



LIVE STOCK companion



Volume 2: January 2024

MONTHLY TIP

To minimize the need to graze drought-affected perennial cool-season pastures early in the year, consider overseeding clovers (2 lbs/acre of with clover + 4 lbs/acre of red clover) around the second week of February. It will help to improve forage production and, as clover is a great source of nitrogen, it will contribute to fescue fertilization. Spring oats are another option to increase forage yield (seeding rate is 100-150 lbs/acre and planting window is from Feb 20 to April 1). If you decide to spring oats, plan to drill seeds in late February if moisture allows.



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

“If you have been putting off doing something until hell freezes over, don't miss your chance this week!”

Joe Elliott - Adams, Tennessee

FORAGE MANAGEMENT

Dr. Bruno Pedreira, UT Extension Forage Specialist

Most fescue pastures did not get precipitation enough to ensure great forage yield, compromising our ability to stockpile fescue. As it is hard to rely on weather forecasts, selling animals is not the first choice to reduce stocking rates, so over-grazing is usually a secondary effect in a drought year. Thus, besides the lack of forage produced in the fall, some grasses may not have had a chance to store carbohydrate reserves, as the pastures were over-grazed while we were waiting for a few drops of rain. Therefore, after being dormant through the winter, spring regrowth may be slower than usual, and some pastures will end up having fewer tillers. So, be prepared to reduce grazing pressure, fertilize, and control weeds.

CATTLE NUTRITION

Dr. Katie Mason, UT Extension Beef Cattle Nutrition Specialist

1. Understand hay demand. A mature cow will eat 2-2.5% of her body weight in dry matter per day. Account for total head of cattle, hay moisture content, and hay waste when determining total hay needs.
2. Test your hay. A forage analysis will reveal the exact nutrient composition of hay, allowing you to match the quality to an animal's stage of production.
3. Reduce hay waste. Hay should be stored under cover or at least on a well-drained surface with plenty of air flow. Using a hay ring can result in less waste than setting a bale directly on the ground.
4. Consider economical forage alternatives. Popular options for forage alternatives are range cubes, straw, or cottonseed hulls, but understand some options only provide “bulk” and should be carefully supplemented.
5. Observe body condition. Keep herd body condition between 5 and 6, meaning no more than 1 or 2 ribs are visible, hip and pin bones are visible, but smooth, and the spine outline is not visible.

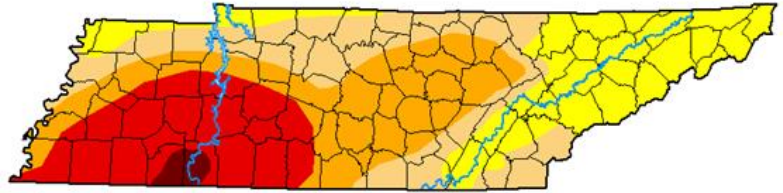
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WEATHER

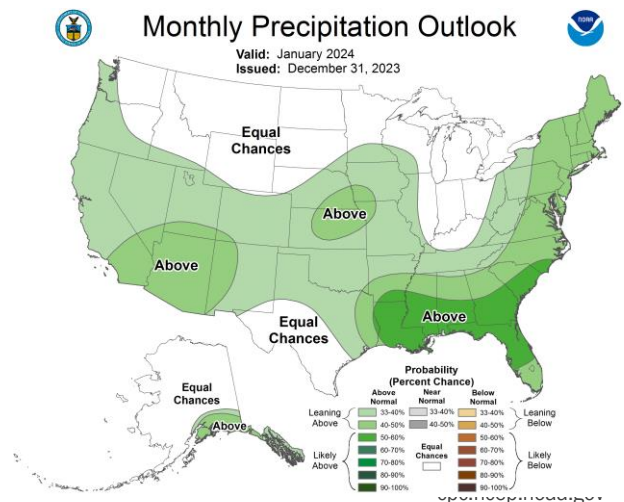
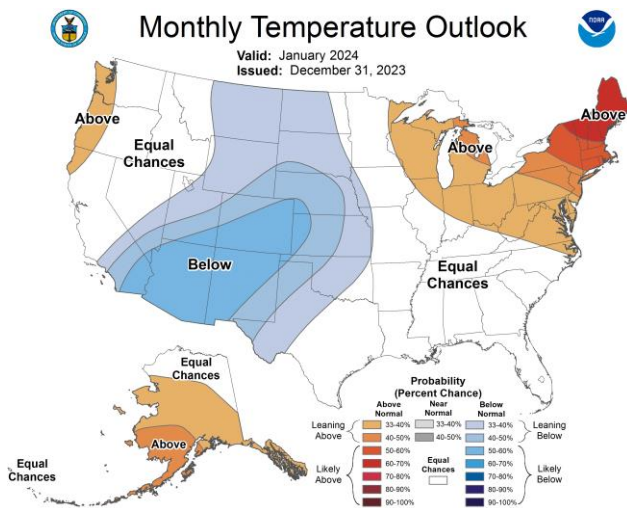
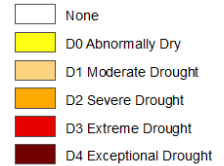
Dr. Bruno Pedreira, UT Extension Forage Specialist

In December, the average temperature and precipitation for the state of Tennessee were +5.3°F and -1.49” departing from the last 10-year average, which is 43.7°F and 5.61”, respectively. ncei.noaa.gov



In January, normal temperatures are anticipated throughout Tennessee. However, precipitation is forecasted to be above the usual levels. As of the Drought Monitor report on January 16th, dry conditions persist throughout the entire state. Optimistically, the occurrence of snow events may bring relief and improve the current drought situation. Middle and West TN are still from D1 to D3 drought, while East TN is getting a little better moving to D0 and D1. McNairy and Hardin are the only two counties that are still in D4. droughtmonitor.unl.edu

Intensity:



UPCOMING EVENTS

- [Live.Stock](#)- Join us for our inaugural live stream February 14, 2024 at 2 pm ET.
- [Silvopasture Systems of the Southeast United States](#) March 7, 2024 – 1 to 3 pm ET.



Photo of the Month - taken by B. Pedreira, Vivien Allen's Farm, Franklin County, TN.

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

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