

# Tornado Moves Dairy Grazing Conference From Joplin To Springfield, Mo.

## COLUMBIA, MO.

The Joplin tornado has moved the Missouri Dairy Grazing Conference, July 6-8, to Springfield, Mo., after all, say University of Missouri Extension hosts.

"The Joplin meeting site, which escaped storm damage, continues to be used in recovery efforts," said Joe Horner, MU Extension dairy economist and co-host for the national event.

The conference will be moved about 70 miles to the Springfield Expo Center at the University Plaza Hotel.

"Missouri farmers will recognize the meeting place as the longtime host to the Spring Forage Conference," Horner said. "For most of those flying in, the meeting place will be closer to the airport."

The move, while stressful for organizers, will cause minimal disruption to those attending, Horner said. There will be no changes in fees or hotel room rates.

Anyone preregistered with the convention motel in Joplin has had their registrations shifted to Springfield already. "Individuals are being notified directly," Horner said.

Those who still want to register can do so by going to the MU website for conference details: <http://agebb.missouri.edu/dairy/>.

A major attraction for the conference is on-farm visits to grazing dairies owned by Missouri and New Zealand producers.

"There will be little difference in bus travel time to the farms," Horner said. "To provide new farms to visit, we went further out from Joplin this year. Those farms were located about halfway to Springfield."

"All of the host farms were outside the tornado path and were undamaged by the storms," said Tony Rickard, MU Extension dairy specialist, Cassville, Mo.

The Missouri conference is held every two

years to teach management-intensive grazing for milk production.

Nationally, Missouri is recognized for rotational grazing research and extension teaching. A dairy grazing farm led the way at the MU Southwest Center, Mount Vernon, Mo., part of the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, Columbia. The advantage of dairy grazing is the reduced feed costs, the MU Extension specialists report. Those cost savings attracted attention of producers from across the country and around the world.

"As milk prices dropped in recent years and profits shrunk, the use of grass to replace grain rations became attractive," Horner said.

On the program, Rickard will tell how conventional dairy farms that use stored forages and grain are adding rotational grazing to their feeding methods.

The conference remains open to dairy producers from both conventional and grazing operations. All can still enroll before the late fees are charged starting June 20.

New research from land-grant universities will be reported at the meeting.

Randy Mooney, Rogersville, Mo., will give the wrap-up summary of the conference. He is an early adopter of management-intensive grazing on his dairy farm. He also is chairman of the board of Dairy Farmers of America, one of the conference sponsors.

Registration fee is \$150 per person, with \$100 for each additional person from the same farm. A \$25 fee will be added for late registrations.

Printed conference proceedings will be available for \$25. A free digital copy will be posted on the MU website.

Early registrations show attendance from across the country and several foreign countries. △