



## MONTHLY TIP

Planting season is here! Be sure to get the seeding rate, depth, and dates right. Tiny seeds planted too deep will use up all their energy trying to break through the soil, leaving little for growth. Planting at the wrong depth can reduce how many plants successfully germinate in your pasture. Seeding dates are just as important. They give you the best chance to establish a pasture stand that will last for decades. Seeding at the right rate, depth, and during the recommended window will boost your chances of success. But remember, if Mother Nature doesn't bring the rain or the right temperatures, even the best practices won't guarantee results. With favorable weather, though, proper seeding practices can make all the difference in growing a healthy, productive pasture.

*Dr. Bruno Pedreira  
UT Extension Forage Specialist*




---

*“Forages, particularly grasses, are the most important plants on the face of the Earth.”*

- Glenn W. Burton

---

## WHAT'S IN YOUR BALE?

*Dr. Bruno Pedreira, UT Extension Forage Specialist & Director of UT Beef and Forage Center*

Most of the time, hay bales aren't tested after baling. We might have a rough idea, but testing for key nutritional factors isn't common practice. So, what's the value in testing your hay? Even though a forage test costs only \$17, most hay in Tennessee isn't tested. By testing, you can ensure accurate valuations and improve your hay transactions. If you're growing your hay, knowing its nutritional content helps you make better management decisions. You can fine-tune your animal's feed plan, leading to better weight gain and reducing supplementation costs. Many times, cattle underperform because we don't know the quality of the hay we're feeding. If you're buying hay that hasn't been tested, there could be a reason for that. If you're producing high-quality hay and investing in your fields, why not test it to prove it's the best? In my experience, the worst hay I've dealt with is usually the kind that hasn't been tested. If you've already purchased hay, get it tested so you can make informed decisions about supplementation for your cattle. This also helps you identify trustworthy sellers, ensuring you return to the reliable ones and avoid those who cut corners. If you decide to test your hay, take samples from around 10 bales in each batch (same harvest, same field). The best way is to use a forage probe, taking samples from the side of the bale, deep into the center. Check with your local Extension office for help with sampling equipment.

## REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS FOR COMMERCIAL GENOMIC TESTS

*Dr. Troy Rowan, UT Extension Beef Cattle Genetic Specialist*

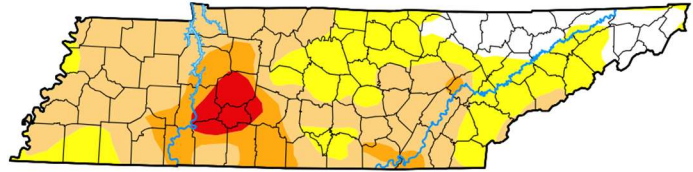
As we make our way into weaning season, the next major milestone in a cow-calf operation is to figure out which females are selected as replacements. Commercial genomic testing has become a popular tool for helping inform that decision. These tests offer the ability for non-seedstock animals to receive estimates of genetic merit like an EPD. There are a few key differences that should inform the way that we view the result of these tests.

1. We have to test more heifers than we plan to keep for commercial genomic tests to be useful. Just testing heifers that we already know we are keeping does no good. Results have to be used to inform decisions.
2. Commercial tests only predict the genetic component of a trait. For lowly heritable traits, this means the test may only account for 5-10% of the phenotype's variation assuming it is perfectly accurate.
3. Commercial tests are less accurate than genomic EPD's. Without animal phenotypes to back up calculations, these tests rely heavily on data from the "training" population.
4. Commercial tests can help make more targeted breeding decisions. Understanding a herd's genetic weak spots can aid in bull selection decisions.
5. Commercial genomic testing may open up added value marketing opportunities. Genomics identify animals predisposed to perform in the feedlot and on the rail.

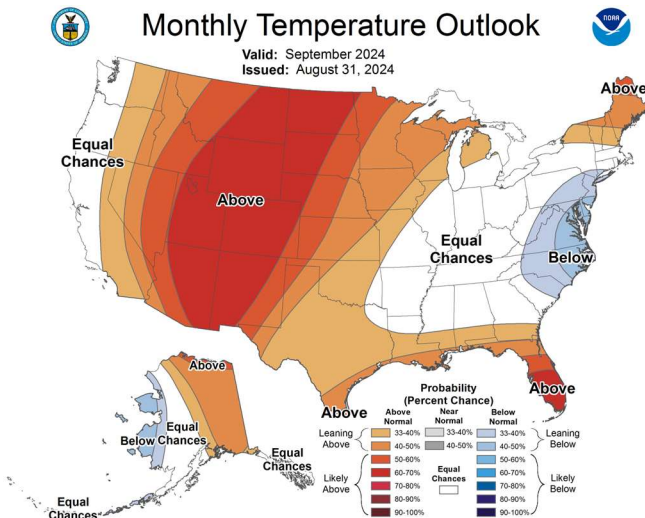
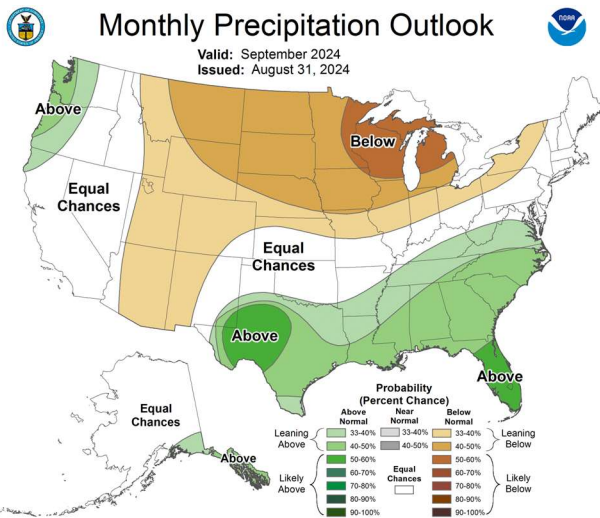
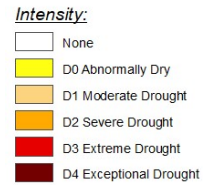
# WEATHER

Dr. Bruno Pedreira, UT Extension Forage Specialist

August temperatures averaged 0.3 °F higher, and rainfall was 3.5 inches below the 10-year average of 76.4 °F and 4.8 inches. [ncei.noaa.gov](http://ncei.noaa.gov)



As August rainfall was only about a quarter of the usual amount, making the dry conditions from July even worse. Now, only a few counties in northeast Tennessee aren't in drought. Lewis, Hickman, Wayne, Perry, and Maury counties are already in D3, or extreme drought, which will definitely impact stockpiling forage and planting. Looking ahead to October, temperatures are expected to be around the average of 60.8 °F, with above-average rainfall across the state. [droughtmonitor.unl.edu](http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu)



## UPCOMING EVENTS

- [Live.Stock](#) - Join us for our live stream September 11th, 2024 at 2 PM ET
- [Precision Livestock Technologies: Beef and Forage Systems Field Day](#) – September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 8 AM CT

These events can be found on [UTBEEF.COM](http://UTBEEF.COM)



**Photo of the Month** by Malerie Fancher – Adella Lonas and Dr. Saulo Zoca, Beef Cattle Reproductive Specialist, at the 2024 Steak and Potatoes Field Day in Crossville, TN.

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

**UTBEEF.COM**

UTIA.TENNESSEE.EDU  
Real. Life. Solutions.™

The University of Tennessee is an EEO/AA/Title VI/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA institution in the provision of its education and employment programs and services. All qualified applicants will receive equal consideration for employment and admission without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, physical or mental disability, genetic information, veteran status, and parental status