



MONTHLY TIP

Preparing for Fall Overseeding

After observing your spring pastures, you have likely already identified fields that are thin or have weak stands. If you already know which pastures need improvement, now is the time to measure the acreage and purchase the seed you will need for overseeding in mid-September. This is also one of the few situations where I recommend intentionally mowing or grazing a pasture short. Right before overseeding, reducing the height of the established plants helps slow their growth and reduces competition, giving new seedlings a better chance to establish and fill in the open spaces.

When overseeding an existing stand, you don't need to use the high end of the full seeding rate recommended for a new pasture. I typically recommend using the low end of the full seeding rate. For example, consider about 15 lb/acre of tall fescue or 10 lb/acre of orchardgrass when overseeding an established stand.

A little planning now can make a big difference. Identify weak pastures, buy your seed, and get ready for mid-September. A timely overseeding can help maintain productive, healthy pastures for years to come.

Dr. Bruno Pedreira, Director,
UT Beef & Forage Center



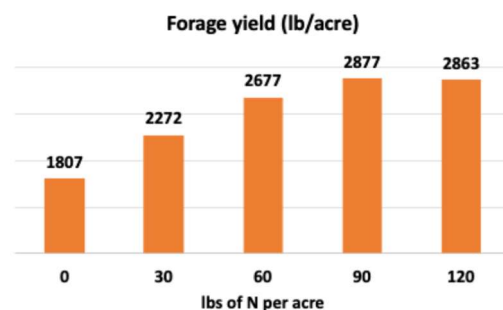
"Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant."

- Robert Louis Stevenson

DON'T OVERPAY FOR STOCKPILED FORAGE

Dr. Bruno Pedreira, Director of the UT Beef and Forage Center

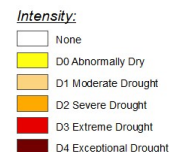
It's August again! From a forage perspective, August means one thing: stockpiling tall fescue. If you have tall fescue pastures, you know they produce abundant forage in spring, followed by a smaller flush of growth in fall. By managing that fall growth, we can produce stockpiled forage—essentially standing hay that can be grazed later, reducing the need for stored feed. The recommended approach is simple: clip the pasture you plan to stockpile by the end of August, then apply 60 lb of nitrogen (N) per acre (about 130 lb of urea, 46-0-0). Ideally, apply nitrogen just after rainfall or when rain is in the forecast. Soil moisture is critical because, without it, nitrogen cannot stimulate forage growth. In fact, average dressed weight reached a record 902 pounds in March 2026. While weights typically decline into the summer months before strengthening later in the year, the key question is how high they may climb this fall and winter. But should you apply more than 60 lb N/acre? We conducted on-farm research last fall in Clay, Jefferson, and Knox counties to answer that question. Increasing N from 0 to 60 lb/acre increased forage yield by 48%, from 1,807 to 2,677 lb of dry matter per acre. However, returns declined rapidly above 60 lb N/acre. Applying 90 lb N/acre produced only 200 additional pounds of forage while increasing fertilizer costs by 33%. At 120 lb N/acre, there was essentially no additional benefit, despite nearly doubling fertilizer costs compared with 60 lb N/acre. The bottom line is simple: 60 lb N/acre remains the sweet spot for stockpiling tall fescue in Tennessee. It provides the best return on fertilizer investment while maximizing fall forage production. This research would not have been possible without the three Tennessee cattle producers who opened their farms to us. Their cooperation is greatly appreciated.

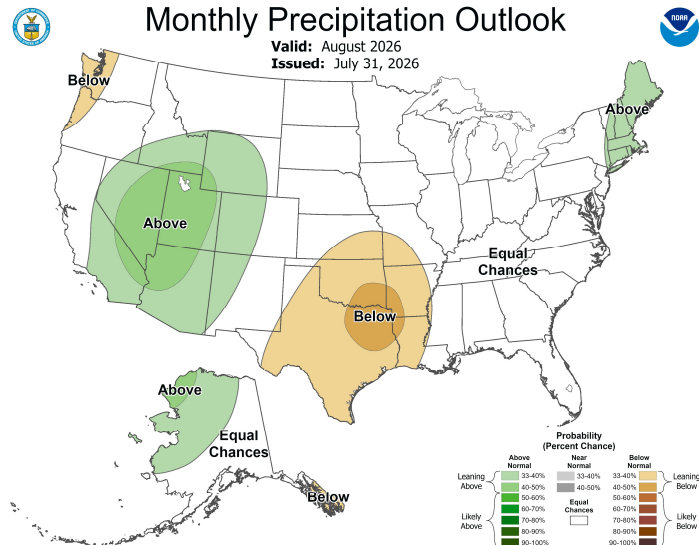
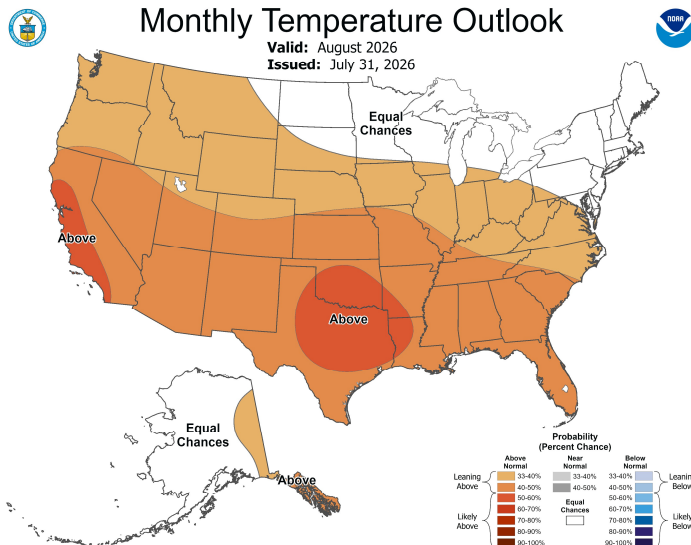


WEATHER UPDATE

Dr. Bruno Pedreira, Director, UT Beef & Forage Center

July's average temperature was 78.9°F, about 0.25°F below the 10-year average. Total precipitation totaled 5.83 inches, 0.84 inches above normal (ncei.noaa.gov). Fortunately, rainfall returned to Tennessee. In July, about 55% of Tennessee was in drought; now it is only 19%. Keeping green pastures over the summer helped a lot, which is uncommon for July-August. Forecasts indicate normal precipitation and above-average temperatures statewide. El Niño conditions should persist through the end of the year, with a 97% chance of continuing into early spring 2027.





PREPARATION FOR BREEDING SEASON NEXT YEAR BEGINS TODAY

Dr. Kyle McLean, Associate Professor, Department of Animal Science

The bull is a critical factor in the success of a cow-calf operation. A single bull is responsible for upwards of 30 calves per estrous cycle. Fluctuation of nutritional planes before, during, and after the breeding season can have negative implications on semen quality, inhibiting reproductive efficiency (Harrison et al., 2021). While it is vitally important to closely manage bulls prior to, during, and immediately following the breeding season to maximize bull health and reproductive efficiency, weight loss is a known issue during the breeding season due to increased activity. A mature bull can lose anywhere from 45.5 to 90.9 kg in a given breeding season (Walker et al., 2009). The use of a defined breeding season, while highly recommended, means that bulls are not actively breeding for 240 to 300 days a year. During this latent time bulls can easily gain excess weight if sufficient nutrient rich feeds are available. Bulls losing significant weight during the breeding season must also revert to a positive plane of nutrition thereafter to regain weight before the subsequent breeding season (Barth 2013). It is important to regulate supplementation at this point to prevent over-feeding leading up to the breeding season to avoid the negative effects that over-conditioning can have on reproductive efficiency and bull performance (Skinner, 1981; Harrison et al., 2021). If body weight gain following the breeding season is not closely regulated, a cycle of body weight and body condition scores swings can be initiated particularly if bulls are observed and fed daily but also not very frequently. This cycling will result in physiological stress and increased feed costs from supplement compared to a consistent management approach. For producers utilizing a dual season system, maintaining bull effectiveness is even more critical for maximizing operation productivity.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Live Stock** - Join us for our broadcast September 9, 2026 at 2 PM ET
- **Forage Field Day** September 3, 2026 at 9 AM ET in Greeneville, Tennessee
- **Beef and Forage Systems Field Day** September 22, 2026 at 8 AM CT in Spring Hill, Tennessee

Details can be found on UTBEEF.COM



Photo of the Month by Malerie Fancher:
Dr. Pedreira alongside several members of the UT Beef and Forage Center were honored at the Annual UTIA Awards Banquet. We are proud to be a part of the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture!

This and other useful information can be found at your local UT Extension office or on UTBEEF.COM

T BEEF & FORAGE CENTER

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