



Your local link to MU for ag extension and research information

<http://aqebb.missouri.edu/aqconnection>

For more information
please contact your
MU Extension Center:

Adair
(660) 665-9866

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(573) 581-3231

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(573) 445-9792

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Preparing Pastures for Spring Grazing

With spring just around the corner, it is time to think about preparing pastures for grazing. If wet soil conditions have left pastures pugged from cattle hooves or rutted from feeding hay, determine if the stand is salvageable or if it will need to be reseeded in part or entirely. Thin stands can be filled by drilling grass seed into bare areas in spring. Late February and early March are also good times to frost seed legumes like red clover, white clover and lespedeza.

The freezing and thawing of the ground works seed into the soil. Start with a pasture which has been grazed or clipped to four inches in height. Three to six pounds of clover and/or lespedeza seed can be broadcast with an ATV or UTV spreader.

Legumes fix nitrogen for growth and provide nitrogen to companion grasses. To fix nitrogen, the legume seed must be inoculated with the proper rhizobia bacteria at the time of planting. Do not apply nitrogen fertilizer to pastures where legumes are seeded. Grasses begin growing earlier in the spring than legumes, and the addition of nitrogen fertilizer allows the grass to outcompete the legume for sunlight, nutrients and moisture.

Soil fertility testing is a valuable tool to optimize forage production. The soil test results are interpreted and recommendations for limestone and fertilizer applications are made based on the crop being grown and the desired level of plant production or yield.

The key to getting accurate soil test results is collecting a representative soil sample. Soil samples should be taken every three to five years to identify trends in the soil nutrient levels and the pH level. Wait at least three months after the application of soil amendments like phosphorus fertilizer, limestone or manure before sampling.

Divide large fields into smaller tracts of 20 acres or less. Soil type and fertility can be extremely variable within a pasture or hayfield, identify variations and sample accordingly. Each tract should represent an area which is similar in soil type, landscape position and historical management. Ridgetops and side slopes tend to be more eroded than toe slopes and valleys. This leads to differences in soil fertility, organic matter and other soil properties.

Human activities influence soil fertility:

- Manure applications have a long-term effect
- Fence placement or removal
- Crop history and fertilizer applications
- Hay harvest or grazing management
- Dust from crushed limestone roads

Animal activities influence soil fertility:

- Animal congregation areas including hay feeding sites, water tanks, and shade trees
- Travel paths
- Manure piles and urine patches

When grass begins growing in spring, allow cool season grass pastures like tall fescue, bromegrass and orchardgrass, to reach a minimum height of six inches before turning livestock in to graze. Grazing before the plant has an opportunity to develop adequate leaf area and root reserves will reduce the season-long productivity of the forage.

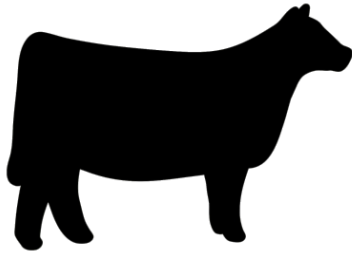
Spring is a great time to prepare pastures for summer grazing. For more information contact the local MU Extension Agronomy Specialist.

Source: *Valerie Tate, field specialist in agronomy*



2025 Show-Me-Select Heifer Sale

The Northeast Missouri Show-Me-Select Replacement heifer sale averaged \$4,545 at F & T Livestock Market, Saturday, December 13.



The 19 producers of the 304 heifers were enrolled in the MU educational heifer management program. The heifers were bred to sires with both calving-ease and growth genetics. The top lot sold belonged to Connor Eckman, Paris and brought \$5,600.

The highest average price from a consignor was \$5,200 on five head from young consignor Connor Eckman, Paris. Other top consignors were E&A Belgian and Cattle Farm's \$4,945 on 30 head and Ed and Scott Jackson \$4,861 on 18 head.

The 45 buyers were responsible for a northeast record \$1,381,950 worth of bred heifers exchanging hands in two hours. Thirty-three repeat buyers purchased 190 head, or 63 percent of the total consignment. Calving surveys returned by these buyers provide important information which is given back to consignors to improve for future years.

The Show-Me-Select heifer development program takes nearly a year to complete. The heifers complete

a pre-breeding examination usually four to eight weeks before breeding. This exam includes pelvic measurement, reproductive tract score, and weight. Heifers may be bred artificially or be exposed to natural service, however; the service sires must meet specific calving ease Expected Progeny Difference (EPD) requirements based on breed. This year 141 head, or 46 percent, of the heifers in the sale were synchronized and bred by artificial insemination (AI).

All heifers must be confirmed pregnant within 90 days of breeding by a veterinarian to determine expected calving date. The use of ultrasound has helped many of the veterinarians improve the accuracies on calving dates. During the development period all heifers undergo an extensive health program and are vaccinated at three different times, as well as treated several times for internal and external parasites. Heifers are also screened for blemishes, body condition, muscling and structural soundness by MU livestock specialists and USDA graders.

Averages of other Show-Me-Select sales from fall 2025 were Joplin, \$4,177 on 246 head; Kirksville, \$4,154 on 200 head; Kingsville, \$4,364 on 213 head; SEMO, \$4,441 on 37 head; and Farmington, \$4,357 on 87 head.

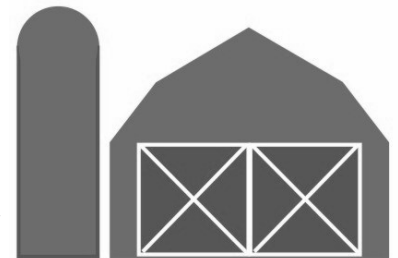
This was the 29th year for the Show-Me-Select heifer sale in Palmyra and over 52,188 heifers have been through the program and 9,426 head have been sold. For more information contact the local MU Extension livestock specialist.

Source: *Daniel Mallory, field specialist in livestock*



Pearls of Production Celebrates the International Year of the Woman Farmer

The University of Missouri Extension's Pearls of Production program is honoring the International Year of the Woman Farmer with a series of events designed to elevate women in agriculture through education, networking, and global collaboration.



The celebration begins Sunday, February 22 at 3:00 p.m. CST with an inspiring keynote by Missouri's

Carey Portell, a nationally recognized speaker known for her message of resilience and leadership in farming. Portell says this year is about visibility and action:

“Women have always been central to agriculture,” Portell said. “Now it’s time to own that leadership and invest in the skills that keep farms thriving.”

Register for the keynote at: pears.io/events/mu/3344/

On Saturday, February 28, Pearls of Production will host an in-person, hands-on conference featuring practical workshops for livestock producers and farm managers. Topics include tips for a successful calving season, genetics for a better cow, small ruminant neonatal care, shop talk, virtual fencing, and drones.

“When women farmers share tools, knowledge, and hard-won lessons, we raise the floor for everyone,” Portell added. “Resilience is not just a personal trait—it is a system we build together.”

In addition to the producer conference, youth of attendees aged 5-12 are welcome to attend the Future Pearls conference at the same time, in partnership with Mizzou Block and Bridle.

Register for the conference at: pears.io/events/mu/2134/

To keep the momentum going, monthly Zoom meetings will feature women farmers from around the globe. These sessions will share innovative practices and stories of resilience, creating a global network of women committed to advancing agriculture.

“This celebration is about building a future where women farmers are not just part of the conversation, they are leading it,” said Heather Conrow, regional livestock and state-wide poultry specialist with MU Extension.

Organizers emphasize that the celebration goes beyond recognition; it is about creating opportunities for growth and success across the entire farming community. “While we are celebrating women farmers, this is not just about one group. When every producer has access to tools and knowledge, everyone wins,” said Conrow.

As the International Year of the Woman Farmer unfolds, Pearls of Production aims to ensure the spotlight translates into sustained, on-the-ground impact. “We are elevating livestock production by honoring women farmers and empowering every producer,” adds Conrow.

For more details and updates, visit extension.missouri.edu/programs/pearls-of-production or follow on Facebook. Also, questions may be emailed to Heather Conrow at hconrow@missouri.edu.

Events At-a-Glance

- ◆ Feb. 22 (Sun.) at 3:00 p.m. Keynote: Carey Portell
To Register: pears.io/events/mu/3344/
- ◆ Feb. 28 (Sat.) 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Pearls of Production Hands-On Conference Date/Time:
Location: MU Beef Research and Teaching Farm, Columbia, MO Register: pears.io/events/mu/2134/
- ◆ Monthly Global Zoom Series Presenters: Women in agriculture from across the globe Details:
Schedule to be announced via Pearls of Production Facebook

Source: [Heather Conrow, field specialist in livestock](#)

Farmers Tax Guides

IRS publication 225 is available at Extension Centers throughout Missouri. These are the new 2025 edition. Stop by and pick up a copy to help with tax planning and preparation. The publication is free.

Private Pesticide Applicator Training (PPAT)

To register call the number listed with **name**, **phone #**, **email** (*if available*) and **location** you plan to attend. Leave a message if no one answers.

Morgan County - Feb. 3 @ 1 p.m. Morgan County Seed, 18761 Kelsay Rd., Barnett (573) 378-5358

Morgan County - Feb. 4 @ 1 p.m. Extension Center, 100 E. Newton St., #4, Versailles (573) 378-5358

Macon County - Feb. 4 @ 10 a.m. MU Extension Office, 111 N. Rollins St., Macon (660) 895-5123

Putnam County - Feb. 11 @ 1 p.m. 4-H Bldg at the Park, 615 N. 22nd St. Unionville (660) 895-5123

Callaway County - Feb. 11 @ 6 p.m. Callaway Health Dept., 4950 CR 304, Fulton (573) 642-0755

Boone County - Feb. 16 @ 1 p.m. Extension Center, 1012 N. Hwy UU, Columbia (573) 445-9792

Linn County - Feb. 17 @ 6 p.m. MU Cornett Farm, 21262 Genoa Rd., Linneus (660) 895-5123

Schuyler County - Feb. 18 @ 1 p.m. Courthouse Assembly Room, 110 W. Washington St., Lancaster (660) 895-5123

Monroe County - Feb. 19 @ 12:30 p.m. Monroe Extension Center, 229 N. Washington St., Paris (888) 577-4158

Adair County - Feb. 26 @ 1 p.m. MU Extension Office, 503 E. Northtown Rd., Kirksville (660) 895-5123

Marion / Shelby Counties - Mar. 5 @ 12:30 p.m. Sesquicentennial Bldg., 621 Johnston Ave., Palmyra (573) 767-5273

Scotland / Knox Counties - Mar. 12 @ 12:30 p.m. Rutledge Community Center, 23615 Main St., Rutledge (660) 465-7255

Moniteau County - Mar. 12 @ 6 p.m. California H.S. Vo. Ag. Bldg., 1501 W. Buchanan, California (573) 378-5358

Lewis / Clark Counties - Mar. 19 @ 12:30 p.m. St. Patrick Catholic Church, 2 Erin Circle St., St. Patrick, (660) 465-7255

Ralls / Monroe Counties - Mar. 30 @ 12:30 p.m. Mark Twain H.S. Ag Bldg, 21622 MO-19, Center (573) 767-5273

2026 Missouri Custom Rates Survey

MU Extension would invites persons doing custom work to participate in a survey. The data will be used to update the *MU Custom Rates* guidesheet, which is a highly used publication.

In addition to data collected in the past, there are new activities: cattle services, machinery rental, aerial application, horticulture services.

To participate: 1) online at muext.us/customagrates or 2) request a paper copy from your local extension center. Survey deadline is March 1.