC child support payments, the collection totals have exceeded \$151,000, the office immediately refers them to the County Attorney's office to be added to the list of recipients.

"The Nicholas County Cabinet for Human Resources," Joan Conley said, has been integral in improving the efficiency of our collection records because once someone applies for AFDC, the welfare office immediately refers them to the County Attorney's office to be added to the list of recipients.

In this pilot program began a year and a half ago, the new system, which Conley said is implemented in very few counties in Kentucky, has increased collection efficiency so much Opal Kelley has been hired to the office to be full-time child support caseworker.

Before this program was installed, child support refer-

Help Wanted

For farmers' cooperative to succeed interest input is needed immediately for USDA review and recommendation

When Tom Henley wants to talk about forming an agricultural cooperative he has amassed a tremendous amount of information to support his case.

But now, Henley says he needs some important help and a helping amount of input from farmers.

For over a year, Henley, a Nicholas County farmer, feels an eight county area along the Licking River covers an excellent area to build the cooperative.

Nicholas County, Robertson, Montgomery, Bush, Fleming, Harrison, Bracken and Pendleton counties have been picked out to be part of the cooperative building effort.

Chuck Henley, a marketing specialist in the Agricultural Cooperative Service of the United States Department of Agriculture is spending two weeks in the eight county area to gain input.

"I am here to do a feasibility analysis to determine if there is enough interest to form the cooperative."

"I am here in a neutral capacity - as is the USDA," Henley said.

"I am here to gather information concerning grass needs, interest - and after having time to analyze that information, I will publish the numbers - we will be in a position to say let's go (with the cooperative) or let's quit and go fishing."

"The grass needs numbers will give a basis for us to make these determinations."

Henley is not without an extensive background in cooperative development and his experience has paid dividends for many cooperatives - some of which were never formed.

A few years ago Henley was called to an Iowa town to study the feasibility of building an elevator. He recommended against it.

The investors were livid over his recommendation.

Three years later he was called to that area again, and was told that when he had in mind his opinion, the investment one was happy, but with one or more of the changes at hand Henley would have good results.

Local involvement and social control are two key factors listed as positive areas for development.

Henley said cooperation even on the state level has been strong for the formation of this cooperative.

County judges, agents and others have been instrumental in the building of the plan.

And through his efforts, Henley explained, he has found almost everyone interested in helping form development and economic development the potential cooperative could bring.

"I'm conservative, but at the same time I want agricultural programs to work," Henley concluded.

will come back and hold public meetings on forming or not forming a cooperative in this case.

After having a preliminary report in September, Henley said there will be a first report issued in December.

This allows him, and the USDA, adequate time to set up and establish proper guidelines for building the cooperative's beginning.

In addition, should the cooperative be founded, Henley said the USDA will help the cooperative establish its by-laws and get going with its first board of director elections.

Both Henley and Henley were very frank in their desire to perpetuate the information that this is not a "Pie in the Sky" type of program.

There will be no easy fix to the sagging farm economy and forming a cooperative can only be successful if those involved exhibit the effort and time necessary to build a successful venture.

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Elsewhere in this publication is a USDA questionnaire. All farmers are urged to fill it out and forward it to their respective county judge so the information can be passed on to Henley for his review and consideration.

Now in Kentucky, Henley has to have input from farmers in all the areas.

Henley is mailing an interest analysis form to many farmers in the eight county area. In addition, new questionnaires publishing the form as a public service, in most cases, to promote the interest survey.

Once these responses have been received and the numbers put together, Henley, who admits to being very conservative,

will come back and hold public meetings on forming or not forming a cooperative in this case.

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Opal Kelley.