LIVESTOCK NEWS

Get Involved

As a member of the agriculture community, you may be wondering how to become more involved with your industry. There are several organizations that you can join. The first place to start may be your County Livestock Association. Groups in North Carolina that represent livestock interests include the North Carolina Cattlemen’s Association, North Carolina Pork Council, North Carolina Horse Council, North Carolina Meat Goat Producers Inc., and North Carolina Meat Goat Association. The state organizations may have dues associated with their association. They have annual meetings and send out magazines or newsletters to keep producers up to date on issues affecting their industry. There are also numerous state and national breed associations. For more information on any of these organizations, contact your Livestock Extension Agent.

The County Livestock Associations’ purpose is to educate producers about issues relevant to their farm. Memberships are open to any person and some associations have dues associated with joining. Membership benefits include continuing education hours for Animal Waste License, updates on legislative and environmental regulations, information on the latest products and equipment, and contact with others interested in the livestock industry.

The North Carolina Cattlemen’s Association (NCCA) and the North Carolina Cattlemen’s Beef Council (NCCBC) are organizations which coordinate the promotion of beef and the beef industry. The NCCA assists producers in legislative, regulatory and production issues, while the NCCBC promotes beef through the administration of the beef check-off.

The North Carolina Pork Council’s (NCPC) mission is to foster, enhance and improve the capabilities of all those associated with pork in North Carolina. Their efforts are centered around five primary categories: promotion, consumer information, research, producer education, public policy and funding sources.

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If you are interested in learning more about any information in this newsletter, please call me at the Robeson County Center of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service at 910-671-3276 or E-mail me at Tiff_Conrad@ncsu.edu. Individuals with disabilities and/or special needs interested in these meetings should call so proper arrangements can be made.

Sincerely,

Tiffanee Conrad-Acuña

Tiffanee Conrad-Acuña
Extension Area Agent
Agriculture - Livestock
The 2006 Farm Credit Showmanship Circuit Banquet was a huge success this year with around 150 people in attendance. The banquet was held in Robeson County this year and participants sported a country western theme. It was a good ending to a job well done for the youth who worked so hard all season long. What they learned from showing animals is only the beginning. The future of agriculture lays in the hands of our youth. They are future producers and agricultural advocates in each community. This is why the Farm Credit Circuit invests in the youth and our future by sponsoring showmanship opportunities for them. Below are the winners from the Farm Credit Showmanship Banquet. Congratulations are due not only to the winners, but also to all the participants for a great show season!!

**Meat Goats**

**Novice**
- 1st- Morgan Rockwell- Hoke Co
- 2nd- Theresa Fehlen- Union Co

**Junior**
- 1st- Elizabeth Deese- Richmond Co
- 2nd- Ryan McInnis- Richmond Co

**Senior**
- 1st- Abby Allen- Richmond Co
- 2nd- Natalee Smith- Stanly Co

**Market Lambs**

**Novice**
- 1st Danielle Hunt- Cumberland Co
- 2nd- Ruth Verderbrugge- Cumberland Co

**Junior**
- 1st- Katie Baucom- Anson Co
- 2nd- Bryanna Xavier- Anson Co

**Senior**
- 1st- Britanni Hatcock- Stanly Co
- 2nd- Will Vangilder- Stanly Co

**Beef Cattle**

**Novice**
- 1st- Dixie Acorn- Hoke Co
- 2nd- Josh D'annunzio- Hoke Co

**Junior**
- 1st- Mathew Millward- Bladen Co
- 2nd- Meagan Thomas- Moore Co

**Senior**
- 1st- Katie Pesta- Stanly Co
- 2nd- Stacey Neil- Lee Co
ANIMAL WASTE MANAGEMENT

By: Becky Spearman

NPDES Permits - Annual Certification Forms Due

The annual certification form is due by March 1, 2007. This certifies information and activities for the preceeding calendar year (2006). The following web site has the forms: http://h2o.enr.state.nc.us/ndceu/Animal.htm and click on CAFO Annual Certification Form or call the Extension Office to request a copy.

USDA Offers Funding to Farmers

By: Chris Bordeaux, District Conservationist
with USDA-NRCS in Bladen County

USDA announces availability of funding to implement conservation practices on Bladen County farms through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). The goal of EQIP is to assist eligible farmers in addressing resource concerns on their land in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner. Eligible best management practices which can receive funding include Litter Storage Facilities, Mortality Incinerators, Long-Term No-Till, Grassed Waterways, Riparian Buffers, Filter Strips, Field Borders, Prescribed Burning for Wildlife Habitat and many others. Applicants are ranked based on an evaluation of their farm needs and the environmental benefits achieved by implementing a solid conservation plan. Those applicants with the highest ranking are selected for funding. The sign-up for EQIP is continuous and you can apply at the Natural Resource Conservation Service located in your county. Please call for an appointment. The next batching period ends January 19, 2007. At that time, all applications received to date will be ranked and will compete for available funds. For more information, contact your local office.

10 Hour Animal Waste Operators Certification Training Class

January 24 and 25 - Mt Olive Agribusiness Center.
Call Eileen Coite at 919-731-1525 to register.

May 2 and 3 - Bladen County Extension Office.
Call Becky or Beverly at 910-862-4591 to register.

2007 Exam Dates - March 8, June 14, September 13, and December 13

Wildlife and Water Quality on NC Farms Tour

By: Benjy Strope, NC Wildlife Resources Commission

Producers and Landowners Wanted! You are invited to visit a 4500 acre hog farm in Bladen County to view a CURE (Cooperative Upland habitat Restoration and Enhancement) area, and hear speakers on a variety of subjects such as: Water Quality, Quail Ecology, Blocks vs. Buffers, Prescribed Burning, Pollinators and Predacious Insects, and Farm Bill Programs. The date will be January 25, 2007 from 9:30 am until 4:00 pm in Ammon. Lunch and refreshments will be provided. Please register by Jan 17, 2007 by emailing cure_tour@yahoo.com or by calling (910) 866-4636. The tour will be limited to 50 people, so please register early.

Get Involved

The North Carolina Horse Council (NCHC) exists to represent and further the interest of the entire equine industry of North Carolina. NCHC is composed of volunteer individuals and groups from all breeds and types of horse activities, without bias. NCHC strives to maintain effective government relations by interacting with state leaders and our government representatives.

North Carolina Meat Goat Association (NCMGA) provides educational resources for potential, new, and experienced breeders. It promotes the meat goat market, supports, and promotes the efforts of NCMGA members, and demonstrates a vision for the future.

North Carolina Meat Goat Producers Inc.’s vision statement is to develop and maintain a nationally recognized self-sufficient meat goat producers cooperative focused on producing a quality and consistent food with value-added products that can be strategically positioned in the marketplace.

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Research shows that 6-10% of all calves born in beef cattle herds in the U.S. die at or soon after birth. About half of those deaths are due to calving difficulty (dystocia). This multi-million dollar annual loss is second only to losses from failing to conceive. About 80% of all calves lost at birth are anatomically normal. Most of them die because of injuries or suffocation resulting from difficult calving. Factors contributing to calving problems fall into three main categories -- calf effects, cow effects and fetal position at birth.

Most calf problems are related to heavy birth weights. Birth weights are influenced by breed of the sire, bull within a breed, sex of the calf, age of the cow, and nutrition of the cow. Several factors associated with the cow influence dystocia, mainly her age and pelvic size. First-calf heifers require more assistance in calving than do cows, because they are structurally smaller. Heifers and cows with small pelvic areas are likely to require assistance at calving. However, even heifers with a large pelvic area may need help delivering large calves. The calf’s birth weight and cow's pelvic area have a combined effect on dystocia. Many heifers giving birth to calves weighing more than 80 pounds will have difficulty, even if they have large pelvic areas. Two-year-old heifers tend to have either a pelvis too small or a calf too large to allow them to deliver without assistance. Therefore, calving problems could be reduced by decreasing birth weight through bull selection.

About 5% of the calves at birth are in abnormal positions, such as forelegs or head turned back, breech, rear end position, sideways or rotated. This requires the assistance of a veterinarian or a producer to position the fetus correctly prior to delivery. Normal calving can be divided into three general stages -- preparatory, fetal expulsion and expulsion of the afterbirth. The time interval of each stage varies among breeds of cattle and among individuals of the same breed. A general understanding of the birth process is important to properly assist calves. Preparatory stage occurs within 2-6 hours. In this stage, the calf rotates to the upright position, uterine contractions begin, and the water sac is expelled. The delivery stage occurs in 1 hour or less. In this stage the cow usually lies down, the fetus enters the birth canal in a front feet and head protruding first position normally, and then the calf delivery occurs. The final cleaning stage lasts 2-8 hours. This stage involves the cotyledon-caruncle (button) attachments relaxing, and the uterine contractions expel the membranes.

Normal delivery in cattle should be completed within 2 hours after the water sac appears. If prolonged, the calf may be born dead or in a weakened condition. Assisted deliveries should not be attempted without proper preparation of facilities and equipment. A clean, well-lighted maternity pen and clean pulling chains and equipment are needed to reduce bacterial contamination. Check with your veterinarian for advice on when to assist the cow alone and when to call him. Since cervical dilation is completed in stage 2, assistance can be given too early. However, since final dilation occurs very rapidly, assistance is often given too late. Too late assistance is much more serious than assistance given too early.

Apply an obstetrical lubricant to a sleeve. Using the sleeve, attach the obstetrical (pulling) chains to the front legs of the calf, placing the loop of each chain around each leg. Placement of the chains should be around the pastern (below the dewclaw and above the hooves) with the looped chain on top of the hooves. Careful attention to this placement when pulling on the chains will generally result in the least amount of damage to the calf. If the chains are allowed to become slack or excessive force is applied, the chain may damage the hooves. Placing the chains above the fetlocks (above the dewclaws) with a half-hitch around the pastern can result in broken front legs. Although some calves can be delivered by pulling both legs evenly, it's usually best to alternately pull on one leg and then the other a few inches at a time (see diagram above). Once the legs are "walked out" in this manner, the shoulders can easily pass through the pelvic opening one at a time. The Hoke County Extension Center has a mechanical calf puller that farmers may borrow in case of emergency. It is a very effective puller, because it alternately pulls on the legs. Farmers can also invest in their own calf pullers to keep around for emergency use. If you live in Hoke County and need to borrow the mechanical pullers, please call the Extension Office to make sure they are not being used by another producer.
FORAGE MANAGEMENT TIPS

Information provided from the book Production and Utilization of Pastures and Forages in North Carolina.

JANUARY
* To maximize stockpiled fescue, restrict the grazing area (cross fencing) so that four to six cows graze on an acre.
* If winter pasture is limited, feed hay in the pasture or allow cows to graze every other day. The priority for limited pasture is for (1) calves by creep grazing, (2) stockers, (3) nursing cows, and (4) dry cows.
* Winter annual pastures that were planted on a prepared seedbed may be severely damaged if animals trample on them during wet periods. Allow calves first priority to these high-quality annual pastures.
* Sample hay bales which are stored outside that will be fed during the next four to eight weeks.
* Keep a record of winter weed problems so that control measures can be taken next fall.
* Determine animal feed requirements for the year (about 6 tons hay equivalent/cow-calf pair) and outline a 12 month forage production plan and use plan to meet the needs.

FEBRUARY
* Apply nitrogen to cool-season grasses to stimulate early spring growth.
* Lime fields that will be prepared for spring plants.
* Locate sources of hybrid bermudagrass sprigs for planting next month.
* Burn warm-season grass residues in late February or early March.
* Get herbicide sprayers ready to control weeds in dormant bermudagrass fields.

WEED MANAGEMENT

By: Becky Spearman from the book Production and Utilization of Pastures and Forages in North Carolina.

Controlling weeds through herbicides depends on three main factors.

1. Plant growth
   * Annual weeds are easiest to kill when young and actively growing (3 to 8 inches tall).
   * Spraying herbicide at early growth stages gives the best control.
   * Some weeds may require a second spraying when regrowth appears.

2. Environmental
   * Weeds grow during favorable soil moisture and mild temperatures.
   * Herbicides are less effective during drought and other stressful conditions.
   * Rain may wash away herbicide before it is absorbed by the weed.

3. Herbicide Selection
   * Properly identify the weed to be controlled.
   * Select the herbicide labeled to give control by referring to the NC Agricultural Chemicals Manual – call the Extension Office or go to http://ipm.ncsu.edu/agchem/agchem.html.
   * Read the label to find out application rates, grass tolerance, grazing restrictions.

Some common weeds found in pastures and sprayfields:

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<th>Winter Annuals</th>
<th>Summer Annuals</th>
<th>Biennials</th>
<th>Perennials</th>
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<td>Bitter Sneezeweed</td>
<td>Bull Thistle</td>
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<td>Chickweeds</td>
<td>Common Cocklebur</td>
<td>Musk Thistle</td>
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<td>Geranium</td>
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<td>Lettuce</td>
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CLOSTRIDIAL DISEASES IN LIVESTOCK AND HORSES

Clostridial diseases are a family of diseases that are caused by different types of the *Clostridium* bacteria. There are more than 60 types of the bacteria. These diseases affect different species and ages of animals. Clostridial bacteria are found in the soil. They are resistant to the environment and can lie dormant for years. Clostridial bacteria is also naturally in the gut of healthy animals. Different species of animals have different susceptibilities to clostridial disease.

Some of the diseases are blackleg, tetanus, botulism, enterotoxemia, and malignant edema. Blackleg is a disease mainly seen in cattle. Blackleg is a fatal infection of muscle caused by *Clostridium chauvoei*. It causes a gas gangrene in the muscle of young cattle, usually between 6 months and two years of age. Tetanus is caused by *Clostridium tetani*. The toxins from bacteria growing in contaminated wounds cause uncontrollable muscle spasms. It is also called lock jaw and is often fatal. Tetanus mainly affects horses, but can affect cattle, swine, goats, sheep, and humans. Botulism is caused by *Clostridium botulinum*. An animal ingests toxins in contaminated food or water which causes paralysis, weakness, and death. Enterotoxemia is caused by *Clostridium perfringens*. Organisms in a young animal’s gut form toxins which cause severe poisoning and death. There are several types of enterotoxemia—types A, B, C, and D. Type D is commonly referred to as overeating disease and is very common in goats and sheep. Type D is caused by a sudden change in feed that causes an increase in the bacteria which causes a toxic build up. Type C can affect lambs, calves, foals, goats, pigs, adult cattle, and sheep. Type C causes severe diarrhea, toxemia, and death. Malignant edema is caused by *Clostridium septicum* and related bacteria. Muscle and skin is infected by toxins entering through a wound. Animals are depressed, have swelling around the wound, and can die. Malignant edema affects cattle, sheep, goats, swine, and horses.

Treatment for most of these diseases is usually not successful. Many times the disease causes rapid death and there is not enough time for treatment to work. The best approach is to vaccinate animals for the major clostridial diseases in your area. Clostridial vaccines are very effective if they are given to young, susceptible animals. It is critical that you booster within 2-6 weeks. Always read and follow the directions. Clostridial vaccines are usually sold as 7-way or 8-way vaccines which means one vaccine can help prevent several types of diseases. Check the label to see what your vaccine covers. Clostridial vaccines are very affordable - costing around 0.50¢ or less per animal.

HOOF CARE FOR HORSES

By: Tiffanee Conrad-Acuña

Healthy hooves are vital to your horse's overall health. Taking care of your horse's hooves is not just the farrier’s responsibility. Regularly inspecting your horse's hooves can help you to find problems early such as thrush, puncture wounds, cracks, and abscesses.

Picking out your horse's hooves does not take long and keeping them cleaned out will help you to stay ahead of any common hoof problems. When picking out hooves, check the condition of your horse's shoes and hooves. It’s a good idea to pick hooves before each ride to remove stones, and after each ride in case something got lodged in a hoof during the ride. Many people also pick hooves when bringing horses in at night and before turning them out to pasture. Each time you clean the hooves, take a moment to also gently clear the crevice of the frog and to scrape any remaining bits of matter off the sole. You want to be able to see the sole's entire surface. Some hoof picks come with a brush attached, or you can use a separate brush to clean off the hoof's sole.

It is normal to schedule farrier visits every 6-8 weeks on average, although there's no standard interval for trimming or shoeing. Ask your farrier to teach you how to remove a shifted or sprung shoe. This can save your horse unnecessary pain and hoof damage.

You can help your horse grow the best possible hooves that they can. Some horses naturally have better hooves than others. Your horse may already be producing the best hoof he's capable of, or he may need some help. Adding a biotin supplement to his diet may help, but it may take 6-12 months to show up in new growth. Consistent exercise on good quality surfaces, especially while walking and trotting, increases circulation to your horse's hooves and promotes healthy growth.