

DECEMBER 2025 & JANUARY 2026

Washington County

Newsletter

Agriculture and Natural Resources

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Santa Fe Rabbit Soup



- 1 (3 pounds) rabbit, cut up
- 1 (7 ounces) can chopped green chilies, drained
- 1.5 cups frozen or canned corn, drained
- 1 (28 ounces) can no-salt added diced tomatoes
- 1 (15 ounces) can low-sodium black beans, rinsed
- 1 (14 ounces) can low sodium vegetable broth
- 1 (32 ounces) box low sodium chicken broth
- 3 tablespoons reduced-sodium chili seasoning mix

Place all ingredients in slow cooker. Simmer on low 6 to 8 hours. Remove rabbit and remove meat from bones. (Be careful, rabbit will be hot so use a utensil to help.) Return rabbit meat to soup. Stir to combine and serve. Freeze leftovers in freezer bags or freezer container.

FEATURED PHOTOS



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Stay Up-to-Date



Agents go LIVE each Tuesday on
100.9 at 8:20!



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<https://washington.ca.uky.edu/>

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MARTIN GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

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

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University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Kentucky Cooperative Extension, Lexington, KY 40546



IMPORTANT DATES

December

- 1st : All About Goats! Webinar
- 5th : Country Ham Contracts Due
- 5th : Wreath Making
- 3rd - 6th : KY Farm Bureau's Annual Meeting, Louisville
- 11th : Beef Management Webinar
- 15th : All About Goats! Webinar
- 31st : Cost-Share Due

The office will be closed December 24th - January 2nd

January

- 1st : Office Closed
- 8th : Beef Management Webinar
- 11th - 13th : KY Fruit & Vegetable Conference, Bowling Green
- 15th - 16th : Kentucky Cattlemen's Convention, Owensboro
- 19th : Office Closed
- 26th : Preparing your Farm Taxes
- 30th - 31st : OAK Annual Farming Conference

February

- 11th - 14th : National Farm Machinery Show, Louisville
- 12th : Livestock Water and Water Quality



TIMELY TIPS

Forages

- Begin utilizing stockpiled pastures. Graze pastures with orchardgrass and clovers first. Save tall fescue pastures for late winter.
- Using polywire, strip graze stockpiled pastures to improve utilization. Start at the water sources and allocate enough forage for 2-3 days. Backfencing is not necessary.
- Make plans to frost seed red and white clover onto closely grazed tall fescue pastures in February.
- Begin hay feeding as stockpiled forages are used up.
- Minimizing waste by utilizing ring feeders.
- Remove animals from very wet pastures to limit pugging and soil compaction.
- Feed hay in poor pastures to increase soil fertility and enhance organic matter.

Beef

- Monitor body condition and increase feed, if needed, for all classes of cattle. It often gets cold in December and the nutrient needs of cattle increase as temperatures fall below their comfort level. Be especially mindful of cold, wet conditions and increase energy availability. Consult your nutritionist to ensure that your rations are meeting the nutrient requirements during stressful weather.





Sheep and Goats

- Winter is a great time to watch the market for an opportunity to sell cull males and females. Prices should be on the rise as the supplies decrease and demand peaks.

PREPARING FARM TAXES

Preparing your farm taxes with Jonathan Shepherd, UK Ag Economics Specialist, will be a great start to your tax season. Learn about the importance of record keeping and farm spending organization to help you maximize your tax appointment this spring.

Topics Include

-  Record Keeping
-  Tax Forms
-  Hobby vs Business Loss
-  Weather Related Deferrals


January 26th, 2026

6:00 PM

Washington County Extension Office


You will be contacted with updates
if anything changes due to weather!

RSVP

 (859) 336-7741
or scan the QR
code.



Livestock Watering & Water Quality



UK Extension Associate, Lee Moser, will discuss livestock watering systems and water quality. This program will cover alternative watering sources for livestock, local watersheds, and pond management techniques for ponds as a water source.

February 12th

6:00 PM

Washington County
Extension Office



RSVP:
859-336-7741

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HOW TO KEEP LIVESTOCK AND FIELDS SAFER FROM MUD

Source: Steve Higgins, assistant adjunct professor, Department of Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering

As every livestock owner knows, mud is more than a nuisance. It robs animals of energy, wastes feed and tears up pasture. The good news is that a few wise choices about location and surface design can turn the worst trouble spots into firm, drainable ground that holds up month after month.

Start with placement

Heavy-use areas — feeders, gates, mineral sites and waterers — are best when set on a slight rise, not in a “bottom” or along a ditch. When you place these hubs on higher ground, you deal only with the rain that falls there, not with water flowing through from the rest of the field. That single decision cuts most of the mud before it is able to form.

Build a layered pad

Under any rock or gravel, separate soil from stone with felt-like, non-woven, geotextile fabric. Overlap seams by a foot or two, lay it flat, then cover with compacted dense-grade aggregate. Go easy with the first lift so you don’t tear the fabric, then make sure it is well compacted. This simple fabric-plus-rock system spreads the load from hooves and traffic, sheds water and resists rutting. When the surface loosens with use, add a thin layer of stone and compact again.

Choose the right surface for the spot

Concrete earns its keep around waterers, feed bunks and scraping lanes. Give it a rough finish — rougher than a sidewalk — to protect hips and joints. Where you want gravel but need more stability, plastic paver grids (think shallow egg cartons) lock rock in place and stop sloppy areas before they begin. Budget-friendly reinforcements, like filling old tires or cinder blocks with rock, can stiffen lanes and edges. Soil-cement can work for larger pads built in warm weather; use concrete where routine scraping is expected.

Daily habits that pay off

Keep hay off bare soil; once trampled into mud, it’s lost feed and a future weed patch. Scrape manure before it dissolves into sludge. Avoid driving heavy equipment across wet ground to reduce ruts that channel more water during the next rain. Give animals a firm path to and from water and feed so they don’t churn a single patch into soup. Where animals access a stream, build one armored entry or crossing rather than letting the whole bank break down.

Fixing cow paths

Grazing animals form contour trails (“cowtouring”) and single-file cow paths to save energy moving to water, feed and minerals. In wet weather, these routes can trough, erode, expose slick clay and become hard to traverse, especially on steeper slopes (cattle struggle above ~30%).

An all-weather path solves this by building a drainable base: excavate about eight inches, lay nonwoven geotextile, set recycled tire tread cylinders end-to-end in the trench and fill inside and around them with dense-grade aggregate. The tire tops finish at or just above grade. These paths provide firm footing year-round, cut energy costs for animals and protect fields from rutting and erosion.