



Volume 21: August 2025

# LIVE STOCK companion



## MONTHLY TIP

Stockpiling forages such as tall fescue and orchardgrass is a smart and cost-effective way to reduce hay expenses and extend the grazing season here in Tennessee. These cool-season grasses will continue to grow well into the fall and can maintain good quality even as they mature.

To make the most of this practice, wait for a good rain, then fertilize selected pastures with up to 150 lb of urea per acre. Keep livestock off these areas until after the first frost to allow maximum growth and nutrient storage. Before fertilizing, clip old growth or weeds to encourage fresh, leafy regrowth.

Pastures that contain legumes are especially valuable because legumes naturally fix nitrogen in the soil and provide a higher protein forage. To avoid trampling and waste, consider using rotational or strip grazing, along with temporary fencing, for better control and efficiency. Weather plays a major role in success, so be sure to check the temperature and precipitation outlook on page two of this newsletter before making final plans.

Dr. Bruno Pedreira  
UT Extension Forage Specialist  
Beef and Forage Center Director



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“Rooted in tradition, growing with purpose.”

- Anonymous

## FARMING POST-FLOOD

Walker, Professor, UT Extension Environmental Soil Science Specialist

Dr. Forbes

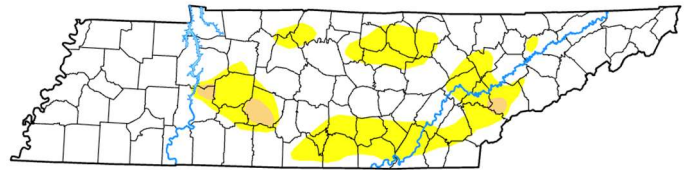
On September 26, 2024, Hurricane Helene made landfall in Florida, as a Category 4 hurricane. Hurricane Helene then headed north, through Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. By the time Helene hit Tennessee on September 27, it was a tropical storm. Much of the damage in Tennessee was the result of record rainfall in the mountains of western North Carolina that resulted in flooding in some areas that had not been seen in hundreds of years. Many farms lost topsoil on their most productive fields, others had large deposits of sediment burying what was once productive hay and pasture fields, row crop fields or vegetable fields. In many cases trees that once protected the riverbanks from erosion were knocked down. Damage to farms across an eight-county area in East Tennessee is estimated to be over \$1 billion. Since October 2024, a team of scientists from the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture has been working to assist farmers across the flood impacted areas. The team has collected sediments from across the region. Sediments have been tested for plant nutrients, as well as contaminants. Germination tests and greenhouse studies were conducted to determine how to re-establish forages and other crops on the flood impacted fields. This summer research plots and demonstrations were established to evaluate strategies for restoring fields and protecting the streambanks. The field day on August 20 will showcase what has been learned so far and discuss strategies that will be tested in the future.

## WEATHER

Dr. Bruno Pedreira, UT Extension Forage Specialist

July temperature was 1.9°F above, and rainfall was 1.96 inches below the 10-year average of 78.6°F, with 5.02 inches of precipitation, respectively.

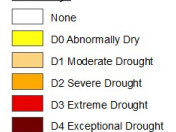
[ncei.noaa.gov](https://ncei.noaa.gov)

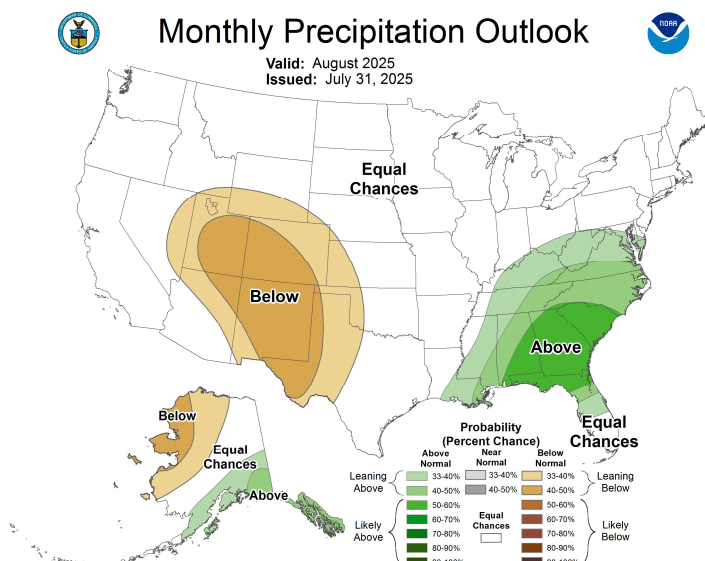
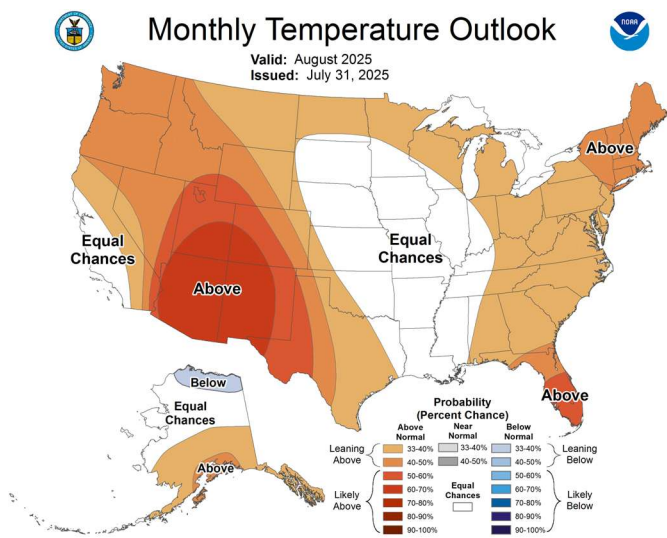


August still looks to be warm and mostly wet. The forecast shows above-average temperatures for the eastern half of Tennessee, and above-average rainfall for most of the state, except for a few counties along the western border. Currently, about 20% of the state is in D0 (abnormally dry) conditions, and 1.3% is in D1 (moderate drought).

Hopefully, with the current August forecast, we can keep our pastures green in Tennessee for a few more weeks. [droughtmonitor.unl.edu](https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu)

Intensity:





## TAKE WEIGHTS!

Dr. Troy Rowan, Assistant Professor, UT Extension Beef Cattle Genetics Specialist

As we approach weaning time for our spring-calving herds, it's important to remember one crucial step: to weigh both your calves and your cows. Good managers in any business know we can't improve what we don't measure, and for most Tennessee herds, capturing performance at this point in the production cycle is critical. Recording weights gives us a clear picture of how our management and breeding decisions are playing out. An increase in herd average weaning weight may confirm that a recent bull purchase was a good investment or that a new grazing strategy is paying off. On the other hand, a calf with an unusually low weight may point to a cow with production issues who needs to be culled. While individual weights will vary, herd averages provide a reliable way to track progress year after year. Weighing cows is almost as important as weighing calves. Larger cows have higher maintenance requirements, needing more feed and forage to sustain their body weight. Across the industry, mature cow size has steadily increased due to selection for heavier weaning, yearling, and carcass weights. But those extra pounds come with a cost: higher feed demand that can offset the added revenue from heavier calves. One of the best measures of cow efficiency is how close she comes to weaning half of her body weight. It's far easier for a 1,200 lb cow to wean a 600 lb calf than it is for an 1,800 lb cow to wean a 900 lb calf.

So, let this be your annual reminder: take, record, and use both calf and cow weights at weaning!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Live.Stock** - Join us for our broadcast  
- September 10 at 2 PM ET
- **Steak and Potatoes Field Day**  
- August 21 at 8 AM CT

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



**Photo of the Month** by Malerie Fancher, The Tennessee Master Forage Program kicked off its Western Region tours in McNairy County. We had great discussions covering a variety of forage management topics.

This and other useful information can be found at your local UT Extension office or on [UTBEEF.COM](http://UTBEEF.COM)

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