Cattle Round Up
February – March 2009
Rockingham County Extension Beef Newsletter

Rockingham County February 12th Cattlemen’s Program –
Rockingham County Cattlemen will be getting together on February 12th beginning at 7:00 pm at the Rockingham County Agricultural Center, located at 525 Highway 65 in Wentworth. At this program we will be discussing Beef Cattle Identification and Record Keeping. This is not the most exciting of topics but it is probably the most important aspect of the beef cattle business. This will be a night with a good educational topic and the enjoyment of getting together with other cattle producers.

Please come and support your Cattlemen’s Programs!

March 12th Rockingham County Cattlemen’s Program
The Rockingham County Cattlemen’s October meeting will take place on Thursday March 12th, beginning at 7pm at the Rockingham County Agricultural Center. At this meeting we will be hearing about some important State and Federal Conservation Programs and practices from our NRCS folks. There are many opportunities for cattle producers to take part in these programs. This will be a very informative program about the opportunities & requirements of these programs.

Please plan on coming to this program at 7pm on March 12th here at the Rockingham County Agricultural Center. I am sure it will be a program you will not want to miss.

Grazing Sticks
If you attended the Drought/Grazing Management Field Day back on September 4 at the Research Station, and you registered there, then I have a grazing stick here for you. Just give me a call at 342-8235 so that I will make sure it will be available to you when you stop by the office to pick yours up. If you did not attend and wish to have one, call me for details on how to get one!

The mythical “Cow Gas Tax”
There has been many questions over the last few weeks concerning a tax that was to be put on cows because of the methane they produce in normal metabolism. The answer to the question is “there is no plan to enact such a tax”. The rumor was started when EPA published an “Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking” that outlined actions that would be needed should the Clean Air Act be applied green house gas emissions. The point they were making is that strict enforcement of the Clean Air Act would have devastating effects on every sector of the economy including agriculture. This information was supplied by Bryan Blinson from the North Carolina Cattlemen’s Association.

Water use by beef cattle
Water use will differs dramatically by type of animal and environmental temperature, but for planning purposes here are the figures the maximum amount of water an animal (and the herd) would use in a given day assuming a 90 degree high temperature. This information is adapted from the National Research Council’s publication Nutrient Requirements of Beef Cattle.

Lactating cow: 25 gallons/day, Dry cow: 14 gallons/day, 600 lb stocker: 13 gallons/day
1000 lb finisher: 21 gallons/day, Mature bull: 21 gallons/day

Using those numbers, a 100 cow herd (including 3 bulls) with spring calving would use a maximum of 2563 gallons per day. A 100 cow herd with fall calving and marketing of the calves before the heat of summer would use a maximum of 1363 gallons per day during the summer, but during peak lactation (November) with high temperatures in the 60s they would need 1833 gallons per day (11 gallons for bulls and 18 gallons for cows). The same fall calving herd that keeps all their calves over the summer would need to plan for 2763 gallons per day with peak use during the heat of the summer.

USDA Establishes Naturally Raised Marketing Claim Standard
WASHINGTON, January 16, 2009 -- The U. S. Department of Agriculture issued a voluntary standard for naturally raised livestock and meat marketing claims. The standard will be published as a notice in the Federal Register and is titled "United States Standards for Livestock and Meat Marketing Claims, Naturally Raised Claim for Livestock and the Meat and Meat Products Derived from such Livestock.”

The naturally raised marketing claim standard states that livestock used for the production of meat and meat products have been raised entirely without growth promotants, antibiotics (except for ionophores used as coccidiostats for parasite control), and have never been fed animal by-products. The voluntary standard will establish the minimum requirements for those producers who choose to operate a USDA-verified program involving a naturally raised claim. The segment of the marketplace that includes specific animal raising claims
Questions regarding the standard should be directed to Martin E. O'Connor, Chief, Standards, Analysis and Technology Branch, Room 2607, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, D.C. 20250-0254; or by calling (202) 720-4486 Questions regarding participation in USDA-verified programs should be directed to James L. Riva, ben_chase@ncsu.edu Technology Branch, Room 2607, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, D.C. 20250-0254; or by calling (540) 361-7640.

Beef Cattle Mailing & E-Mail List – PLEASE READ! - Everyone knows that budgets are very tight and being cut. Well, things are no different here. I need your help. To cut back on cost, I am asking for you to do one of the following : 1. Those of you who wish to receive Newsletters by US Postal Service, if you wish to continue receiving these Newsletters, I am required by Law to ask you to let me know that you wish to continue receiving them. So if you wish to continue on this Beef cattle mailing list you need to call me at 342-8235 and tell me that you want to remain on the Rockingham County Beef Cattle mailing list. If you do not do this, YOU WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE MAILING LIST.

OR 2. Those of you that have a computer please email me to let me know that I can send you just an electronic copy of this newsletter so I will not waste copies, paper and postage on something I can email to you.

So to receive the Newsletter electronically and added to a Beef Cattle E-mail list, please send me an E-mail at: ben_chase@ncsu.edu and put in the body of the message your name, and that you wish to be added to the Rockingham Beef E-mail list. This will also make it easy for me to send you quick notifications when needed.

Cattle Management Reminders - February: Fall Calving - End breeding season for heifers by February 20. - Keep heifers gaining weight. - Rotate & rest bulls every 1-7-14 days if possible. - Creep feed or creep graze calves. Spring Calving - Mature cows start calving. - Heifers finish calving. - Creep feed or creep graze calves from heifers. - Sell heifers not nursing calves. - Keep heifers gaining 1/2 lb/day. Separate cows as they calve from dry cows if possible. Graze cows with calves on cover crop if available. - Continue conditioning bulls. - ID replacement heifers. - Keep stockers gaining 1 1/2 lbs/day. March: Fall Calving - Keep heifers gaining 1/2 lb/day. Stop breeding cows by March 20. Remove bulls to bull pasture and check condition. *Creep feed or creep graze calves until spring grass is available. *If supplemental or stored feed has been used, continue, as spring grass is available. *Vaccinate all calves against blackleg, malignant edema. Deworm all cows and calves. Spring Calving - *Mature cows start calving. *Creep feed or creep graze calves from heifers. *Ear tag & dehorn all calves at birth; castrate at birth in commercial herds. *Sell heifers not nursing calves. *Keep heifers gaining 1/2 lb/day. Separate cows as they calve from dry cows. Graze cows with calves on cover crop if available. - Continue conditioning bulls and do Breeding Soundness Exams. -Brand or ID replacement heifers ALL CATTLE - Consult herd health plan and implement herd health practices suggested for the month. - Check cattle regularly. Check for health disorders including pink eye, cancer eye, foot rot, etc. Treat at the first sign of these disorders - Body condition score all cattle. - Provide a high quality mineral on a free choice basis. Consider using a high magnesium mineral year round. - Provide clean fresh non-frozen water at all times. - Check forage availability, if limiting consider feeding hay in a confined area. - Purchase quality bulls (utilize performance tested or from a reputable breeder that can supply performance data) & Isolate for 30 days. – Check fences & facilities.

Forage Management Tips - February: “Take soil samples as soon as possible, if not already done so! If the pH is below 5.8, apply limestone to pastures as soon as possible (based on soil report). Come by and pick up your free soil sample boxes and sheets. *Apply nitrogen to cool-season grasses to stimulate early spring growth. *Overseed legumes (lupini, red alfalfa) into well-grazed (2 inches or less), well limed grass pastures.*Remember to inoculate legume seeds before planting. *Weed management * Do NOT allow livestock to graze pasture grasses before they reach a height of 3-6 inches. Yes, this is difficult to do with short forage supply. However, grazing pastures (during late February/early March) actually delays spring growth. During the late fall and winter, cool-season forages make carbohydrates and store them in the stem-base and/or roots. These reserves are then used to initiate spring growth. If cattle remain on pasture, they consume these reserves and consequently delay spring growth and reduce spring yields. Finish your winter feeding in a sacrifice pasture and let the rest of the pastures recover from the drought and winter. * Scout pastures & determine if they need to be renovated or if they are acceptable and determine if weed control is necessary. * One good method to renovate pastures is to simply add clover. Adding clover reduces the nitrogen requirement and it improves animal performance. Clover can be planted through March. * Drag pastures to break up and scatter manure piles. This adds fertility back to the soil and increases the effective grazing area. * Controlled Grazing. * Keep the stocking rate low.

Calendar of Events

**February 12th – Rockingham County Cattlemen 7pm**

**February 17th – Guilford County Cattlemen**

**February 23rd – Guilford Horse Management Series**

**March 5th – Guilford Horse Management Series**

**March 16th – Rockingham Cattlemen**

**March 17th – Guilford County Cattlemen**

Ben Chase
Extension Agent
Agriculture
Livestock
342-8235, ben_chase@ncsu.edu

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