University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture, Food and Environment
Cooperative Extension Service

Cooperative Extension Service
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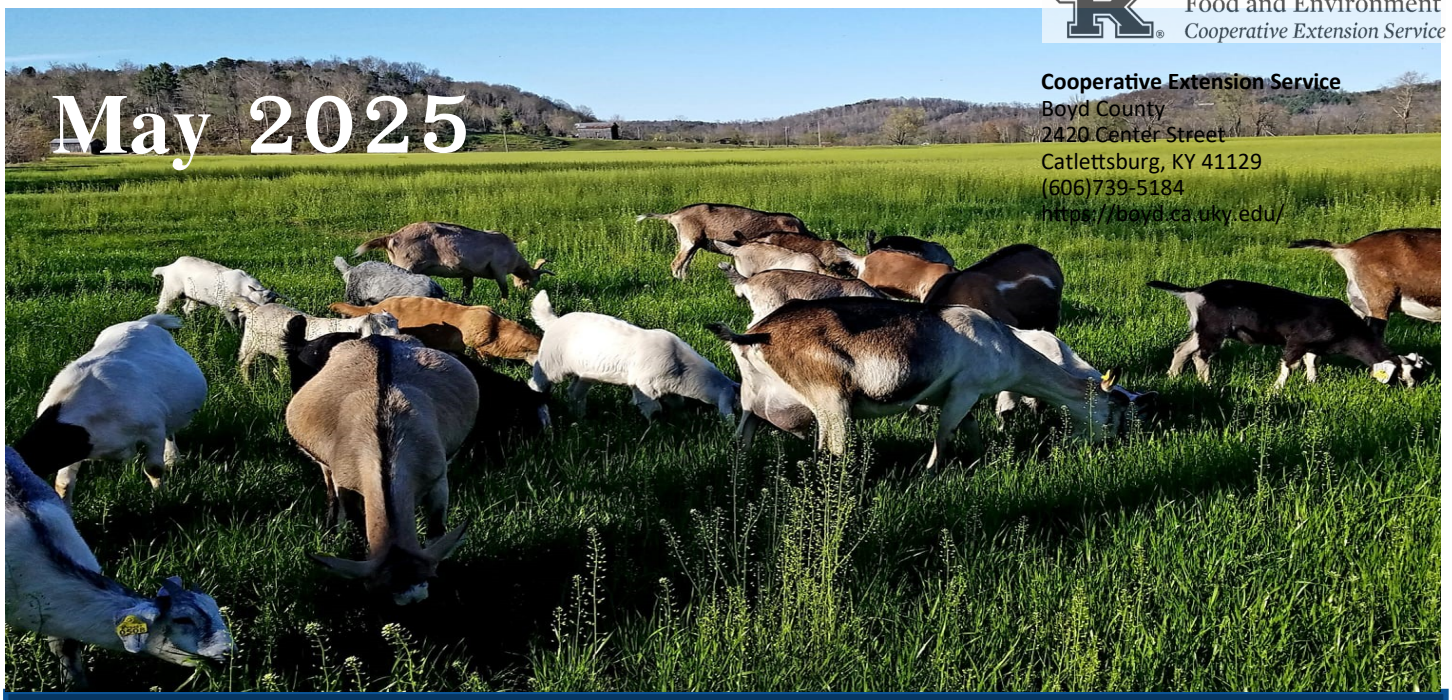

Agriculture and Natural Resources Newsletter

Boyd County Cooperative Extension Service

Greetings All,

Spring is in the air! As we enter into this busy time of year remember the Boyd County Extension Service is here to assist you with your farming endeavors.

Please enjoy your newsletter!

Sincerely,

Meredith Hall

Meredith Hall
Boyd County Extension Agent
for Agriculture and Natural Resources

In This Issue

Upcoming Events

Denotes preregistration is required

East Kentucky Horse Expo & Show

May 10, 2025
Boyd County, Education Center

Homebased Microprocessing Workshop

May 1 @ 9:30 AM
Boyd County, Extension Office
Must register at ukfcs.net/HBM

4-H Summer Camp
North Central 4-H Camp

June 30 - July 3
Register at the Boyd County Extension Office

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Boyd County Agriculture

https://www.facebook.com/BoydCountyAgriculture/

Boyd County Cooperative Extension Service

https://www.facebook.com/BoydCountyCES/

10 Backyard Chicken Basics

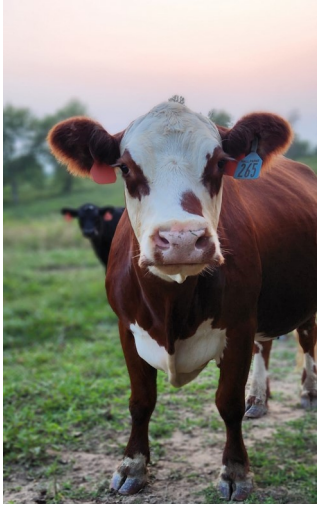
Source: Jacquie Jacob, Extension Poultry Project Manager

Having a small chicken flock in the backyard is very popular these days. To have a successful flock producing eggs for your family, you'll want to learn the basics.

1. Make sure you check your local city and county ordinances to ensure you're able to have a backyard flock. Some ordinances require a minimum amount of land and some subdivisions and homeowners' associations have their own rules.
2. Chickens require daily care. You must feed them, provide clean water and collect eggs every day. Managing a small flock is an excellent opportunity to teach children a certain amount of responsibility, but ultimately, you'll oversee the health and well-being of your flock.
3. Birds get sick and it may be difficult to find a veterinarian to provide care for them.
4. Cleanliness and sanitation are critical elements in caring for a small flock. Everyone must wash their hands before and after handling the birds. Also, no matter how tempting, avoid bringing your chickens into the house and don't use your kitchen sink to wash equipment.
5. Poop happens. Chickens eat a lot and hens use about 60% of the feed they consume and excrete the other 40% as manure. You must have a plan for that manure. One option is adding it as an odor-free fertilizer for your home garden.
6. Keep it down. Chickens make noise. Only roosters crow, however, hens are not always quiet and can make a lot of noise letting everyone know that they just laid an egg.
7. The egg season will come to an end. Chickens stop producing eggs at some point in their lives and may live a long time beyond their egg-laying years. Have a plan for what you will do with hens that stop producing. If you keep them as pets you'll have to keep feeding them and providing other resources for their care.
8. Housing is a big part of keeping a flock. Your birds will need a house that provides shelter from the weather, nest boxes for egg laying and perches for roosting at night. Make sure housing is easy to clean and provides protection from predators. You'll have to manage their bedding well to prevent rodents from making your chickens' house their home.
9. Scratch that. Chickens scratch when they forage. If you let them run free, you may need to place a fence around your garden if you don't want the birds to destroy it.
10. Know how to get chicks. You will most likely want to raise your hens from chicks. You can buy them in feed stores, or online and have them shipped to your home, but some suppliers have minimum quantities for orders. You may have neighbors or friends who also raise chickens willing to join you in an order. Remember you'll need to provide new chicks with a heat source, such as a lamp , for at least six weeks.

Better Pastures Equals Healthier Herds

Source: Christopher Teutsch, UK Extension Associate Professor and Forage Specialist



Rotational stocking, often referred to as rotational grazing, is a powerful technique that can bring a range of benefits to all types of livestock as well as the land. By dividing large pastures into smaller paddocks and moving animals through them on a planned schedule, farmers can give each grazed area a rest period., allowing for regrowth of leaf area lost to grazing and replenishment of stored carbohydrates that were utilized to fuel regrowth. When producers shift from continuous grazing to a rotational system they often see dramatic improvements in pasture productivity, soil health and even animal behavior.

One of the primary advantages or rotational grazing in enhanced pasture productivity. When animals graze one paddock at a time and then move on, the plants in the grazed paddock have a chance to rebound. During this rest period, forage plants can restore their carbohydrate reserves and recover more completely from being grazed. This not only boosts the quantity of forage available over time but also maintains better and more consistent nutritional quality. In contrast, continuous grazing-where livestock stay in the same pasture all season-often leads to overgrazing, weaker plants that are more susceptible to stresses and progressively lower yields.

Improved nutrient distribution is another significant plus. Rotating animals means they spread manure evenly around the paddocks rather than depositing it heavily in just a few favorite areas (like watering or resting spots). Because manure is a natural fertilizer, more uniform distribution helps replenish the soil and encourages consistent plant growth. A continuous grazing system, on the other hand, may result in, “hot spots” of manure accumulation. This concentrated nutrient load can negatively impact both plant growth and the environment around those areas.

A well managed rotational grazing system also offers increased drought tolerance. With planned rest periods, plants develop deeper, stronger root systems. These robust roots allow the plants to access water further below the surface, which can be crucial during dry spells. Ina continuously grazed pasture, plants rarely get the downtime they need to fully recover, leaving them more vulnerable to stress when rainfall is scarce. As a result, fields under rotational management often grow longer into drought periods and recover faster when conditions improve.

Continued ...

Another practical benefit of rotational stocking is easier animal handling. When paddocks are set up with well-designed lanes and strategically placed water sources, moving livestock becomes more straight-forward. In addition, more frequent contact with animals allows livestock to associate human interaction with something positive, fresh grass. This greatly reduces the stress and chaos commonly associated with animal handling in open pastures. Properly places lanes can also help control erosion, ensuring that foot traffic and machinery movement do not damage sensitive areas of the pasture.

Rotational stocking can be a game changer for anyone looking to optimize pasture health and livestock performance. By giving plants time to recover, distributing nutrients more evenly, building drought resilience and streamlining animal handling, rotational grazing can deliver long-lasting improvements to farm operations. Whether you're raising cattle, sheep, goats, or other grazing animals, this strategy can help you optimize productivity and at the same time protect land and water resources for future generations.

Contact your local Boyd County Extension Office for more information on how to maintain healthy pastures.

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USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Manage Wildlife To Prevent Avian Influenza

Highly pathogenic avian influenza is a very contagious disease that kills domestic poultry. Wild birds such as ducks, gulls, and shorebirds can carry and spread avian influenza viruses without any signs of illness. To protect your poultry, keep wild birds away from your farm. Here are some simple steps you can take today:

Secure Buildings

- Repair holes in buildings.
- Regularly check and repair damaged screens on windows and doors.
- Install netting or screens and use repellent gel or bird spikes to deter perching.
- Regularly inspect foam installation for signs of rodent or bird digging, chewing, or pecking.
- Wash away or remove old nests before each nesting season.*
- Install decoys and scare devices and move them often so wildlife don't get used to them.

** It is unlawful to remove nests with eggs or young birds in them.*

Manage Ponds and Basins

- Prune or remove plants from banks of manmade water structures.
- Use wire grids, predator decoys, and scare devices to keep waterfowl away from ponds or basins.
- Use fencing to separate natural ponds from the active area around barns.

Reduce Food Resources

- Don't feed wildlife!
- Locate feed structures on a clean pad.
- Inspect pipes and connections regularly for leaks.
- Keep a broom and lidded garbage container at every feed storage area for quick cleanups.
- Reduce natural food sources by removing fallen fruit and mowing grass often.
- Don't pile used litter near barns.

Cover Waste

- Keep carcasses and compost piles covered at all times.
- Always close and latch dumpster and trash can lids.

Remove Standing Water

- Grade property to avoid pooling water. Fill or grade areas where water stands for more than 48 hours after a heavy rainfall.
- Don't walk or move equipment through or near standing water—this could track wildlife feces or other contaminants with the virus into your barns.
- Use French drains and culverts to carry water away from poultry houses.
- Never use untreated surface water for watering poultry or cleaning poultry barns and other facilities.

USDA and other experts recommend an integrated wildlife damage management approach. Some management methods that involve handling nests and eggs or the lethal removal of wildlife require specific expertise and authorizations. The lethal removal of native wildlife is regulated under Federal and State laws.

DEFEND THE FLOCK

Need help managing wildlife on your farm? Call 1-866-4USDA-WS (1-866-487-3297).
To learn more about how to protect your flock from HPAI and other diseases, scan the QR code.

Cook Wild KENTUCKY

Baked Fish Fillets with Dill Sauce

KENTUCKY DEPT. OF FISH & WILDLIFE RESOURCES

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program — SNAP.

SNAP Putting Healthy Food Within Reach

USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

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Baked Fish Fillets

- *1 pound freshwater fish fillets*
- *1 tablespoon lemon juice*
- *1 teaspoon water*
- *½ teaspoon pepper*
- *1 small onion, diced*

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees Fahrenheit. Coat 9 x 13 inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Place the fish in a single layer in a baking dish. Sprinkle the fish with 1 tablespoon lemon juice, 1 tablespoon water, pepper, and onion. Cover tightly with foil. Bake 20 to 25 minutes and internal temperature reaches 145 degrees Fahrenheit.

Dill Sauce

- *¼ cup low-fat mayonnaise*
- *¼ cup fat-free milk*
- *1 tablespoon dried dill weed*
- *1 tablespoon lemon juice*
- *2 teaspoons Dijon mustard*

Place mayonnaise in a saucepan. Gradually whisk in milk. Whisk over medium-low heat for 2 minutes or until smooth and heated through but not bubbly. Remove sauce from heat. Stir in dill weed, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, and Dijon mustard. Remove fish to a serving platter. Spoon dill sauce over fish and serve.

Yield: 4 servings

Adapted from "Living Well, More Than a Cookbook," Published by National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, Copyright 2010 by National Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, 14070 Proton Road, Suite 100LB9, Dallas, Texas 75244.

Nutrition Facts

4 servings per container

Serving size 4 ounces (170g)

Amount per serving

Calories 170

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 5g	**6%**
Saturated Fat 1g	**5%**
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 80mg	**27%**
Sodium 280mg	**12%**
Total Carbohydrate 6g	**2%**
Dietary Fiber 1g	**4%**
Total Sugars 3g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	**0%**
Protein 23g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 125mg	10%
Iron 2mg	10%
Potassium 480mg	10%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

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