

# Ag and Natural Resources News

November 2023

Cooperative Extension Service  
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► **Grazing Conference**

**November 1, 2023**

Lexington

► **Honeysuckle Removal**

**November 3, 2023**

Boone County Environmental and Nature Center

► **Boone County Farm Safety Day**

**November 11, 2023**

Boone County Enrichment Center

**Visit Our Farmers Market**

Open 7 days a week

9:00 am-5:00 pm



## Preparing Your Cattle for Winter in Kentucky: Essential Tips

As the days grow shorter and temperatures drop in Kentucky, it's crucial for cattle farmers to start preparing their herds for the upcoming winter season. Cold weather, snow, and harsh conditions can pose challenges for both livestock and farmers. However, with careful planning and proactive measures, you can ensure the well-being of your cattle and maintain a productive operation throughout the winter months.

The first step in winter preparation is to ensure that your cattle have access to suitable shelter. Kentucky winters can bring bitterly cold temperatures and unpredictable weather, so a sturdy and well-insulated barn or three-sided shed is essential. Ensure the structure is properly ventilated to prevent moisture buildup, which can lead to respiratory issues in cattle. Additionally, provide clean and dry bedding such as straw or hay to keep your cattle warm and comfortable.



Cattle require additional energy during the winter to maintain their body temperature and overall health. Adjust their diet accordingly by providing high-quality forage, hay, and supplements. Monitor their body condition regularly to ensure they are maintaining a healthy weight. Consult with a veterinarian or livestock nutritionist to create a customized feeding plan for your herd, taking into account their specific needs and the severity of the winter in your region.

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Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.

# Enchilada Rice



**Servings:** 6

**Serving Size:** 1 cup

**Recipe Cost:** \$8.56

**Cost per Serving:** \$1.43

## Ingredients:

- 1 pound lean ground beef or lean ground turkey
- 1/2 cup onion, diced or 1 tablespoon onion powder.
- 1, 14-ounce can no-salt-added whole kernel corn, drained
- 1 tablespoon cumin or chili powder
- 1, 10-ounce can enchilada sauce
- 2 cups brown rice, cooked using package directions or our recipe.
- 1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 1/4 cup cilantro minced (optional)

## Directions:

1. Wash hands with warm water and soap, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds.
  2. Prepare 2 cups of brown rice or use leftover rice..
  3. Dice 1/2 cup onion using a knife and cutting board.
  4. Heat a large skillet to medium heat, and add 1 pound of ground beef and 1/2 cup diced onion.
  5. After handling the raw ground beef, wash hands with warm water and soap, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds.
  6. Break the meat up with a mixing spoon and move around the pan. Be sure it is cooked to an internal temperature of 165 degrees F (about 10 minutes).
  7. Using a colander, drain the mixture, being sure not to pour the fat down the sink. Return the beef and onion mixture back to the skillet. Throw grease in the trash after it has cooled.
  8. Open and drain the can of corn.
  9. Add drained corn, 1 tablespoon cumin or chili powder, and 1 can enchilada sauce to the skillet. Stir well. Simmer for 10 minutes.
  10. If using cilantro, rinse under water to get rid of any dirt. While the beef mixture is simmering, chop cilantro.
  11. Turn off heat and remove skillet. Stir in 2 cups cooked brown rice.
  12. Add 1/2 cup shredded cheese; cover with aluminum foil and let sit for 5 minutes. Sprinkle cilantro on top before serving.
- Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours. Eat within 3-4 days.

360 calories; 14 fat; 6g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 75mg cholesterol; 540mg sodium; 31g carbohydrate; 4g fiber; 6g sugar; 0g added sugar; 28g protein; 0% Daily Value of vitamin D; 8% Daily Value of calcium; 20% Daily Value of iron; 10% Daily Value of potassium.

Access to clean and unfrozen water is vital for cattle year-round, but it becomes especially crucial in winter. Invest in heated waterers or employ a regular water-check routine to prevent freezing. Dehydration can lead to a host of health issues, so it's imperative to keep water sources functional at all times.

During the winter, muddy and wet conditions can lead to various hoof problems in cattle. Regularly check their hooves for signs of issues like mud fever and foot rot. If necessary, trim hooves and provide a dry, well-drained area for your cattle to minimize these problems.

Maintaining good cattle health is a year-round responsibility, but winter brings its own set of challenges. Ensure your cattle are up-to-date on vaccinations and deworming. Cold stress can weaken their immune systems, so it's important to provide them with the best protection possible. Consult your veterinarian for guidance on a winter health maintenance program.

Snow and ice can weaken or damage fences, posing safety hazards for your cattle. Conduct a thorough inspection of your fencing and make any necessary repairs before winter sets in. Additionally, consider rotational grazing to prevent overgrazing and to give pastures time to recover. This strategy can help ensure your cattle have access to adequate forage throughout the winter months.



Prepare for emergencies by stocking up on essential supplies such as feed, hay, medications, and first-aid equipment. Have a backup generator and a supply of fuel on hand to ensure that critical equipment like water heaters and ventilation systems continue to function during power outages. Develop a plan for dealing with extreme weather events, such as heavy snowfall or ice storms.

Winter in Kentucky can be challenging for cattle farmers, but with proper preparation and attention to detail, you can ensure the well-being of your herd. Adequate shelter, nutrition, water, hoof care, health maintenance, fencing, pasture management, and emergency preparedness are all essential aspects of winter cattle care. By taking these measures, you can help your cattle not only survive but thrive during the winter season, setting the stage for a successful and productive year ahead on your Kentucky farm.

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# Watering Cattle During the Winter in Kentucky

Winter in Kentucky can be a beautiful but challenging time for cattle producers. As temperatures drop and snow and ice become common, providing adequate water for your cattle becomes a top priority. In this article, we will explore strategies for successfully watering cattle during the winter months.

One of the most effective ways to ensure your cattle have access to liquid water throughout the winter is by investing in heated waterers. Heated water troughs or automatic waterers can prevent freezing, providing a constant supply of clean, fresh water to your herd.



These systems come in various sizes to accommodate different herd sizes and are designed to withstand cold temperatures. Heated waterers are not only efficient but also reduce labor and the need for manual water-breaking in frigid weather.

Insulating water sources such as pipes and tanks can help prevent freezing. Use foam insulation or heat tape on water lines and tank covers to retain heat. Ensure that all connections are secure and that there are no leaks that could lead to ice buildup.

For those who use traditional water tanks, tank heaters are a valuable addition to your winter cattle management strategy. These submersible heating elements can prevent the formation of ice in the tank, keeping water accessible to cattle even during freezing temperatures.

If you choose not to invest in heated waterers or tank heaters, you'll need to break ice manually. Check water sources at least twice daily to ensure that cattle can access the water. Use a heavy-duty ice-breaking tool or a sledgehammer to create openings in the ice. Breaking the ice should become a routine part of your daily chores to prevent water deprivation.

In Kentucky, winter winds can make the cold feel even more biting. Consider positioning water sources near natural windbreaks or erecting artificial windbreaks, such as hay bales or portable windbreak panels, to protect cattle while they drink.

In some situations, you might explore alternative water sources. If you have access to a pond or creek that doesn't freeze over, consider installing a fenced-in area to allow cattle to access these sources safely. Ensure water quality and safety when using natural water sources.

Water quality is crucial year-round, but it's especially important during the winter when cattle rely on it to stay hydrated and maintain body temperature. Keep an eye on water quality by regularly testing for contaminants and monitoring for signs of poor water intake.

Providing adequate water to your cattle during the winter months in Kentucky is essential for their health and well-being. Heated waterers, insulation, tank heaters, and regular ice-breaking are all effective strategies to ensure your herd has access to clean, liquid water, even in freezing temperatures. By planning and implementing these measures, you can navigate the challenges of winter cattle management successfully and maintain a healthy and productive herd.

## Why Every Farm Should Have a Few Chickens

Chickens have long been an essential part of rural life, providing eggs, meat, and even companionship to farm owners for centuries. However, in recent times, chickens have also gained popularity among urban and suburban dwellers who have discovered the joys of raising these feathered friends in their backyards. Whether you have acres of land or a modest backyard, there are several compelling reasons why every farm, big or small, should consider adding a few chickens to their flock.

One of the most obvious benefits of having chickens on your farm is the constant supply of fresh, organic eggs. Not only are homegrown eggs richer in flavor and nutrients than store-bought counterparts, but they also give you complete control over the chickens' diet, ensuring that your eggs are free of harmful chemicals and additives. Chickens are excellent layers, and with a few hens, you can enjoy a steady supply of eggs year-round.

Chickens are natural foragers and skilled bug hunters. By letting your chickens roam around your property, they will eagerly gobble up insects, grubs, and even small rodents. This natural pest control not only reduces the need for chemical pesticides but also helps maintain a balanced ecosystem on your farm.

Chickens are not picky eaters; they'll happily devour kitchen scraps, garden waste, and leftovers from your table. This means you can significantly reduce food waste on your farm by feeding it to your chickens, which will convert it into valuable fertilizer in the form of nutrient-rich chicken manure. This "black gold" can be used to enrich your garden soil, improving crop yields and overall farm productivity.

Compared to larger livestock, chickens are relatively low-maintenance animals. They require a basic shelter to protect them from harsh weather and predators, fresh water, and a balanced diet. Their feed is inexpensive, and many of their dietary needs can be met by allowing them to free-range. Chickens also reproduce relatively easily, providing an opportunity for the farm to expand its flock without significant upfront costs.

For families with children, keeping chickens can be an excellent way to teach responsibility and instill a sense of sustainability. Children can take part in feeding, collecting eggs, and caring for the chickens, promoting valuable life skills and a connection to the food they eat. It's an opportunity to educate the next generation about where their food comes from and the importance of ethical and sustainable farming practices.

As mentioned earlier, chicken manure is a valuable fertilizer for your farm. It is rich in nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium – essential nutrients for plant growth. By incorporating chicken manure into your compost or directly into your garden beds, you can enhance soil fertility, leading to healthier and more productive crops.

Chickens are surprisingly social animals and can provide a sense of companionship for farm owners. Many people find joy in watching their chickens scratch and peck around the yard, displaying their unique personalities and behaviors. They can also be surprisingly affectionate, making them endearing additions to the farm.

Whether you're running a large-scale farm or just a small homestead, the benefits of having a few chickens are undeniable. They provide fresh eggs, natural pest control, efficient waste management, and sustainable fertilizer production, all while teaching valuable life lessons and adding a touch of charm to your farm. Chickens are indeed a cluck-worthy addition to any farm, offering a multitude of advantages that can enhance both productivity and the overall quality of life on the farm. So, don't be afraid to embrace the feathered world of chickens and enjoy the many rewards they bring to your farm.





# BOONE COUNTY FARM SAFETY

## DATE

November 11th, 2023  
9:00 am-12:00 pm

## LOCATION

Boone County  
Enrichment Center  
1824 Patrick Drive,  
Burlington, KY 41005

## JOIN US!

Come learn how to be farm safety from Boone County Cooperative Extension! Demonstrations by the local fire department, rollover tractors with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, presentations about farmer stress and suicide prevention, and more!

## REGISTER

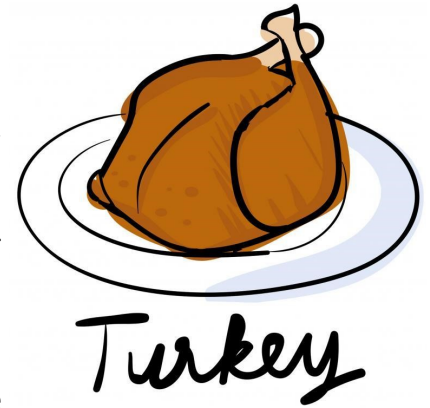
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## SCAN HERE



## It's Turkey Time!

What many regard as the nation's first Thanksgiving took place in 1621 as the religious separatist Pilgrims held a three-day feast to celebrate a bountiful harvest. The day did not become a national holiday until 1863 when President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the last Thursday of November as a national day of thanksgiving. Later, President Franklin Roosevelt clarified that Thanksgiving should always be celebrated on the fourth Thursday of the month to encourage earlier holiday shopping, never on the occasional fifth Thursday. Nice to know that even in President Roosevelt's time that the wife's still controlled the calendar to allow for more shopping time before Christmas. Makes me wonder when the very first black Friday sale that requires husbands to wake up at 4:00 a.m. to chauffeur their wife from store to store at a time of day that I should either be asleep or at least in a deer stand. But anyway back to a bit of turkey talk.



Although juicy and tender turkeys are the main cuisine of today's Thanksgiving celebrations, these birds were NOT the most popular centerpieces on the first Thanksgiving tables. In 1621 when the Plymouth colonists and Wampanoag Indians celebrated the first Thanksgiving, they were gobbling up many more foods than just turkey. Since lobster, goose, duck, seal, eel, and cod were plentiful during this time, these foods were most likely the main courses of this first feast. Deer meat and wild fowl are the only two items that historians know for sure were menu of this autumn celebration. There you go deer meat, that's another reason why I should be on the deer stand early black Friday morning instead of playing bumper cars in the mall parking lot so that my wife can get a free ornament for being one of the first 100 customers.

One story tells of how Queen Elizabeth of 16th century England was chowing down on roast goose during a harvest festival. When news was delivered to her that the Spanish Armada had sunk on it way to attack her beloved England, the queen was so pleased that she order a second goose to celebrate the great news. Thus, the goose became the favorite bird at harvest time in England. When the Pilgrims arrived in America from England, roasted turkey replaced roasted goose as the main cuisine because wild turkeys were more abundant and easier to find than geese.

Turkey production in the United States for 2022 was 5.56 billion pounds. Minnesota leads the nation in the number of turkeys raised.

Who knows the true story of why turkeys became the main course for Thanksgiving and really do we care as long as we can continue to enjoy Thanksgiving with family, friends, neighbors, and a meal that will last for days.



## Kentucky forests signal season change

Source: Billy Thomas, UK extension forester

If you've been waiting all year to see beautiful fall colors in Kentucky, it is almost time. Mid-October is usually the beginning of the state's brilliant fall tree color show. Actually, these brilliant colors have been there all along; they've been masked by a cloak of chlorophylls, green pigments vital to a tree's food-making process.

Trees use and replenish chlorophylls during the growing season. High replacement maintains green leaf color. As fall approaches, the green pigments are replaced at a slower rate due to complex environmental factors and the trees' genetic makeup. The dwindling supply of green pigments unmasks other pigments that were present all along, revealing the spectacular show of fall color.

We can enjoy a variety of fall colors because Kentucky's diverse climate and soil composition enable many diverse trees to grow here.

Black gum, pear, sumac, dogwood, maple, oak and sassafras trees produce various shades of red. Other trees give us a range of orange and yellow hues such as yellow-poplar, birch, hickory and beech.

Since black gum and sumac trees shut down chlorophyll production early, they are the first to reveal fall color. Both change from green to red, leaf by leaf. No leaf seems to be all green or red at the same time, giving a spotty appearance throughout the trees.

You might be surprised to know that what makes leaves change color has less to do with "Jack Frost" and more to do with shorter days activating a "chemical clock" that tells the trees to shut down chlorophyll production and prepare for winter.

When the tree completely shuts down chlorophyll production, a layer at the base of the leaf forms. This abscission layer causes the leaf to fall off the branch, leaving only the bud with next year's leaves and flowers to wait for the signal in the spring to bloom and grow.

For more information on fall tree color or other forestry topics, contact your Boone Cooperative Extension Service office.



11. 03. 2023 | 1 PM - 3:30 PM

# HONEYSUCKLE REMOVAL

BOONE COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURE CENTER  
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*An equal opportunity organization*



## **We are so proud!**

*Environmental Education Agent, Lacey Kessell, and Horticulture Technician, Joe Smith, were both nominated for the 2023 Lisa P. Collins Outstanding Staff Awards!*

*They were recognized at the University of Kentucky's Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment Roundup Event. We are so proud of them and all that they do for Boone County Extension!*



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