



# Ohio County Farm & Home News

Cooperative  
Extension Service

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## PESTICIDE SAFETY EDUCATION – MARCH 3<sup>RD</sup>

### BEEF MARKET UPDATE & BCQA TRAINING – MARCH 1<sup>ST</sup>



As we get started into 2023, we will have a “Beef Market Update & BQCA Training” next Wednesday evening March 1<sup>st</sup>, starting at 6:00 p.m., at the Ohio Co. Extension Center.

We will have Dr. Kenny Burdine, Extension Livestock Marketing Specialist, discuss the current market conditions and what he expects beef markets to do throughout 2023.

At the conclusion of his discussion, I will provide a Beef Quality & Care Assurance (BQCA) training for any producers needing re-certification or to be certified for the first time. Remember, BQCA practices are essential management skills for all beef producers to use in their operations, so we may assure consumers that our products are the most consistent, safest, most wholesome beef products in the world.

For those planning to participate in the CAIP program this year, if you are cost-sharing in the “Large Animal” category you must have a current BQCA certification. So, this will be an opportunity to get that taken care of. There is a \$5 fee for the BQCA training.



### Pesticide Safety Education Training

Friday March 3, 2023 9:00 am-12:00 pm  
Tuesday March 14, 2023 6:00 pm-9:00 pm  
Friday March 24, 2023 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

These classes are FREE and open to anyone wanting to attend.  
For more information call the Ohio County Extension Office at  
270-298-7441

Cooperative Extension Service  
Agriculture and Natural Resources  
Family and Consumer Sciences  
4-H Youth Development  
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For many years the ‘Pesticide Safety Education Training’ was considered only for people using restricted-use pesticides, but with today’s pesticide products all pesticide users should attend the training. Pesticide products are safer than they have ever been, but if not used properly, they can be harmful to not only the user, but the environment, as well.

The “Pesticide Safety Education Trainings for this year are:

- March 3<sup>rd</sup> – 9:00 a.m. till noon
- March 14<sup>th</sup> – 6:00 p.m. till 9:00 p.m.
- March 24<sup>th</sup> – 9:00 a.m. till noon

All trainings will be held at the Ohio Co. Extension Center on Clay St. in Hartford.

So, check your cards to be sure you have a valid certification for 2023, especially if you need to purchase restricted-use pesticides. Cards expire on December 31 of the year of expiration. The “Pesticide Safety Education” is free and open to anyone wanting to attend.

## MIXING TALL FESCUE VARIETIES SHOW BENEFITS



The following article is adopted from “Hay & Forage Grower” magazine, discussing the additional benefits of seeding a combination of tall fescue varieties, in improving forage stands and soil quality.

Plant diversity has become somewhat of a buzz phrase in the world of agriculture. It sometimes refers to growing diverse crops from year to year but, most often is associated with having different species growing in the same field or pasture at the same time.

There is good scientific evidence to show that diverse mixtures enhance soil health and fertility attributes.

Rebecca McCulley, a research professor with the University of Kentucky, decided to test diversity at the tall fescue varietal level. The results of the study were recently reported in the Alliance for Grassland Renewal’s newsletter by Alayna Jacobs, one of her former graduate students.

The research compared mixtures of two-, three-, and four-way seed mixes of different tall fescue variety and endophyte sources to seedings of stands with a single variety. Varieties included Kentucky 31, both with and without the toxic endophyte, and several different novel endophyte varieties. The hypothesis was that a greater number of unique variety/endophyte combinations would make stands more productive, competitive, and sustainable.

Five years after seeding and establishment, the field plots were evaluated to compare low diversity (monocultures of single varieties) to two-, three-, and four-way mixtures of different tall fescue varieties and endophyte characteristics.

The field plots were harvested in the spring (April) and fall (September). There were no differences in the amount of tall fescue biomass produced in the spring, but the more diverse plots produced about 12% greater fescue biomass in the fall. The more diverse stands

produced additional fescue in the fall because those stands limited the encroachment of other plant species such as orchardgrass and Kentucky bluegrass.

Stands that included three variety/endophyte combinations were purer tall fescue stands compared to endophyte-free or single variety monocultures. The more diverse stands would offer producers the opportunity to stockpile higher amounts of tall fescue during the fall and reduce hay feeding.

McCulley also found that greater tall fescue diversity improved several soil quality indicators. Soil phosphorus and potassium availability was enhanced in the top 4 inches of soil, and soil cation exchange capacity increased in the 4- to 8-inch soil depth range.

More diversity resulted in lower soil carbon in the top 4 inches of soil but, greater carbon at a 4- to 8-inch depth. The researcher notes that deeper storage of carbon is beneficial because it is less susceptible to losses associated with erosion, tillage, and other disturbances.

Planting mixtures of two, three, or four different tall fescue varieties is an easy way to take advantage of the benefits offered by pasture plant diversity. Better yet, it’s an easy strategy to implement since it only involves mixing seed before loading it into the drill.

## IF YOU NEED TO CUT DOWN A TREE – DO IT IN WINTER

Trees are valuable components of our ecosystems, not to mention the cooling and other benefits they can provide around our homes. But, sometimes you may need to cut one down. From a wildlife perspective, the best time to cut down a tree is in the winter.

### What Are Some of the Reasons to Cut Down a Tree?

There are many reasons why you might choose to remove a tree from your property. Some common reasons include:

- It is a hazard tree which poses a safety risk to people or personal property. If it is a safety risk, it doesn’t matter what time of the year it is. The tree should be removed to make the area safe.
- The tree isn’t a safety risk – yet, but you can tell that it is going to be and you’d rather take care of the problem before it becomes critical. Whether you can wait until winter will depend on the circumstances.
- You want to manage your property for a prairie / grassland habitat, a savanna habitat, or an open

woodlands habitat. Prior to European settlement, much of the eastern U.S. was a complex matrix of habitats ranging from open prairie / grasslands to closed canopy forest. Today, grasslands and shrublands are some of our most rapidly disappearing habitats as they are developed or allowed to grow up into forests.

- You want to do a timber harvest.

### **Why Is Winter the Best Time to Remove Trees?**

During the spring and summer, trees may be used as maternity or nesting sites. We all know that many birds nest in trees. Many of our bats also form maternity colonies in tree cavities or under loose bark. Baby birds and baby bats can't fly. Cutting down a tree in the spring or summer risks killing any baby birds or baby bats in the tree.

In the winter, we don't have any nesting birds or bat maternity colonies to worry about. Few, if any, of our bats hibernate in trees so you aren't likely to disturb any bats by cutting down a tree during the winter. Birds may roost among the tree's branches or in small cavities, but those are transient roosts. Winter birds can, and often do, move from one place to the next. So, if a winter roost disappears, the birds will just move to another. However, many of our owls and some of our hawks will begin nesting in late winter or very early spring, which is why I prefer to remove trees in early to mid-winter, if possible.

There are many reasons why you might need to cut down a tree. Those reasons will vary from person to person and may include safety, economic, and habitat management considerations, just to name a few. Cutting trees in winter, especially the early to mid-winter, will typically have the fewest negative impacts on your local wildlife.



- March 1 – Beef Market Update & BCQA Training; Ohio Co. Extension Center; 6:00 p.m.
- March 3 – Pesticide Safety Certification; Ohio Co. Extension Center; 9:00 a.m. until noon
- March 4 – KY-TN Cowman's Kind Bull Sale; Ky-Tenn Livestock Market; Sale starts at noon
- March 14 – Pesticide Safety Education Training; Ohio Co. Extension Center; 6:00 p.m. till 9:00
- March 24 – Pesticide Safety Education Training; Ohio Co. Extension Center; 9:00 a.m. till noon
- April 4 – Hay Feeding Systems & CAIP informational Mtg.; Ohio Co. Extension Center; 6:00 p.m.