



LIVE STOCK companion

Volume 1: December 2023

MONTHLY TIP

Precipitation in early December has been very helpful to the winter annual forages, such as annual ryegrass. Although, the rain was late for stockpiled fescue. Keep allocating hay based on the animal's needs and checking your hay inventory. It is also important to check hay quality, especially for bales left outside, as they are losing nutrients. Small differences in protein and energy will require more animal supplementation. The best way to store hay is in a barn, where the losses should be from 2 to 6% and hay quality will last longer.



What's in your bale? soillab.tennessee.edu

*"They didn't have internet when I started 30 years ago as a forage specialist-
Dr. Gary Bates."*

FORAGE MANAGEMENT

Dr. Bruno Pedreira, UT Extension Forage Specialist

December is the last month of the year, which means that we made it through 2023. As forage growers, we could have improved soil fertility, added warm-season grasses to our forage program, stockpiled tall fescue, and used winter annuals to extend the grazing season to reduce the hay needs. We all know how much it costs to feed our cattle with hay and supplements, so a longer grazing season will help to reduce our variable costs. However, at this time of the year, there is not much to be done regarding forage production, but there are still alternatives to increase forage use efficiency and reduce hay losses.

CATTLE NUTRITION

Dr. Katie Mason, UT Extension Beef Cattle Nutrition Specialist

Minerals are a small, but mighty, nutrient requirement for cattle. These elements cannot be made by the body, and they are essential for proper function of the skeletal, immune, and muscular systems. Imagine that the major nutrients, such as carbohydrates and protein, are the bricks in a wall. Minerals can be viewed as the mortar that holds the wall together, playing a supportive role in using those major nutrients. Minerals matter, but it can sometimes be complicated to put your finger on exactly what you need in a mineral program. Mineral availability in pasture and hay forage fluctuates according to the season, fertilizer application, weather conditions, forage species, and other factors. Cattle mineral requirements also fluctuate with growth and stage of production. While cattle get minerals from the diet, we often recommend providing a complete mineral program year-round, just to be sure that minerals are being provided at the appropriate level in the diet.

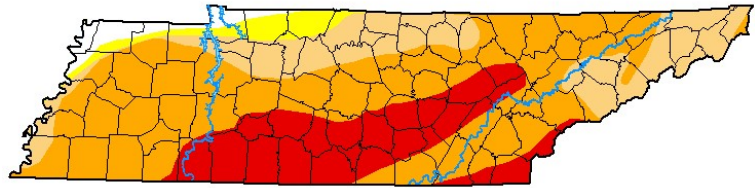
CONTACT US

UT Beef & Forage Center
2505 EJ Chapman Drive, PBB 112
Knoxville, TN 37996
P: 865-974-7324
utbeef@tennessee.edu

WEATHER

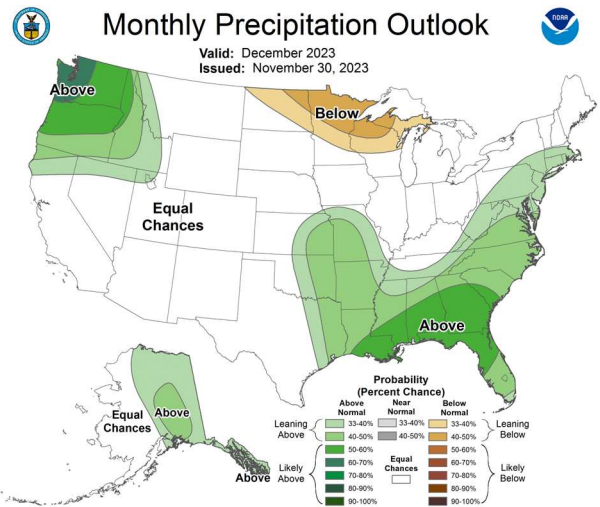
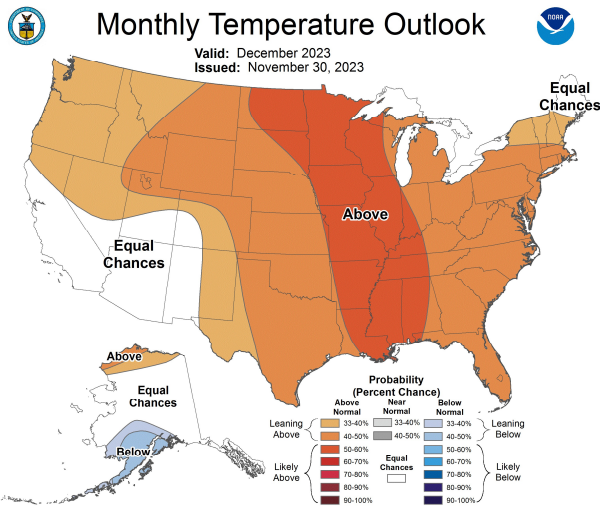
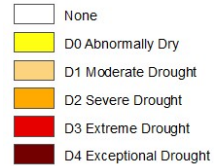
Dr. Bruno Pedreira, UT Extension Forage Specialist

In November, the average temperature and precipitation for the state of Tennessee were 2.7°F and -2.18” departing from the normal, which is 47.4°F and 4.05”, respectively. ncei.noaa.gov



For December, temperatures are expected to be leaning above normal all over TN. Precipitation in the east and the whole southern TN should be leaning above normal and towards average in middle and southwest TN. Drought monitor (Dec. 5) is still highlighting most of the state from severe (D2) to exceptional (D3) drought. Seasonal drought outlook is still highlighting drought remains but improves. droughtmonitor.unl.edu

Intensity:



UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Live.Stock**- Join us for our inaugural live stream February 14, 2024 at 2 pm ET. utbeef.com/live.stock



Photo of the Month- taken by B. Pedreira UTIA Lone Oaks Farm, Hardeman, County

This and other useful information can be found at your local UT Extension office, or on our website.



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