

Agriculture & Natural Resources Newsletter September 2023

Cooperative Extension Service
Robertson County
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What a busy time it has been these past few months! I hope that everyone saw the flyers in last month's newsletter and is planning on attending the programs we have offered this fall.

The Robertson County Beef Field Day is in a few weeks, and then our Area Farm Field Day is going to be held September 29th. We have worked hard on this event and hope you are able to come spend the day with us learning about an array of topics and visiting with agriculture vendors.

Farm School for Women is once again happening during the month of October, and we are hosting a Beef Education Series during the month of November!

The East KY Hay Contest is also happening once again. This program allows for you to have your hay tested for **FREE!** This is a great way to know the nutritional value of what you are feeding your livestock. Just call our office and I will come out and take the samples! The deadline was originally set for September 1st, but if you contact me before September 18th, we might be able to get you squeezed in.

Don't forget about fall soil sampling as well! The first 10 samples are free and you can stop by the office to borrow a probe.

Inside this edition:

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- Farm School For Women
- Beef Education Series
- No Need to Fear
Autumnal Arachnids
- Robertson County Beef Field Day

Samantha Saunders

Samantha Saunders
Robertson County Agriculture &
Natural Resources/
4-H Youth Development Agent



BQCA Classes

September 19th @ 11:00 AM

September 27th @ 5:00 PM

Robertson County Extension Office



FREE!!

If you have any
questions, please
call 606-724-5796



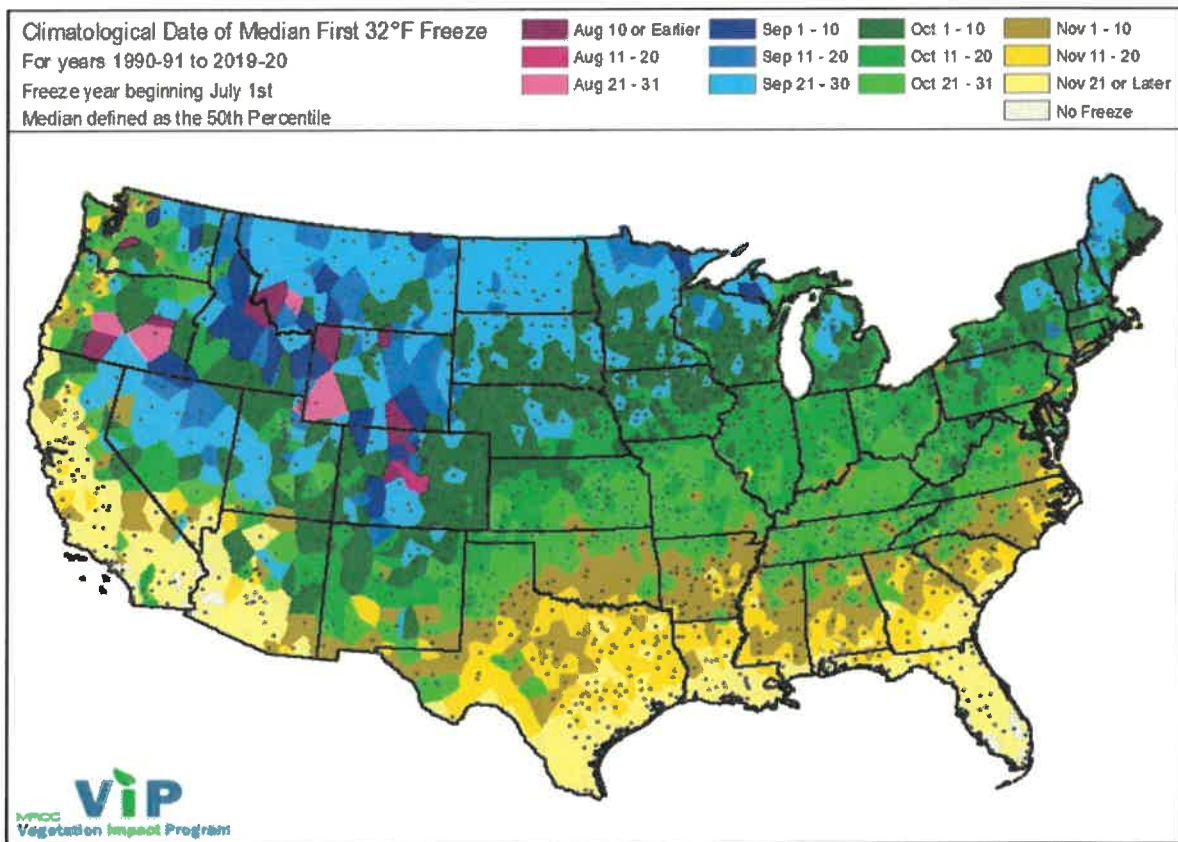


Tracking the First Fall Freeze

by Derrick Snyder - National Weather Service Paducah, KY



As the calendar moves into October, nights continue to become longer, leaves begin to turn color, and first frosts and freezes begin to occur. The first freeze of the fall typically marks the end of the growing season. As shown on the map below, most locations across the Commonwealth typically see their first freeze of the season during the latter half of October into the early days of November.



Frost can often develop on plants even when thermometers show the temperature to be a few degrees above freezing. This is because most thermometers are mounted several feet above the ground, and the temperature a few inches from the ground can be colder than what a thermometer reads. This most often occurs on clear nights with calm winds.

To protect your plants from frosts and freezes, consider taking preventive measures like covering them with tarps or blankets in the evening before temperatures drop. This can help trap the ground heat and provide insulation. Additionally, placing mulch around the base of plants can help retain soil warmth. If possible, relocate potted plants indoors or to a sheltered area. Watering the plants before the onset of frost can also provide a slight protective effect, as water releases heat as it freezes, helping to moderate the immediate environment around the plants.



University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment
Cooperative Extension Service

AREA FARM FIELD DAY

BRACKEN, FLEMING, LEWIS, MASON & ROBERTSON COUNTIES



**THE FARM FIELD DAY WILL TAKE PLACE AT
SEVERAL FARMS ON HELENA ROAD **

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2023

WILL BEGIN AT MASTERS ACRES: 3850 HELENA RD, FLEMINGSBURG

MORNING TOPICS:

- ALL ABOUT BEES
- GENERAL SHEEP & GOAT PRODUCTION
- CATTLE VACCINES
- INSECT ID
- ELECTRIC FENCING DEMO

AFTERNOON TOPICS:

- IDENTIFYING WEEDS IN PASTURE & HAY FIELDS
- HIGH/LOW TUNNELS
- UTILIZING DRONES IN PRODUCTION AGRICULTURE

9:00AM-2:00PM

- 9:00 AM- VENDORS & SIGN-IN
- 9:50 AM- WELCOME
- 10:00 AM- FIRST MORNING SESSION SPEAKERS
- 11:00 AM- 2ND MORNING SESSION SPEAKERS
- 12:00 PM- LUNCH & VENDORS
- 1:00 PM - AFTERNOON SESSION SPEAKERS
- 2:00 PM- CONCLUSION OF EVENT

REGISTER BY QR CODE OR CALL YOUR
LOCAL EXTENSION OFFICE BY 9/22/23:

- BRACKEN COUNTY: (606) 735-2141
- FLEMING COUNTY: (606) 845-4641
- LEWIS COUNTY: (606) 796-2732
- MASON COUNTY: (606) 564-6808
- ROBERTSON CO.: (606) 724-5796



Cooperative
Extension Service

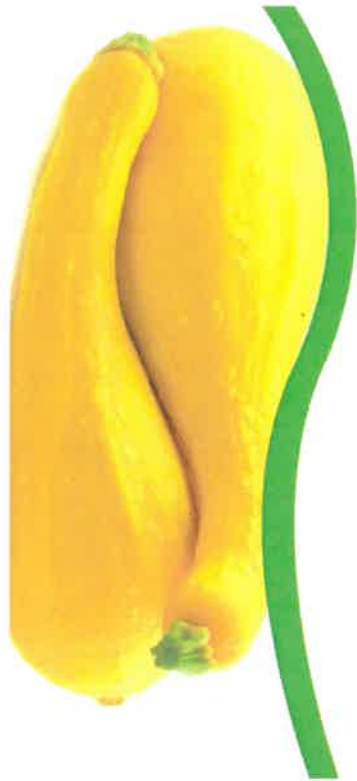
Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

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Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.



Squash Supreme

- 4 cups** sliced summer squash
- 1 medium** onion, sliced
- ½ cup** diced red bell pepper
- 1 cup** fat free sour cream
- 1 - 10% ounce** can reduced fat

- cream of chicken soup
- 1½ cups** dry corn bread stuffing mix
- ¼ cup** melted margarine

- 1. Preheat** oven to 350° F.
- 2. Steam** the summer squash, onion, and red bell pepper until slightly tender.
- 3. Combine** sour cream and cream of chicken soup. Add steamed vegetables to soup mixture and toss to coat.
- 4. Combine** corn bread stuffing mix and melted margarine.
- 5. Place** half the stuffing mixture in

- the bottom of a greased 2-quart casserole dish.
- 6. Add** vegetable mixture; **top** with remaining stuffing mix.
- 7. Bake** for 45 minutes or until mixture bubbles.
- Yield:** 8, ½ cup servings
- Nutrition Analysis:** 170 calories; 7 g fat; 1.5 g sat fat; 5 mg cholesterol; 370 mg sodium; 22 g carbohydrate; 3 g fiber; 7 g sugar; 4 g protein.

Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers' market, or roadside stand.



How can we serve you, Kentucky?

Take a ten-minute survey to help us develop programs addressing needs in your community.

go.uky.edu/serveKY



KENTUCKY
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

An Equal Opportunity Organization



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UNIVERSITY
College of Agriculture, Food and Environment

Paper Copies of the survey will be available to pick up at the Robertson County Extension Office. We appreciate any and all feedback!

Don't Miss Opportunities in this High Market

Kevin Laurent, Extension Specialist, Department of Animal and Food Sciences, University of Kentucky

As we approach the end of summer and nighttime temperatures begin to consistently dip into the 60's our thoughts turn to fall activities, one of which is marketing our spring born calves. It's quite easy to feel good about the cattle business these days with current market prices, however we need to make sure we continue to manage our calf crop and do not miss the opportunities this current market is offering. Good management pays dividends in both lean years and good years. In fact, one could make the case that good management pays even greater dividends in times like these. The following are four management considerations that will help maximize calf value at sale time.

Avoid selling bulls. Table 1 compares steer and bull prices in Kentucky markets for the week of 8/6/2023 to 8/12/2023. As is usually the case, discounts for bulls increase as calves move up in weight class. What is unusual is the severity of the current discounts. Bull calves weighing in the 500-600 lb weight range have historically taken a \$10-12 per cwt. discount as compared to similar weight steers. However, the present discounts for that weight bull calf have been running in the \$20+/cwt. range. As table 1 shows, during the week of 8/6/2023-8/12/2023 that amounted to \$95-152 per head. Although it is best to castrate male calves prior to three months of age, the next best option is to castrate prior to weaning. Research also shows that if calves are castrated early and implanted, weaning weights will be similar to intact males at weaning. A good reason does not exist to leaving a male calf intact. Castration is something that must be done and should be done on the farm where the calf was born to avoid the most stress and add the most value.

Weight	Steer Price	Bull Price	Discount	Discount
Lbs	\$/Cwt	\$/Cwt	\$/Cwt	\$/Head
375	260.00	260.77	0.77	2.89
425	260.58	251.87	-8.71	-37.02
475	259.59	247.18	-12.41	-58.95
525	252.83	234.74	-18.09	-94.97
575	258.39	232.02	-26.37	-151.63
625	252.18	219.98	-32.20	-201.25
675	249.34	213.89	-35.45	-239.29

KY Weekly Livestock Summary Monday Aug. 14, 2023

Wean, feed, and take advantage of the current value of gain. Weaned lots of calves have been consistently selling at a premium to unweaned calves. Weighted average premiums in two recent CPH sales were \$10.45/cwt over state average prices with premiums as high as \$20/cwt for lighter weight heifers. But what is most promising is the current value of gain being offered in the marketplace. Table 2 shows the current value in dollars per head of each additional 100 lbs. of weight. By simply dividing that dollar amount by 100 you can calculate the maximum cost of gain that a feeding program must stay under to be profitable. You can see that there is an excellent opportunity to profitably add weight to calves, especially at the lighter weight classes. Lighter weight calves are also cheaper to feed and have a lower cost of gain than bigger calves due simply to less feed needed for body maintenance. Backgrounding/preconditioning budgets using \$300/ton feed, \$90 hay, 8% interest, and \$15/head health costs along with 2-2.5 average daily gains are currently showing cost of gain figures of approximately \$1.10/lb. for 375-575 lb. calves to upwards of a \$1.50/lb. for 775-875 wt. cattle. Realize, these price figures are from the non-valued added portion of the market report and do not represent any premium for weaning. The best way for small producers to capture weaned calf premiums is to sell in special preconditioned sales such as CPH or other stockyard sponsored sales. Combining a weaned calf premium with a feeding program that captures current value of gain leaves room for a potential significant profit.

Consider a pre-weaning working. Working calves prior to weaning has always been a standard recommendation, especially for calves that were going to be retained on the farm through a pre-conditioning program. With current market prices, this may be a profitable strategy even for calves that will be sold off the cow. Virginia Tech research showed a 10-40 lb response in added weaning weight by deworming and implanting calves in mid-summer. If it is early September and we know we will not sell for another 45-60 days (about 2 months) it may pay dividends to deworm, implant and boost fly control now. If these practices add an additional 20 lbs of sale weight given the current market prices, a \$10 investment may net a \$40 return.

Avoid excessive sale day shrink. Sale day shrink is simply a cost of doing business. Anytime we move or haul cattle we can expect at least a 2-3 % reduction in weight primarily due to fill. However, with every pound worth \$2+ dollars, reducing excess shrink needs to be a consideration. Oklahoma State research showed that unweaned bawling calves hauled to the sale barn the night before sale day shrank approximately 2% more than similar calves delivered on sale day. Sometimes delivering calves the night before a sale cannot be avoided but be mindful that a fresh weaned bawling calf in a hay and water pen at the yard the night before the sale is not going to eat or drink very much, if at all. Some other considerations to reduce shrink are to improve facilities so cattle can be sorted and loaded quietly and efficiently just prior to hauling. Also consider hauling calves early to the yard to avoid long waits in line to unload. Although excessive shrink should be avoided, overfilling calves should also be avoided. Selling calves that are deliberately overfilled is not fair to buyers and can also affect the health of calves in transit. Most of the time this strategy backfires on the seller in the way of price discounts.

How ever you plan to market your calves this year, prices should be favorable. But there is nothing wrong with trying to maximize value and get paid a little extra for all your hard work and efforts.

Weight	Steer Price	Steer Price	Additional Value	Max. Cost of gain
Lbs	\$/Cwt	\$/Head	\$/Head	\$/lb
375	260.00	975.00	---	---
475	259.59	1233.05	258.05	2.58
575	258.39	1485.74	252.69	2.53
675	249.34	1683.05	197.30	1.97
775	230.28	1784.67	101.63	1.02
875	233.06	2039.28	254.61	2.55

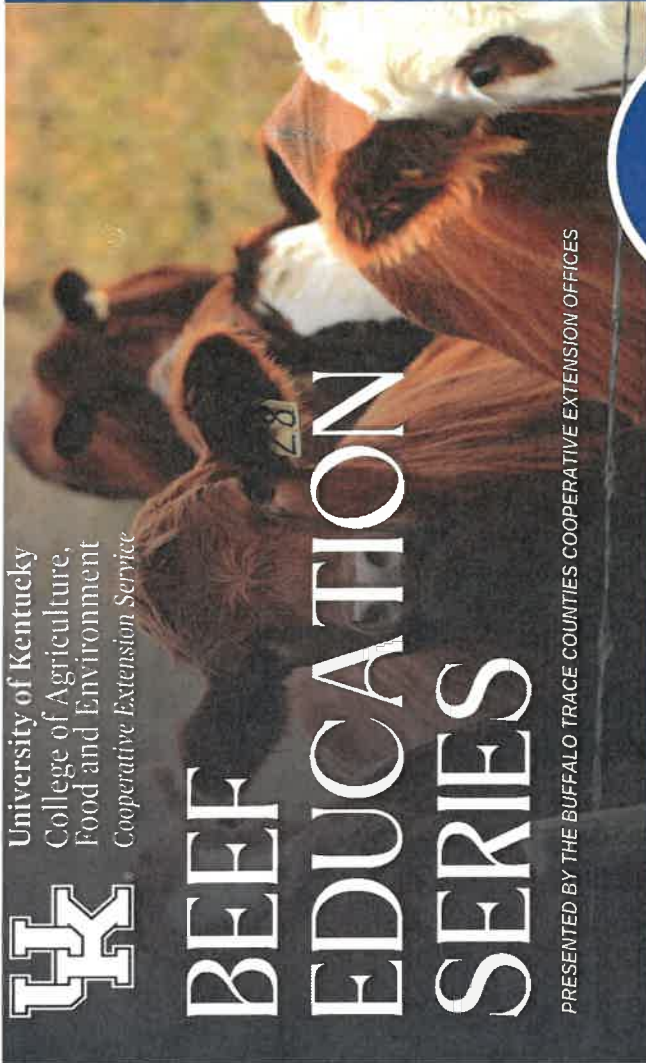
KY Weekly Livestock Summary Monday Aug. 14, 2023



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Cooperative Extension Service

BEEF EDUCATION SERIES

PRESENTED BY THE BUFFALO TRACE COUNTIES COOPERATIVE EXTENSION OFFICES



- 11/2: CATTLE HEALTH @ FLEMING COUNTY EXTENSION
- 11/9: CATTLE NUTRITION @ MASON COUNTY EXTENSION
- 11/16: CATTLE FACILITIES @ LEWIS COUNTY EXTENSION

CALL TO REGISTER OR USE QR CODE:

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- LEWIS COUNTY: (606) 796-2732
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- ROBERTSON CO.: (606) 724-5796



HEALTH

NUTRITION

FACILITIES

**REGISTRATION REQUIRED BY:
10/27/23 TO PLAN FOR MEAL**

6PM

MEAL PROVIDED

Cooperative Extension Service
Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

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Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education
10-2023-0001



University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture,
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Cooperative Extension Service



FARM SCHOOL FOR WOMEN

THURSDAYS IN OCTOBER

6:00PM

FLEMING CO. EXTENSION OFFICE
1384 ELIZAVILLE RD, FLEMINGSBURG

CALL YOUR LOCAL EXTENSION OFFICE TO REGISTER BY 9/29/2023



- BRACKEN: (606) 735-2141
- FLEMING: (606) 845-4641
- LEWIS: (606) 796-2732
- MASON: (606) 564-6808
- ROBERTSON: (606) 724-5796

- OCTOBER 5**
HAULING- LAWS & SECURING LOADS
- OCTOBER 12**
WILDLIFE CONTROL
- OCTOBER 19**
POULTRY HEALTH & NUTRITION
- OCTOBER 26**
PARTNERING GROUP LEARNING ABOUT RESOURCES

OR REGISTER USING THE QR CODE

Cooperative Extension Service
Agriculture and Natural Resources
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Community and Economic Development

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University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education
10-2023-0001



No Need to Fear Autumnal Arachnids

By Blake Newton, Entomology Extension Outreach Specialist, and Jonathan L. Larson, Entomology Extension Specialist

After the coming and going of Labor Day, it starts to feel like autumn will be here before you know it, with all the fun and delicious things it brings. Autumn also brings us more obvious spiders. This isn't some sort of attempt at creating a spooky atmosphere; it's just part of the natural progression of the season. It's also not a good reason to start spraying everything with six or more legs on and near the home. Read on to learn more about which spiders you can find this autumn and a small primer on why there might be more of them after summer vacation ends.

Why do I see more spiders in autumn?

Most of the spiders that are associated with autumn belong to the Orb Weaver Family. Unlike other spiders that make messy cobwebs or very simple webs, orb weavers make large, geometrical webs. The reason that you notice so many orb weavers in autumn is simply because of their life cycle.

Many kinds of spiders live for multiple years, with overlapping generations. Most orb weavers, though, have a single generation each year. They hatch from eggs in spring, grow throughout the summer, and mate and lay eggs in autumn. So, these species are present all summer long, but females reach their largest size and make their largest, most conspicuous webs in late summer and early autumn, drawing our attention. They use these large webs to catch large prey: big grasshoppers, moths, wasps and anything else that they can subdue. Females need a lot of calories and protein to make their egg sacs, which often contain hundreds of eggs.

Orb weavers can be very large and intimidating, but they are not of any medical significance for most people. They can bite, but bite would be similar to a bee sting. Also like a bee sting, there would be a chance for a more serious reaction, but this is very rare with spider bites. And, like all spiders, orb weavers have no interest in biting humans unless they are grabbed or otherwise threatened.

What are the types of autumn arachnids I am likely to see?

One of the most famous orb weavers in Kentucky is the black-and-yellow Argiope, *Argiope aurantia*. It's also known as the "black-and-yellow garden spider," the "writing spider," or simply the "garden spider," among other monikers. This might be the largest species of spider in both mass and leg span (3 inches or more) that occurs in Kentucky (large fishing spiders, trapdoor spiders, and wolf spiders might have a word). The writing spider is common in crops, gardens, weedy meadows, and forest openings. It gets the name "writing spider" because of the bold zigzag in the web, which we call the stabilimentum. There is some debate as to the purpose of this zigzag: it may offer structural support or even camouflage for the spider, but it may also be used to alert birds to the presence of the web or even to attract certain prey.

A similar, related spider, the banded Argiope, *Argiope trifasciata*, also calls Kentucky home. It is a little smaller than *A. aurantia* but is otherwise very similar and found in the same habitats.

Another group of orb weavers you might find building near you is the "spotted orb weavers" (genus *Neoscona*). In autumn, these spiders build very large webs between shade trees and other upright objects. One species is known as the barn spider for their penchant of building on or near barns. Spotted orb weavers are notable for the bold black-and-yellow mask-like pattern on the underside of the abdomen. With a body length of nearly 1 inch and an even longer leg span, these are large spiders. They are timid, though: they quickly run to their retreat if approached.

Hikers in Kentucky are aware of a handful of additional orb weavers that commonly build large webs across trails in autumn. Spiders in the *Micrathena* genus are particularly notorious for this behavior. These are medium-sized spiders with distinctively spikey bodies. The arrowhead spider belongs to a different genus (*Verrucosa*) but exhibits similar behavior. Like all orb weavers, these spiders are of no particular medical significance and are highly unlikely to bite, even if you run into them. Though you might be embarrassed by your reaction to trying to get the web off your face.

Is there a need for management?

All in all, it is best to let these spiders live when you find them. They offer free pest control of some plant feeding insects, as well as help to keep populations of mosquitoes under control. They are all quick to run away from you and are not likely to bite unless handled or agitated. There are times where they may build in inopportune places, but they can be discouraged by repeatedly destroying their web with a broom or other cleaning object. Typically, after having their web destroyed multiple times, they will get the point and move to build somewhere else. There are even specialized brooms that can extend to reach hard to get to spots in order to try and move spiders along.





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ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED



**ROBERTSON COUNTY
BEEF FIELD DAY**

September 18, 2023

6:00 PM

**1952 Five Lick Rd.
Mayslick, KY 41055**

**Counts toward
CAIP Education
Credit!**

Meal will be cooked and
served by Robertson
County FFA

Topics:
Bull Overview (EPD's, CAIP Qualifications, etc.)
Kenley Conner, Select Sires

Weed Control in Pastures and Hay Fields

**Robertson
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September
2023**

