



Mary Manning  
Photography

**Kentucky**  
UNBROKEN SPIRIT

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Kentucky Department of Agriculture  
Richie Farmer, Commissioner  
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State Veterinarian





# Kentucky Horse Population

- ❖ Estimated 300,000
  - 35 – 40K thoroughbreds
  - Quarter Horse – Largest breed
    - Growing due to “Breeder’s Incentive Fund”
  - Many breeds represented
  - Large percent non-registered

## ❖ Across all economic levels

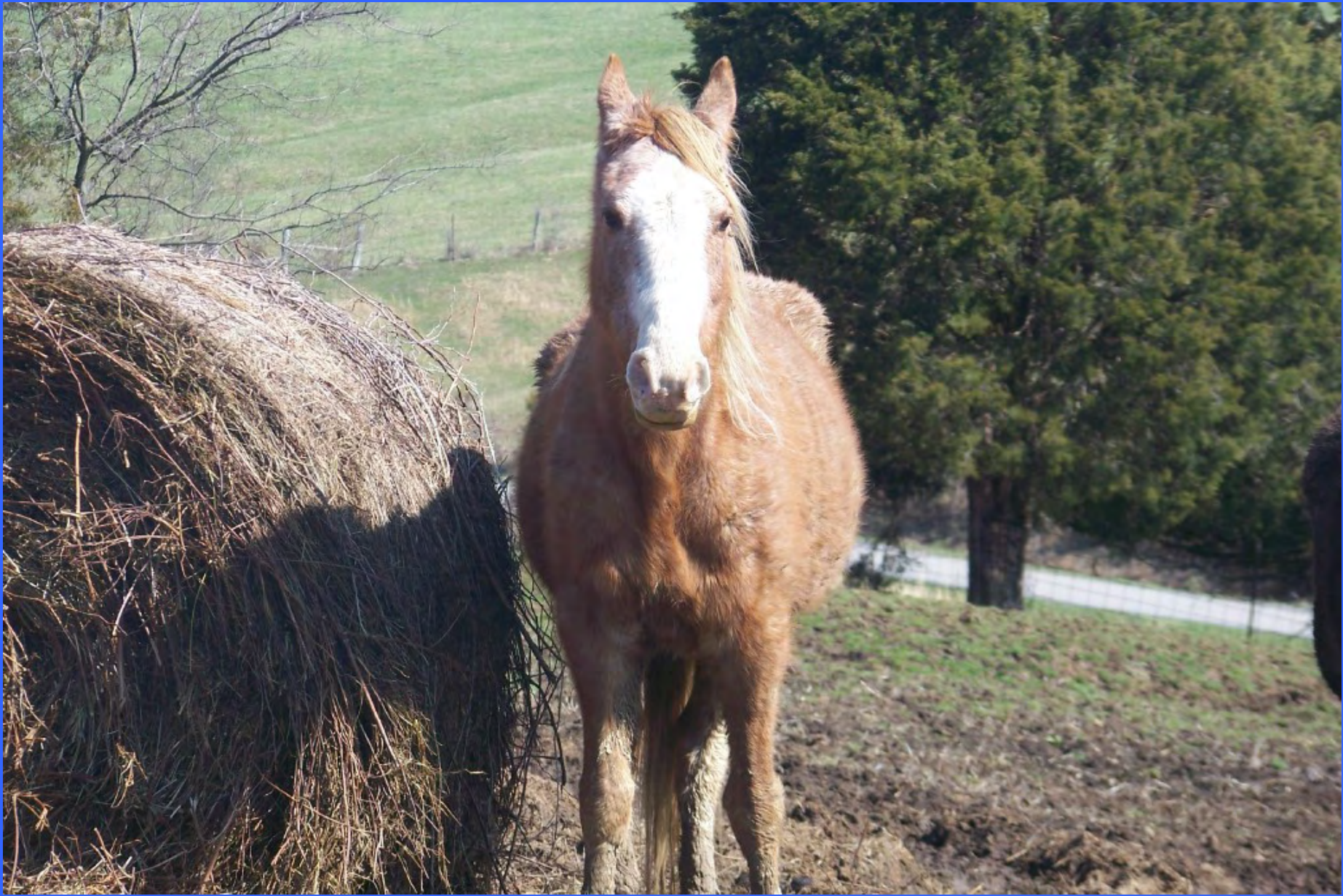
## ❖ Market

- TB – 15K annually
  - Keeneland
  - Fasig - Tipton
- Others – small sales
  - Private
  - Breed sales
  - KY Approved Horse Sales
    - 25 markets
    - 17 – 18K annually
    - Lower-end with estimated 50% previously in slaughter channel
  - Amish sales

# 2007 – 2008 Equine Neglect Crisis

## Extent of Crisis

- Unknown
- KY Horse Council > 100 calls
- KY Dept of Agriculture / local government
- Cases with multiple horses (25-75 head)
- Many unreported









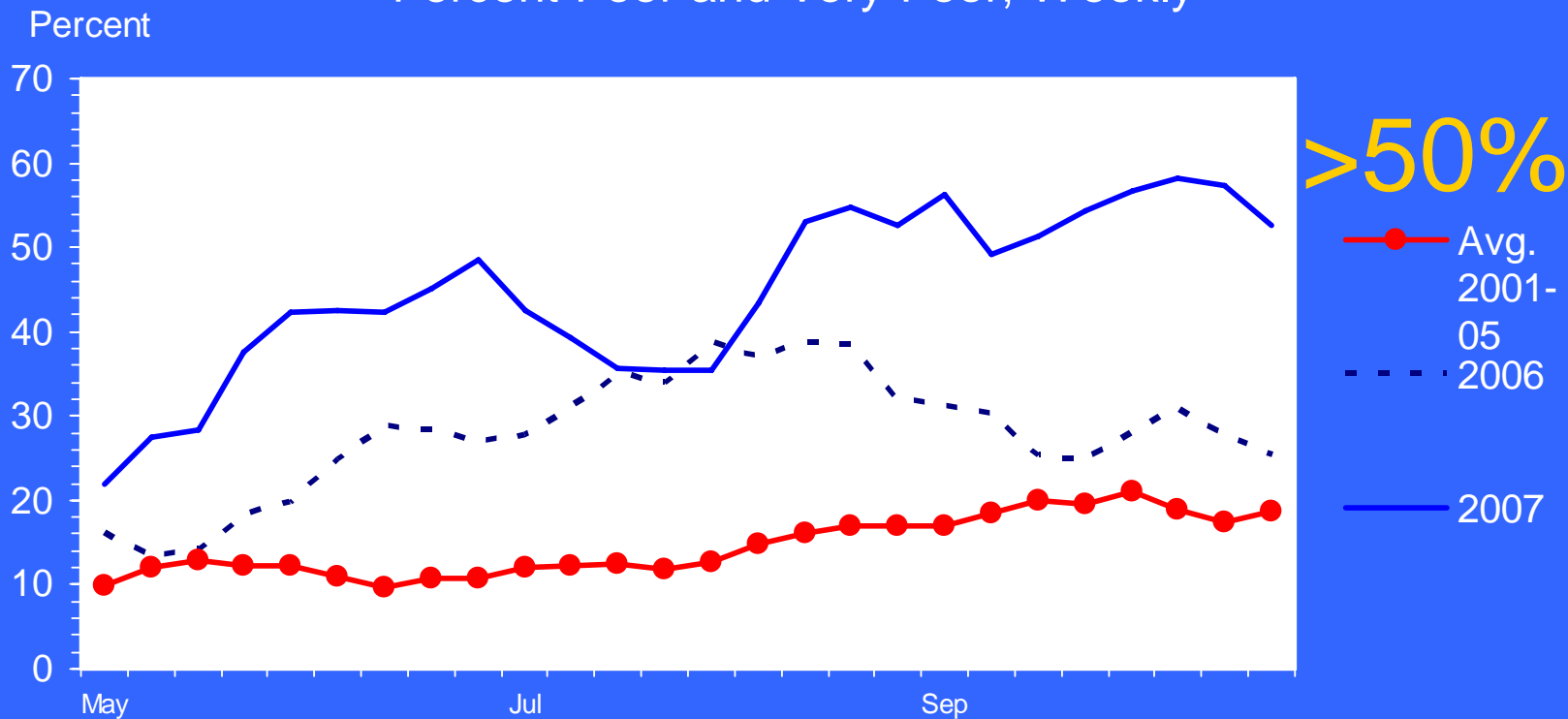
# WHY?

## Convergence of Factors

- Decline in general economy
- Horses are expensive to own: “No such thing as a CHEAP horse”
- Spring Freeze
- Extended widespread drought

# SOUTHEAST REGION RANGE AND PASTURE CONDITION

## Percent Poor and Very Poor, Weekly

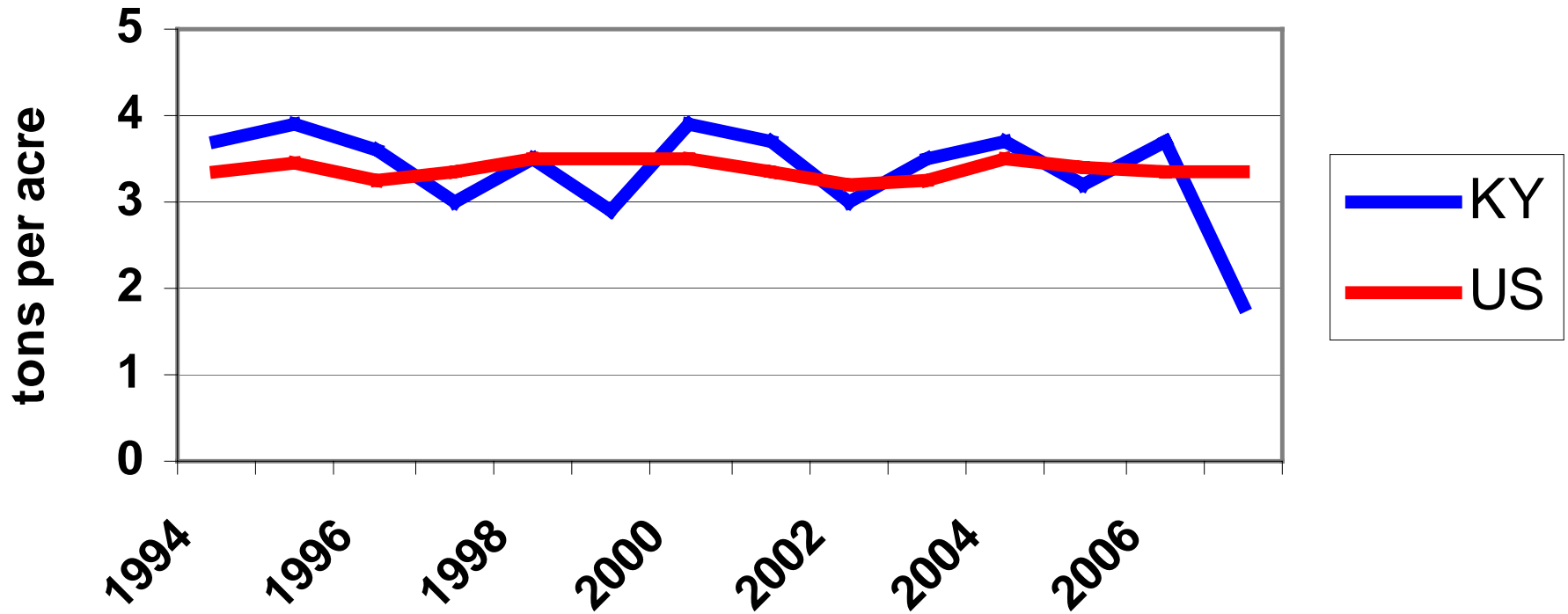


Livestock Marketing Information Center

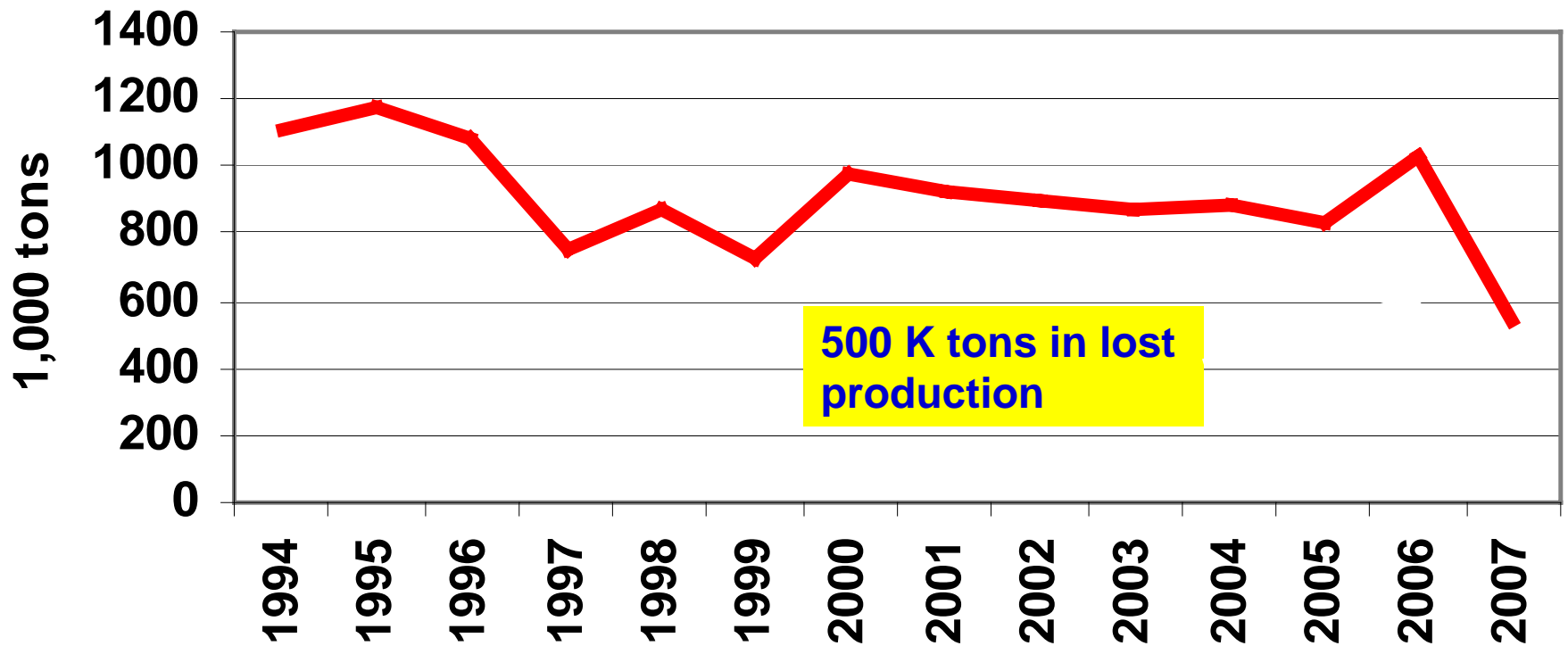
Data Source: USDA/NASS

G-NP-36  
10/29/07

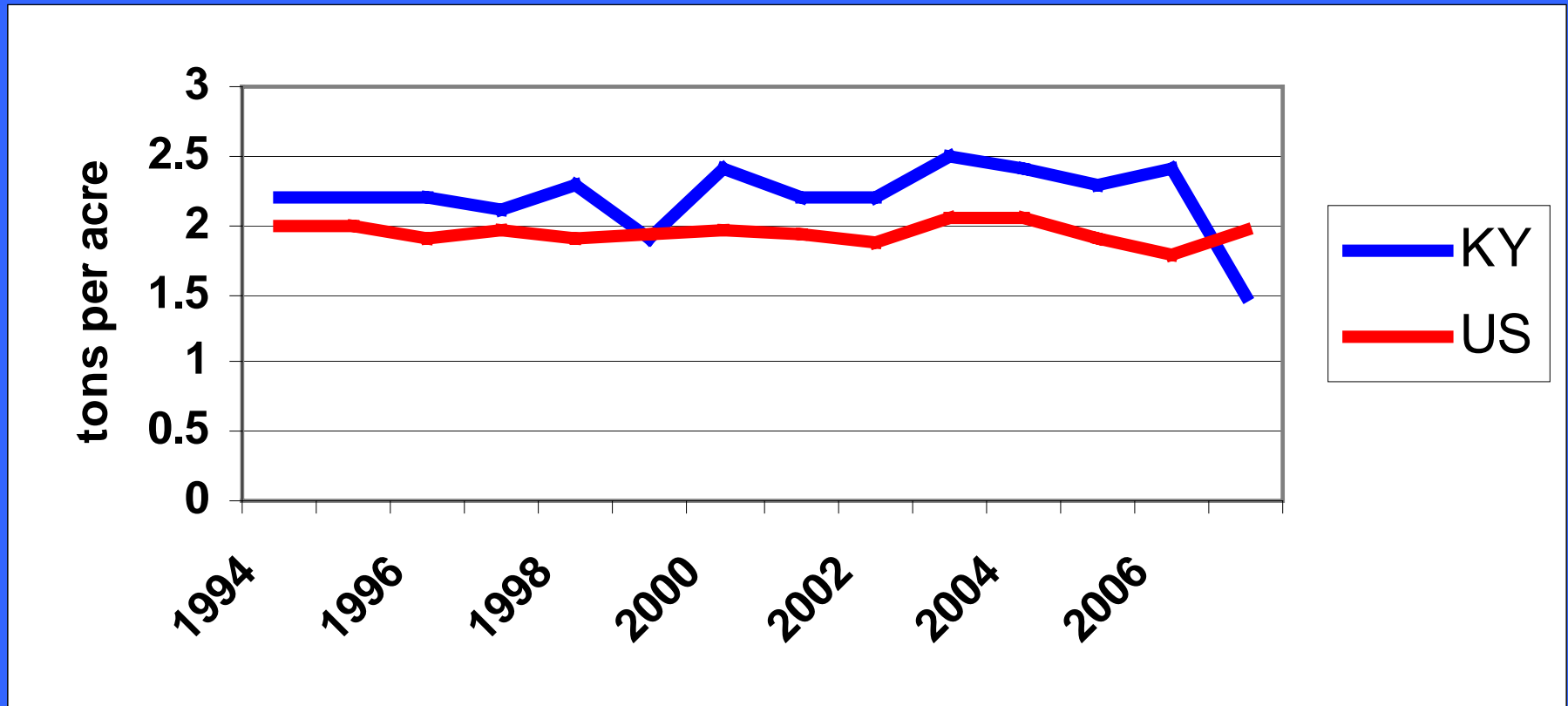
# KY versus US Alfalfa Yields



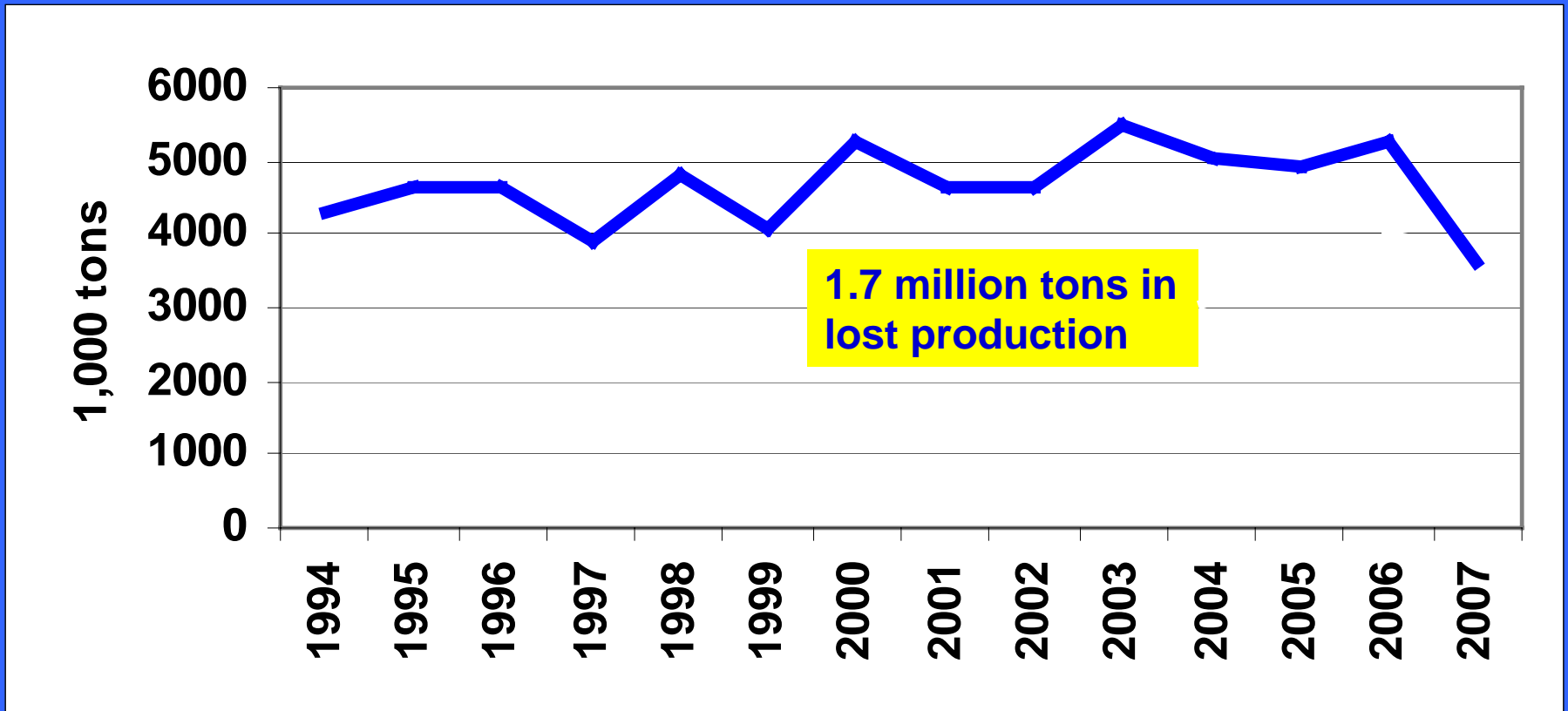
# Kentucky Alfalfa Production



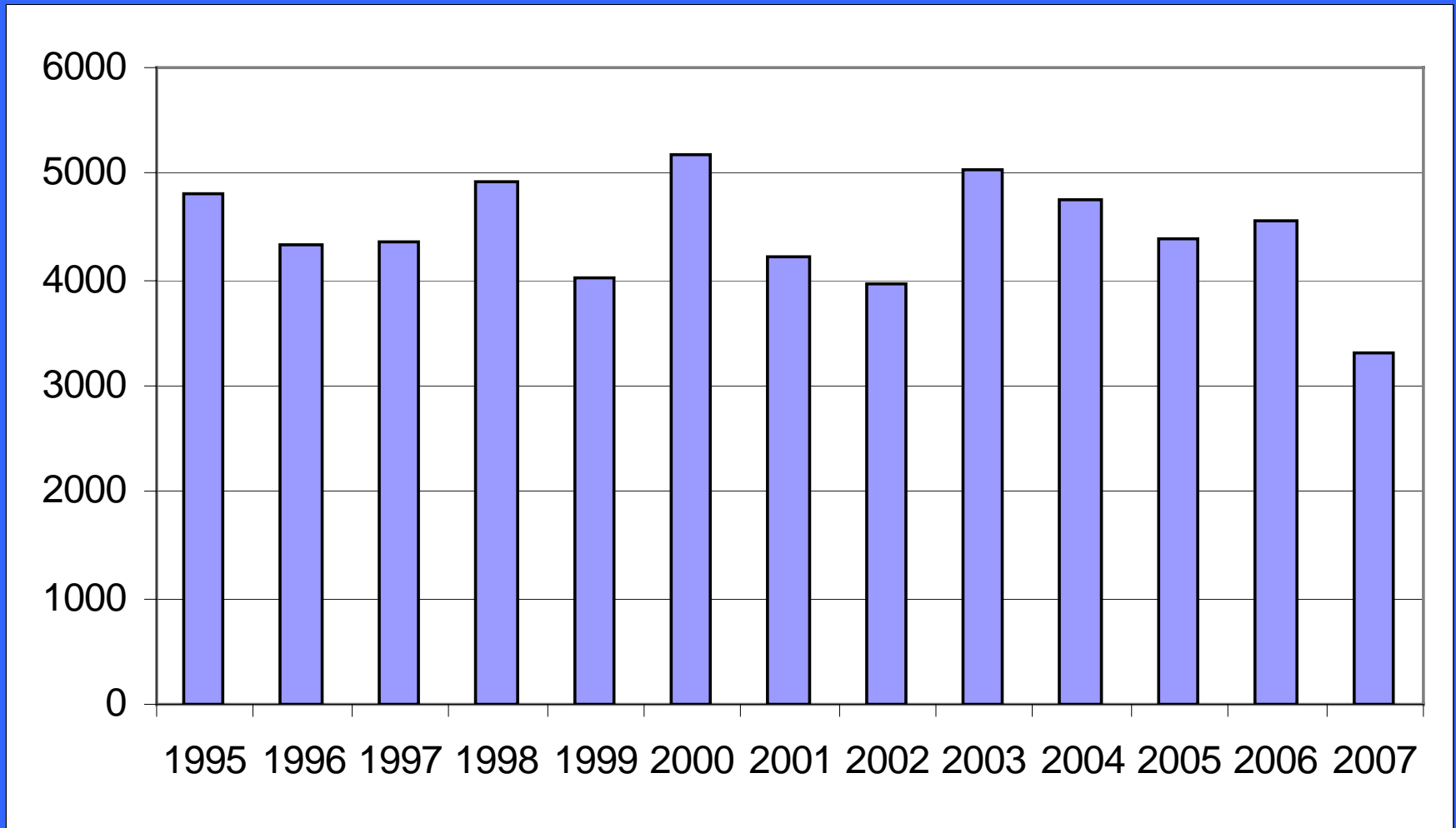
# KY versus US Non-alfalfa Yields



# KY Non-alfalfa Hay Production



# KY December 1 Hay Stocks

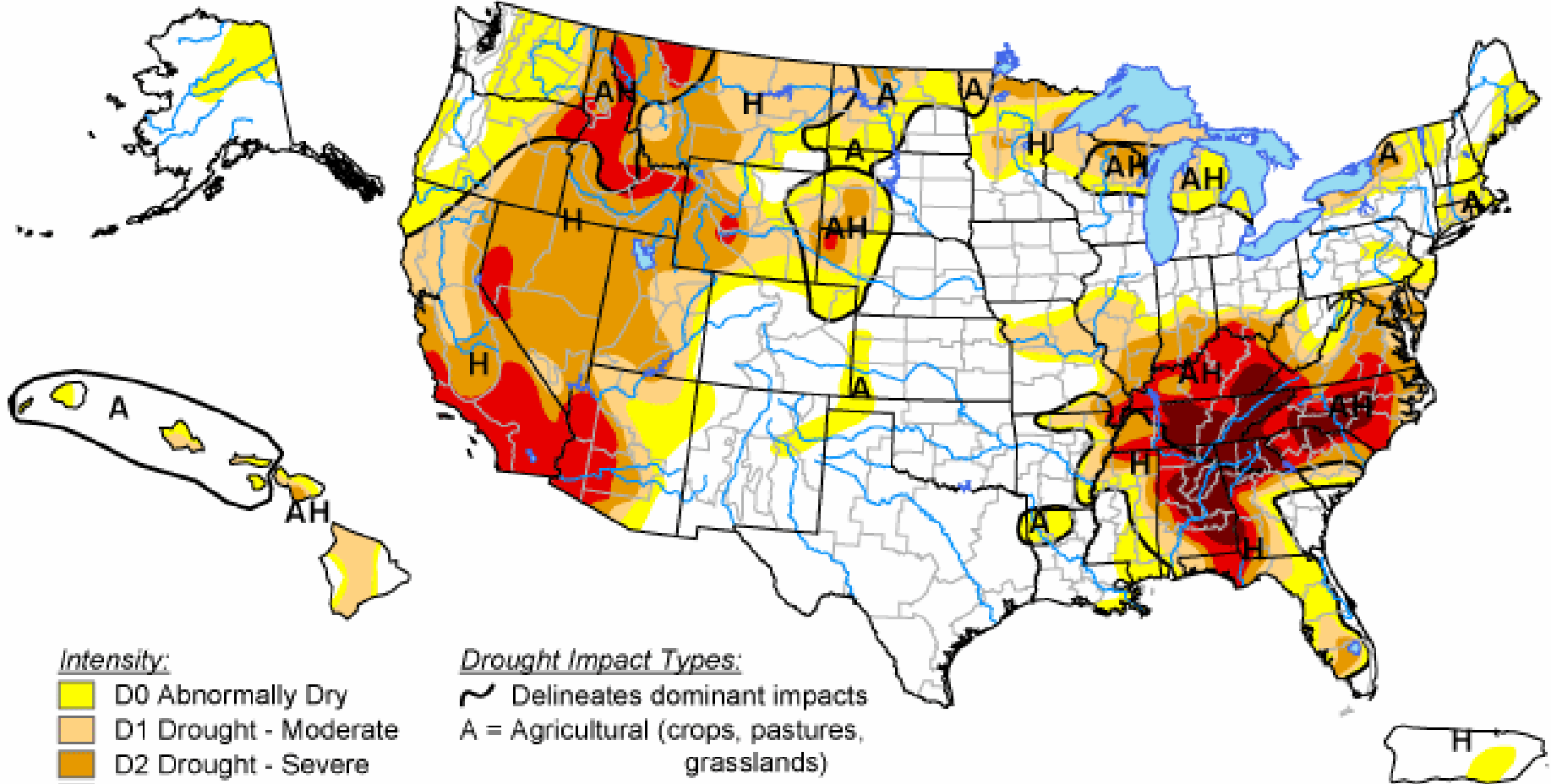


Source: USDA, NASS






# U.S. Drought Monitor

October 2, 2007


Valid 8 a.m. EDT



## Intensity:

-  D0 Abnormally Dry
-  D1 Drought - Moderate
-  D2 Drought - Severe
-  D3 Drought - Extreme
-  D4 Drought - Exceptional

## Drought Impact Types:

-  Delineates dominant impacts
- A = Agricultural (crops, pastures, grasslands)
- H = Hydrological (water)

*The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.*



**Released Thursday, October 4, 2007**

**Author: Jay Lawrimore/Liz Love-Brotak, NOAA/NESDIS/NCDC**

<http://drought.unl.edu/dm>

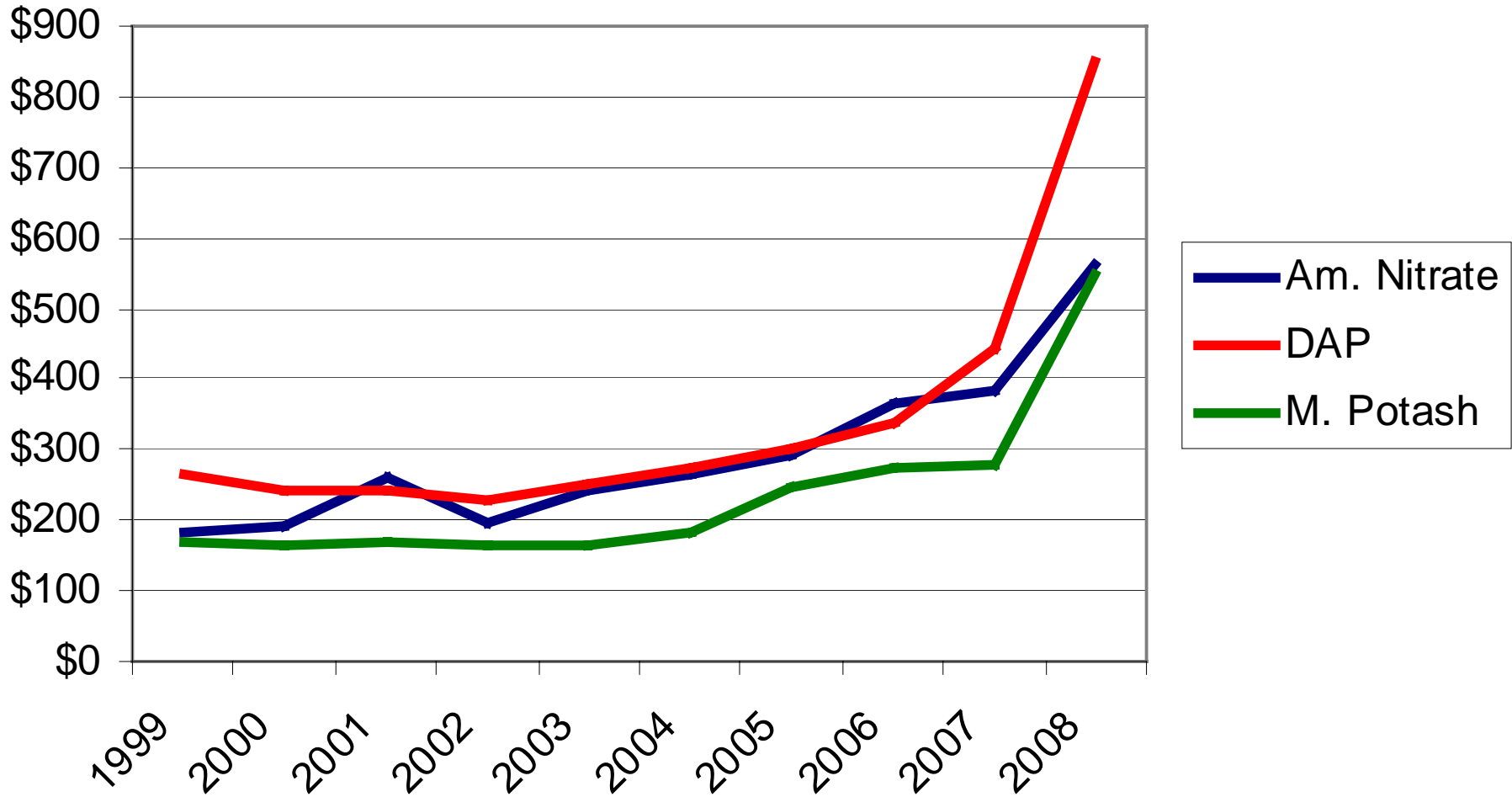
# Increased competition for grains with 200 – 300% price increases

## CORN - MONTHLY AVERAGE PRICE Received by Farmers, U.S., Crop Year



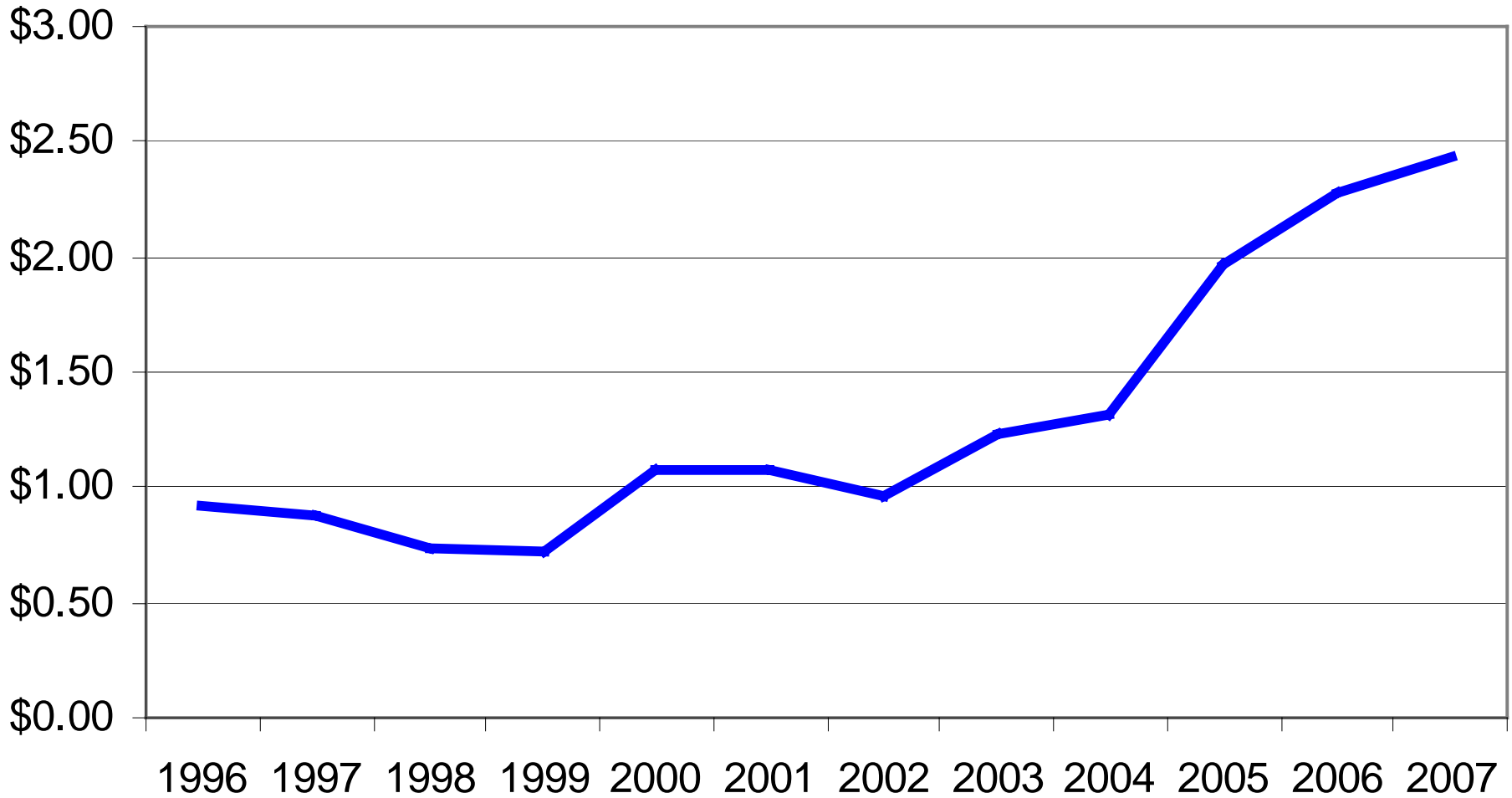
- Increased production costs
  - Fertilizer
  - Fuel
  - Seed

# Rising Fertilizer Prices (1999-2008)



# Bulk Diesel Prices (1996-2007)

2008: \$3.50



Source: KY Agricultural Statistics

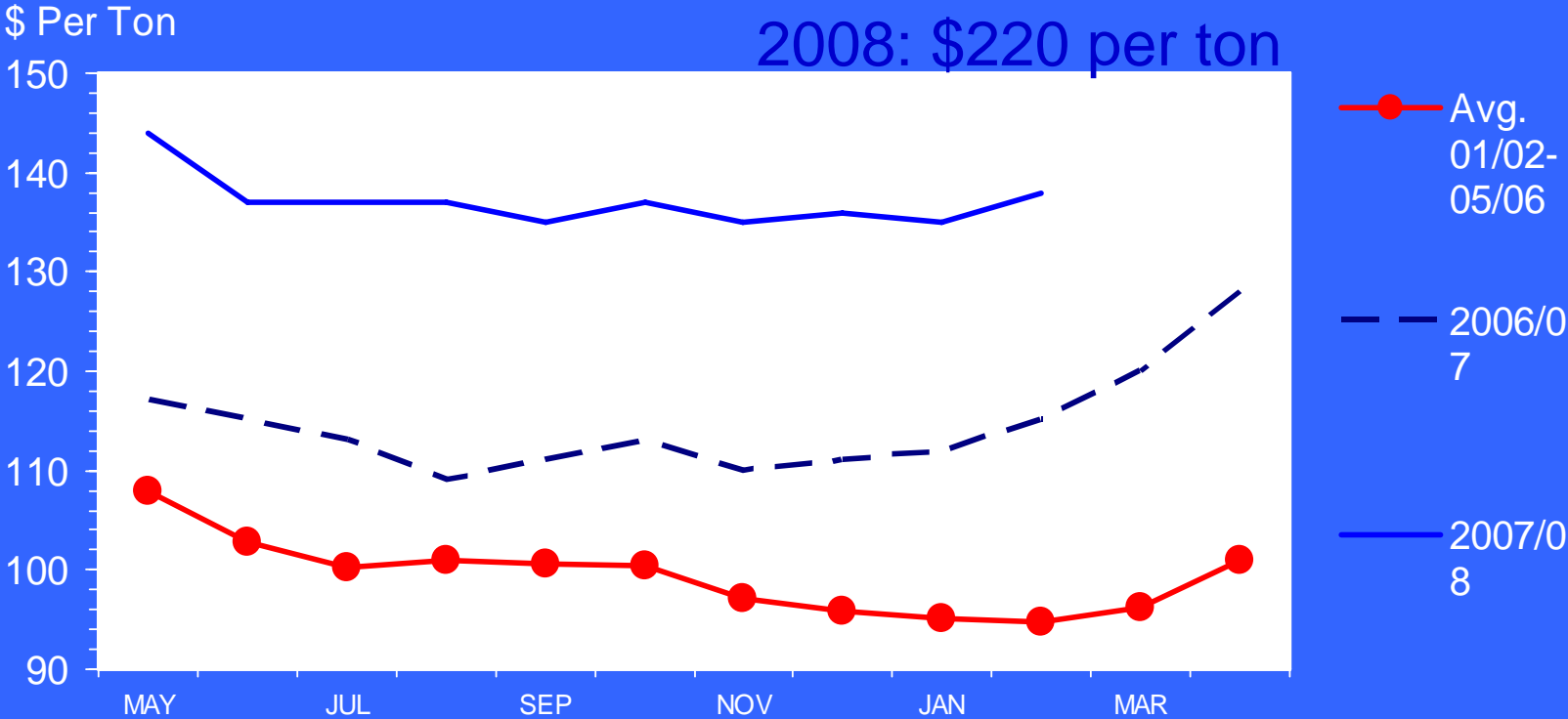
- Shrinking market value
  - Less discretionary income
  - Closing of slaughter markets
  - Overpopulation

# Major Equine Impacts

- Largest impact on Equine is forage and feed shortage
- Shorter grazing season due to short forage production – additional hay feeding days
- Cost of horse quality hay up >100% from last year + additional feeding days

# ALFALFA HAY - MONTHLY AVERAGE PRICE

Received by Farmers, U.S., Crop Year



Livestock Marketing Information Center

Data Source: USDA/NASS

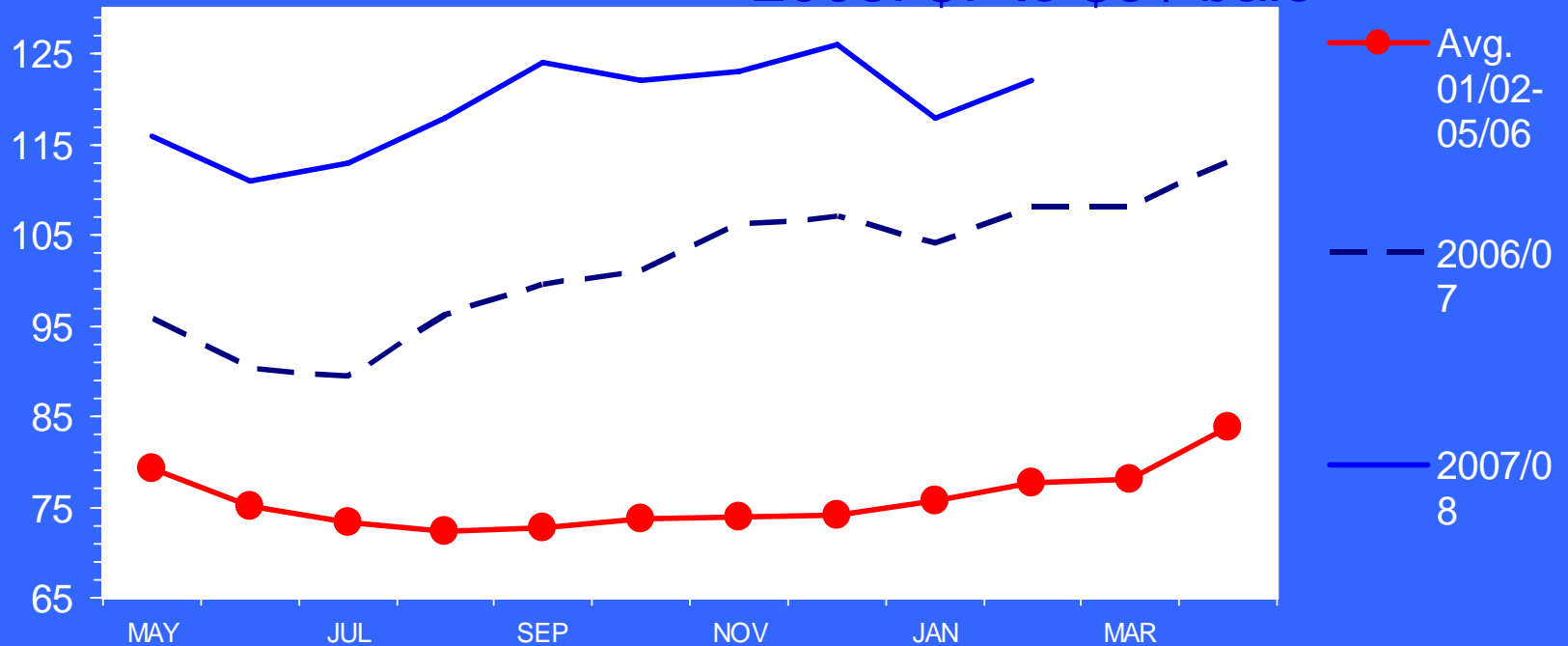
G-P-12  
02/29/08

# OTHER HAY - MONTHLY AVERAGE PRICE

Received by Farmers, U.S., Crop Year

\$ Per Ton

2008: \$7 to \$8 / bale



Livestock Marketing Information Center

Data Source: USDA/NASS

G-P-13

02/29/08

# Kentucky Horse Industry Task Force

- “Feed - in- place” philosophy
- Horse Hotline Formed
  - (866) 634-0030
  - More than 100 calls
- Tax deductible fund to accept donations
- Education project for extension, animal control, and KDA on “Body Condition Scoring”



- Volunteer representatives in 50 + counties
- 4 Ad Hoc Committees
  - Law & Legislation
  - Funding and Resources
  - Population Control
  - Education

# Frustrations

- Ignorance or disregard of the responsibility of animal care
- Lack of response infrastructure
  - Authority
    - Defined roles
    - Legislation for confiscation
    - Penalties
  - Resources and funding
- Reluctance to legislate
  - No mandate without funding
  - Funds NOT available

## Long-term Initiatives

- Solicit active role by breed associations
- Develop educational programs on animal care and responsibility
- Review Animal Abuse laws and enforcement authority
- Create local response infrastructure: funding, facilities, personnel
- Encourage judicial accountability of owners and enforcement authorities