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Cattle Round Up



September - October 2011

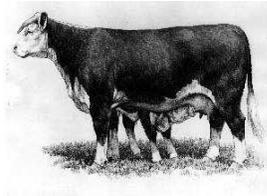
Rockingham County Extension Beef Newsletter

Thank You!

Thanks for the support that has been shown to me through my wife's Stroke. The life of my family has been turned upside down, but our lives are not over and we are still looking Up. My wife Kathy is and has been a true Miracle. She continues to make small improvements in her recovery. This will be a long process but God is with us. Things are still changing and I know things will never be the same, but that is how life is.

I have learned about many things I didn't want to learn and I would like to share with others if given the opportunity. I feel like the life's lessons I have learned could save others from some difficult times during difficult times. Some things in life are certain, please make decisions now that can prepare you AND your family. Making preparations now, can save you a Great deal of grief and a lot of money later.

Thanks for your calls, cards, emails and those who came or gave at the benefit dinner. I can not begin to express how much that has meant to my family. Thanks to the Extension Staffs at both offices for their Love & Support. Thanks to all of you for your patience and without a doubt most of all Thanks for your continued prayers. I am still trying to get in a routine, it has been difficult. I am so ready for that routine and for things to normalize. THANKS AGAIN!



Rockingham County Cattleman's Program on September 8th *THIS PROGRAM IS DIFFERENT THAN WHAT WAS PREVIOUSLY SENT OUT*

On September 8th beginning at 7:00 pm, Rockingham County Cattlemen will be gathering at the Rockingham County Agricultural Center, located at 525 Highway 65 in Wentworth. Area Cattlemen will be getting together for fellowship and an educational program that will cover a few topics: Current Cattle Issues, Future Programs & Having your Farm Prepared For Disasters. Make sure you plan to come on Thursday September 8th starting at 7:00pm. **(There will not be a meal served at this program)**

October 13th Cattleman's Program

The Rockingham County Cattlemen's meeting will take place on Thursday October 13th, beginning at 7pm at the Rockingham County Agricultural Center. At this meeting Scott Goodwin, with Dow AgroSciences will going to discuss weed control, weed control products and some current issues that going on in the herbicide area.

Come hear Scott discuss weeds and weed control products that you consider in a control program. Please plan on coming to this program at 7pm on October 13th here at the Rockingham County Agricultural Center. I am sure it will be a good program.

If you are planning to attend this event, PLEASE CALL or EMAIL Ben Chase, Extension Livestock Agent at 336-342-8235, or ben_chase@ncsu.edu by NOON Monday, October 10th TO RESERVE YOUR PLACE FOR THIS (DUTCH) DINNER! This is to make sure there is enough food & drinks to go around!

So go ahead and mark your calendars for Thursday, October 13th - 7:00 pm. Rockingham Cattlemen's Program



Something to Think About....

Implant Calves This Year?

Authors as Published Dr. W. Dee Whittier, Extension Veterinarian, Cattle, VA-MD Regional College of Veterinary Medicine

In all of cattle management there are few things as easy to administer, consistent in response or as well documented as the use of growth promotant implants. Good studies on implants are easy to do since treated animals and controls can be left together and treated the same. In study after study, results like the Nebraska study below are seen.

Table 1. Performance of steers on grass with difference implants. Courtesy Nebraska Coop Extension.

Implant	Sex	Days	No.	Start Wt.	ADG	Feed	Gain Over Control
None	Steer	123	70	490	1.89	Native Pasture	-
Synovex-S	Steer	123	70	490	2.29	Native Pasture	49.2
Ralgro	Steer	123	70	490	2.3	Native Pasture	50.4
Revalor-G	Steer	123	70	490	2.32	Native Pasture	52.9

While this study involved stock cattle, gains are typical of what nursing calves in much of Virginia gain. Note that the gains were not too different for each of the implants. The point is that implanted cattle gain more than non-implanted cattle. In this study about 50 pounds.

In today's market extra pounds have a lot of value. Not only are calf prices high but added gain has lots of value as well. Spring slides make the gain of less value but by fall values may be \$1 per extra pound gained. In 2011, the above steers might return an extra \$50 by being implanted.

So, with so much added value in implants, one would expect that most growing calves would be implanted. In fact, evidence suggests that there are less calves implanted now than in previous years.

Certainly one reason that implant usage is down is the negative press that "hormone use" gets. Much research has assured the safety of implants and, remember, a steer implanted with an estrogen/progesterone product has much lower levels of estrogen than a heifer in heat at slaughter. But with all the talk, natural beef, including organic beef is still less than 5% of total beef sold. Yet thousands of calves go unimplanted with a loss of hundreds of thousands of dollars.

What is the bottom line on implants? If you have a way to market calves to natural program and can get a good enough premium to pay for foregone gains, you should take advantage of that opportunity. In general you must either have a tractor/trailer load of calves to sell, have your own retail beef business or be part of an alliance to take advantage of premiums for non-implanted cattle. There are premiums to be had, but they are not accessible to many of us.

In the absence of having a way to sell calves designated as "natural", the market assumes they are implanted and pays a price commensurate with that. If you are in the beef business to make money, how can you afford to pass up a \$2 investment that can return \$15 to \$50?

Another Workshop! Leadership and Cattle Handling for Women Producers

April D. Shaeffer and Jeannette A. Moore, N.C. State University Department of Animal Science



The North Carolina State University Cooperative Extension Service and the North Carolina Cattlemen's Association are working together to offer a second workshop for women who would like more information and hands-on experience with cattle. The first workshop was a huge success, and we have had multiple requests to offer the workshop again. This time we will be in the Western part of the state: Saturday, October 29th, 9:00 to 4:00pm WNC Regional Livestock Center, 474 Stock Drive, Canton NC 28716 (between Waynesville & Asheville).

What will participants be learning? We will start the day with a presentation from Bryan Blinson, Executive Director of the N.C. Cattlemen's Association, who will talk about "Becoming a Leader in the Cattle Industry." This will be followed by Dr. Mark Alley's presentation and demonstration of "Low Stress Cattle Handling." The 20 participants will be divided into four small groups for hands-on activities: (1) Low stress cattle handling (April Shaeffer, NCSU); (2) Proper techniques for vaccinating, deworming, eartagging (Lisa Shelton, certified Beef Quality Assurance trainer and farm manager at John Queen Farms); (3) Pasture management (Dr. Matt Poore, NCSU Cooperative Extension); and (4) Calving: normal presentation, difficulties (Dr. Mark Alley, NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine). There is no cost to the participants for the workshop or the lunch, thanks to a grant from the North Carolina Cattlemen's Association.

The workshop will be limited to 20 participants, and the selection will be made on September 27th. Anyone who is interested in applying needs to be sure the application is sent to Jeannette_Moore@ncsu.edu and is received by 5 pm on September 26th. An application may also be faxed ([919-515-8753](tel:919-515-8753)) or mailed: Dr. Jeannette Moore, NCSU Box 7621, Raleigh, NC 27695-7621.

All applicants will be notified on September 28th as to what their acceptance status is. A third workshop is in the planning process and we hope to present it in the southeastern part of the state in 2012.



Understanding Johnsongrass - Most everyone has a spot of Johnson grass mingled with our other grasses in their pastures. Believe it or not it can be considered a toxic weed and undesirable for animals to graze. Some say to spray it with round up to kill the whole area. Some say its toxic because if it were toxic, every animal in the area would be dead because animals eat it all the time and they have never heard of an animal dying from eating it. Some say that letting the animals graze it is the best way to get rid of it because it does not stand up well to grazing.

I know that some are afraid to rotate animals onto pastures with Johnsongrass in them & are fencing off the areas where it is growing. So what's the deal? Can it be grazed? Why is there a problem with it?

These are very good questions, with complex answers not understood by many. Johnsongrass is in the grass family, native to the Mediterranean, grows throughout Europe, the Middle East & the United States. It reproduces by rhizomes & seeds. Johnsongrass has been used for forage for livestock but it is often considered a toxic/noxious weed. Due to growing conditions johnsongrass can contain hydrogen cyanide (1 - Prussic Acid) or accumulates nitrogen (2 - Nitrates). This grass grows and spreads very quickly that it can choke out other cash crops that have been planted. 1 - Prussic acid poisoning. (This condition is also known as Cystitis in horses) is caused by the toxin cyanide that can be produced in several types of plants under certain growing conditions. All species of farm animals can be affected with this acute poisoning. The plants most commonly involved in prussic acid poisoning are johnsongrass, sudangrass, common sorghum, arrowgrass, black cherry, chokecherry, pin cherry, and sorghum-sudan crosses. Under normal conditions prussic acid is not a major problem, however, conditions that interfere with normal growth, such as drought, frost, heavy trampling or physical damage, will cause an increase in the amount of free prussic acid in the plant, therefore increasing the chances for toxicity upon ingestion.

Johnsongrass is the most toxic of the sorghums and commonly causes poisoning when subjected to frost or drought conditions. Very young, rapidly growing plants also are more likely to produce the toxin. Fatal prussic acid poisoning may also occur from the ingestion of wilted leaves from wild cherry. Feeding or grazing of these forages

should be delayed until they are more mature. Feeding forages following heavy nitrogen fertilization, plant injury by trampling, or stunting of plant growth due to adverse weather should be avoided. If large amounts of forages containing prussic acid are eaten, death can occur within a few minutes. Excess salivation, difficult breathing, muscle tremors, and rapid heart rate all signal the onset of prussic acid poisoning. Shortly after these symptoms are seen, the animal may go down, and death will likely occur due to respiratory paralysis. Animals that live one to two hours after the onset of these signs will usually recover. Prussic acid is quite volatile, and there is little danger from feeding well-cured hay.

Cyanide concentration drops to safe levels in johnsongrass when cured for hay, (3 – 4 weeks once baled) and it is safe to feed. The leaves and stems of johnsongrass contain a cyanide compound, which when metabolized, inhibits the body's ability to absorb oxygen, in effect suffocating the animal; young shoots of johnsongrass contain the highest concentration of the toxin. Because horses do not metabolize the cyanide compound as efficiently as ruminant animals do, grazing healthy adult plants is unlikely to harm them, but circumstances that injure the plant—wilting, trampling, frost—can chemically liberate the cyanide within the leaves, rendering them dangerous to all species. Horses rarely have problems eating johnsongrass, but when they do, it can be very serious. Clinical signs often come on quickly, and frequently the horse is simply found dead in the pasture. The grass has to be stressed, as can happen after it has been damaged (trampled, frost). When stressed, the grass develops cyanide, and horses that eat johnsongrass can encounter breathing problems, anxiety, staggering, convulsions, coma, and death. If you have a animals that are exhibiting any of the signs listed, call the vet IMMEDIATELY. The longer you wait to get treatment, the lower the chance that the vet can save your animals.

The following points should be kept in mind for Prussic Acid:

- Prussic acid poisoning is not cumulative and upon removal from the forage source animals not showing evidence of being poisoned will likely not be adversely affected.
- Normally, grazing of the target plants can resume 4-6 days after a killing frost. Since frosts may not occur uniformly within the county, it is suggested that animals be taken off the target crops until it is certain that the plants have been frozen to below 26 degrees at least once. - Do not graze for 2 weeks after a non-killing frost. - Do not graze wilted plants or young plant shoots (tillers). - Do not graze at night when frost is likely. - Graze these type plants only when they are at least 15 inches tall. - Don't graze plants during or shortly after drought when growth is reduced and plant has been stressed. - Prussic acid poisoning is not a problem when crops are cured for hay or ensiled for more than 4-6 weeks. - Don't allow access to wild cherry leaves, wilted or not! (Alfalfa and White Clover can also produce Prussic Acid but very low amounts)



NITRATE POISONING FACTS - The facts concerning the conditions that cause nitrates to accumulate in plants are not fully understood yet much knowledge does exist concerning this problem. Nitrate is the form of nitrogen taken up in the greatest amounts from the soil by plants. Under normal conditions this nitrate is rapidly converted to plant proteins. However, under DROUGHT CONDITIONS changes occur that cause normal nitrogen metabolism to shut down and as a result nitrates accumulate in plants. LIGHT INTENSITY may also influence nitrate levels of plants. Low light conditions caused by cloudy weather tend to elevate nitrate concentration. HIGH SOIL N LEVELS tend to set the stage for excessive plant nitrate accumulations. Soils that carry high levels of N from excessive manure or fertilizer N applications or because applied fertilizer N was not taken into soil solution due to drought conditions are predisposing factors.

Certain plants tend to be NITRATE ACCUMULATORS, in other words they tend always have higher levels of nitrate over a wide range of environmental conditions. RAGWEED, PIGWEED, LAMBSQUARTER, SORGHUMS, (Johnsongrass) SMALL GRAINS AND OTHER ANNUAL GRASSES SUCH AS FALL PANICUM and others have been known to be nitrate accumulators.

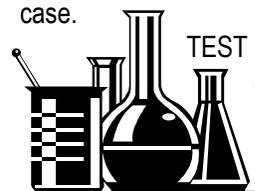
THE STAGE OF GROWTH can also affect nitrate concentration in plants. Nitrate levels tend to be highest in immature, actively growing plants that have been "shut down" or stunted by drought. Also, immediately after a drought when young shoots are actively growing, plants tend to be high in nitrate. Plants can be consumed by animals in several different forms such as hay, pasture, silage or green chop. The level of nitrate ion concentration in the plant that can be tolerated by the animals will depend on such factors as physiological state and class of animal species, plant form, and what proportion of the total ration DM the nitrate forage composes.

Nitrates can be a problem in horses when Nitrate levels of 1% of the total diet or greater are considered toxic for the horse. Avoid grazing drought-stressed grasses, particularly pearl millet, until the plants recover and produce growth. Hays high in nitrates can be diluted with other nitrate-free hay or grain to maintain a nitrate content of 0.5% or less in the total diet.

Grazing steers seem to be able to tolerate higher levels of nitrate ion in the herbage than if the forage were fed as hay. This probably relates to the conditioning of the rumen microbes gradually while animals are on pasture over and extended period and also because less nitrate is consumed per unit of time due to the low DM concentration of the forage. Pregnant animals appear to be most sensitive to elevated nitrate levels (above 0.44% nitrate ion). Relatively high levels of nitrate in forage may be considerably dissipated during the fermentation process if the forage is ensiled (as much as an 80% reduction). However it should be noted that extreme caution should be taken with high nitrate forage that is being ensiled because poisonous nitrogen gases may be evolved from the silo for several weeks during the fermentation process.

Nitrate Management Options - CUT OR GRAZE ONLY THE UPPER PART OF THE PLANT CANOPY.

Nitrates tend to concentrate in the bases of grass tillers. Therefore it makes sense to leave as much stubble as possible when harvesting hay or silage. Raise the cutter bar to leave the lower 1/3 to 1/4 of the plant. This is also true in pastures; by not forcing animals to graze pastures to low stubble heights we can help offset potential problems with high nitrate forage. The use of electric fence and rotational grazing management will help in this case.



TEST FORAGES FOR NITRATES. This should be done for all suspect forages including hay, silage and pasture before the herbage is fed. A little effort here can save a lot. Even if some of your forages show elevated nitrate levels, they can often be fed if you know the what you have. Negative effects can often be eliminated by dilution with other feeds or supplements. CHECK WATER SOURCE. If for some reason your water source is also

high in nitrate, this can present a "double whammy" if you are also feeding or grazing high nitrate forage. Anything above 10 parts per million nitrate nitrogen in the water could be a problem.

Control – We have had success using Round Up with a Wick Applicator. As you may or may not know there has been some Johnsongrass resistant to Round Up in the US and other parts of the World. Johnsongrass is considered by some to be in the top ten worst weeds. If you would like more herbicide suggestions let me know.



FORAGE TIPS: August -September-October - *To get maximum use of available grass, utilize cross fencing. This will stretch out your forage and decrease wastage. *Evaluate your current situation and consider overseeding or planting for fall & winter grazing with rye, ryegrass, etc. in late September. Small grains can provide grazing from December through May *With the high price of fertilizer it is very important to take soil samples for fall plantings. Come by and pick up your free soil sample boxes and sheets. *Fertilize and lime cool season grasses. Apply lime to pastures with pH below 5.8., if proper pH is not maintained, fertilizer may not be utilized by the plant. *Plant cool season grasses (fescue, orchardgrass, clovers, etc.) as late as October 25. *Finish grazing cool season grasses before grazing warm season. *Apply nitrogen to warm-season grasses after each cutting (or 4 to 6 weeks) *Graze bermudagrass to a 2-4 inch stubble and harvest excess every 4-6 weeks. *Control weeds *Be aware of potential of Nitrate & Prussic Acid poisoning from animals if grazing stunted, highly fertilized summer annuals. *Keep good forage records. * DRAG PASTURES TO BREAK UP/Spread MANURE PILES (This helps with fertility and flies). - Rotate/Clip pastures as needed. *Be cautious of combustion - Hay Fires - Hay in round bales should not contain no more than 18% moisture and square bales no more than 20%.

Grazing Management - Established fescue can withstand heavy grazing during its peak production. In general, grazing should be started between 6-8 inches and maintain a 3-4 inch stubble as practical to achieve the best animal performance and persistence of the plant. Continuous grazing below 2 inches will reduce animal performance, slow the growth rate of cool season grasses and may result in stand thinning. During the peak spring growth period, take special care to reduce wasted forage and developing seed heads. Cross-fencing which will restrict acreage available to the animals and, in turn, allow the harvest of excess growth for hay can do this.

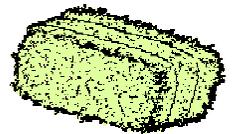


CATTLE REMINDERS: SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER - ALL CATTLE: *Provide (and check) clean fresh water. CULL ANIMALS THAT NEED TO BE CULLED TO CONSERVE FORAGE. *Monitor Body Condition Scores. *Continue parasite control. *Provide High Magnesium mineral supplement. *Deworm and treat for grubs. *Monitor for health problems. *Check cattle regularly*. FALL

CALVES: *Maintain condition on cows; graze cows on lower quality pasture. *Prepare for herd sire selection and vaccinate herd prior to breeding, and fertility check bulls. *Separate herd into management groups (first calf heifers, mature cows, open heifers). *Start heifer replacements on development program. *Vaccinate replacement heifers. *Provide Magnesium mineral supplement. Cows should consume 1 oz. of mgo/hd/day *Wean and sale calves. *Prepare for calving season, keeping calving area clean *Observe frequently once calving starts. Make sure calf consumes colostrum within 4 hours of birth. ID, castrate, and dehorn calves. Look at giving newborn calves Vitamin A & D injections. *Make sure you have the bull power for breeding season. *Make sure cows are getting enough energy after calving. SPRING CALVES: *Evaluate bulls on calf performance. *Deworm & Vaccinate calves. *Select replacement heifers and feed to gain 1.5-1.75 lbs per day. *Wean & watch markets to market calves. *Look for unsound cows that should be culled and identify and cull bulls that have sired groups of calves that are below average performance. *Make replacement heifer selections. *Pregnancy check cows. *Body condition score cows at weaning and separate thin cows. *Prepare to wean calves.

Fall Feeder Calf Sale - Carolina Stockyards at Siler City will conduct its next graded feeder calf sales September 21st, 2011. To be sold at Graded Sales, all calves must be less than one year old, males must be castrated and healed, and all must be dehorned. In addition the calves must be vaccinated against Blackleg and Malignant Edema. There are other graded sales in Statesville, Norwood, Canton, Clinton, and North Wilkesboro, if this date does not fit your schedules. If you need consignment forms to designate feeder cattle to one of these sale barns, then call Carolina Stockyards in Siler City at [919-742-5665](tel:919-742-5665).

HAY DIRECTORY - A Hay Directory is maintained by the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service for the Rockingham County and Guilford County area. This directory is intended as a service to both hay producers and buyers in the area. If you are in need of hay or would like to be added (or removed) from this list please call me at 1-800-666-3625 or 342-8235 and let me know your name, address & phone #, type of hay, number of bales, (square or round bales) and weight per bale.



Beef Cattle E-Mail List – If you would like to be added to a Beef Cattle E-mail list for Rockingham or Guilford Counties, please send me an E-mail at: ben_chase@ncsu.edu and put in the body of the message your name, and the Email mailing list you wish to be on and your US mailing address. This will make it easier to get information to you quicker and cheaper.

Calendar of Events

September 8 –Rockingham County Cattlemen, 7pm Rockingham County Agricultural Center
September 20 –Guilford County Cattlemen's Program, 7pm, Guilford County Ag. Center
September 21 - Feeder Calf Sale, Siler City 7pm 919-742-5665
October 10 – Noon - Call In For Reservations for Oct 13 Cattlemen's Program
October 13 - Rockingham County Cattlemen's Program - 7pm, Rockingham County Ag.Center
October 13-23 – NC State Fair
October 18 - Guilford County Cattlemen's Program 7pm, Guilford County Ag. Center
November 10 - Rockingham County Cattlemen's Program - 7pm, Rockingham County Agricultural Center
November 15 – Guilford County Cattlemen's Program 7pm, Guilford County Ag. Center



Please Don't Forget Our Troops!

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discrimination against similar products or services not mentioned.