LIVESTOCK NEWS

Upcoming Events

Hoke County "Opportunities for Your Farm" Meeting

Are you trying to think of new and different things you can do to generate additional income from your farm? Do you have a small farm that does not generate enough money to pay the taxes? If so, the "Opportunities for Your Farm" Meeting is for you! The meeting, sponsored by Cape Fear Farm Credit, will be held at the Activity Room at the L. E. McLaughlin Jr. Building, 423 East Central Avenue, in Raeford on Thursday, October 26, from 6 to 9 p.m. Experts from across North Carolina will provide detailed information about a variety of alternative opportunities that have the greatest potential for profits for landowners in southeastern North Carolina. Gain valuable information about a variety of topics such as fresh vegetables, pastured meats, poultry and eggs, grapes, and forestry. Call the Extension Center in Hoke County at 910-875-3461 to register for this great opportunity!

Upcoming Computer Classes for Farmers

Basic Computer Classes - Classes begin on Tuesday, January 9, and will meet every Tuesday from 6 to 9 p.m. at Bladen Community College, 7418 Highway 41 West, Dublin. Cost for the 6-week class is $55. The classes will cover computer basics such as word processing, spreadsheets, recordkeeping, the Internet, and E-mail. You will get hands-on training at the computer lab, so class size will be limited. Classes will be taught by computer instructors, but there will be an emphasis on farm skills. Call the Extension Center in Bladen County at 910-862-4591 to register.

Goat and Sheep Training Class

There will be a meat goat and sheep training on Tuesday, November 28, at the Bladen County Center of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service, 450 Smith Circle Drive, Elizabethtown, from 2 to 6 p.m. The topics will include health care and vaccinations (how and where to give shots), parasite control, hoof trimming, body condition scoring, and kidding. Call the Extension Center in Bladen County at 910-862-4591 by Monday, November 27, to reserve your space.

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.

Tiffanee Conrad-Acuña
Sincerely,
Tiffanee Conrad-Acuña
Extension Area Agent
Agriculture - Livestock

North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T State University commit themselves to positive action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability. In addition, the two Universities welcome all persons without regard to sexual orientation. North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.
Lee Johnson and his dad, Greg Johnson are owners of Bladen Cattle Feeders. The farm is located in the Bladenboro area of Bladen County. They have 60 brood cows and a small finishing feedlot. Currently, they have 54 head they are feeding out. They use their calves or buy local calves to finish out. They have been finishing out cattle for almost two years and are very happy with their checks. The finished cattle weigh around 1,200 pounds and are commingled with other local farmers and shipped to Pennsylvania. The cattle are graded and the producer is paid on how well the animals grade. A choice or prime grade receives a premium. Bladen Cattle Feeders have averaged over 85% of the load being choice or prime. They feed a 13% crude protein, 75% total digestible nutrients (tdn) ration which consists of corn, oat silage, soybean meal, and minerals. They produce the corn and oat silage for the finishing ration. They also cut and bale 300 acres of hay. Lee is finishing out their cattle because it adds value to their calves. In the past, some of the calves have been docked at auction because of their color. He enjoys feeding the animals and watching them eat. The biggest challenge has been the holding pens and load out chute.
ANIMAL WASTE MANAGEMENT
By: Becky Spearman

CHECK YOUR CONTINUING EDUCATION HOURS!
Animal waste operators must have six hours of continuing education credit every three years to maintain their license plus pay the yearly fee of $10 by December 31 of each year. You can call the Extension Office to check your hours or go to DWQ’s website at http://h2o.enr.state.nc.us/tacu/RenewalInformationCEPayments.htm and click on the beginning letter of your last name to scroll down and find your name, hours, and period date.

REMINDER:
Producers with animal waste operators license must send in their $10 renewal fee to Division of Water Quality in Raleigh by December 31.

CONTINUING EDUCATION CLASSES
November 9 - Bladen County starting at 10 am (6 hrs.). Call 910-862-4591 to register.
December 7 - Robeson County starting at 10 am (6 hrs.). Call 910-671-3276 to register.

Agenda for both days:
10 am - 12 pm (2 hrs) Alternative Waste Technology Update
12 pm - 1 pm Lunch Break (on your own)
1 pm - 2 pm (1 hr) Hay Basics
2 pm - 3 pm (1 hr) Excel/Computerized Records
3 pm - 4 pm (1 hr) Fly & Rodent Control for Farms
4 pm - 5 pm (1 hr) Best Management Practices

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
November 1 and 2 - Mount Olive College starting at 9 am.
Call 919-731-1525 to register.

Last exam date for the year is December 14, 2006.

CALIBRATION AND SLUDGE SURVEYS
All NPDES farms are required to calibrate their irrigation equipment and perform a sludge survey every year by December 31 of the current year, unless an extension was given. These are turned in to DWQ with your annual certification form.

All General Permit Farms are required to calibrate their irrigation equipment and perform a sludge survey by October 1, 2006. Make sure you have already completed yours for this year! Keep your forms with your records. Inspectors will ask to see them when they come to the farm.
**Johne’s Disease**  
*By: Becky Spearman from Johne’s Information Center at the University of Wisconsin - School of Veterinary Medicine*

Johne's (pronounced "Yo-nees") disease is a contagious bacterial disease of the intestinal tract. Johne's disease occurs most often in ruminants such as cattle, sheep, goats, deer, and bison. The bacterium that causes Johne's disease is named *Mycobacterium paratuberculosis* (*M. paratuberculosis*). *M. paratuberculosis* infects the last part of the small intestine and causes an inflammation that thickens the intestinal wall, preventing it from functioning normally. The two main signs of infection are diarrhea and rapid weight loss. Diarrhea is less common in goats and sheep. Animals with Johne's disease "waste away" even though they are still eating well and seem normal. Johne’s disease is slow progressing and signs are usually not seen until animals are adults. In the U.S., it is estimated that 8% of the beef herds and 22% of the dairy herds are infected with Johne's.

Johne's disease usually enters a herd or flock when an infected, but healthy-looking, animal is purchased. The infection then spreads to other animals by close contact with infected animals, that shed the bacterium in their manure. Most often, the infection is acquired by eating material contaminated with *M. paratuberculosis* when animals are very young. Ingestion of the bacterium occurs when the newborn's environment is contaminated with manure from an infected adult animal or by drinking milk from an infected animal.

There are laboratory tests available to test for *M. paratuberculosis*. The signs of Johne's disease can be confused with several other diseases, so a diagnosis can be confirmed only by use of laboratory tests. Consult with your local veterinarian about testing. Johne's disease control depends on the type of animal and the patterns of husbandry. In principle, two strategies must be employed at the same time. The first is to protect newborn animals from infection by being born and raised in a clean environment and fed milk free of *M. paratuberculosis*. The second is to identify adult animals carrying the *M. paratuberculosis* infection by laboratory tests and remove them from the herd or flock.

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**Youth Livestock Show Season**  
*By: Tiffanee Conrad-Acuña*

The youth livestock show season is in full bloom! Many 4-H youth are participating in the Farm Credit Showmanship Circuit this year. Participants accumulate points at each county show for heifers, meat goats, and lambs. At the end of the show season, all points are tallied and a Grand and Reserve Champion winner is named for each species and division. The circuit is really great, because not only do the youth receive prize money and ribbons at each show, they have an opportunity to win trophies and belt buckles with the circuit. Youth and parents have a great time traveling to the different shows together. There will be a banquet held in Robeson County in November to honor all the participants for their hard work.

Local participants include: Cloverbud meat goats: Abby Inman and Morgan Inman from Bladen County; Paige Riley and Matthew Acorn from Hoke County. Novice meat goats: Meranda Dennis and Dillon Dennis from Bladen County; and Morgan Rockwell from Hoke County. Junior meat goats: Matthew Millward, Allen Monk, and Jeremy Beavers from Bladen County; and Paige Harrelson, Clint Harrelson, Dixie Acorn, and Johanna Carter from Hoke County. Senior meat goats: Joshua Snodgrass and Kim Beavers from Bladen County; and Maranda Rice and Stephanie Carter from Hoke County. Junior heifer: Matthew Millward and Jeremy Beavers from Bladen County; and Josh D’Annunzio from Hoke County. Senior heifer: Kim Beavers from Bladen County.

Showing livestock is a great way for the youth to learn important skills such as nutrition and record keeping. They also gain a compassion for animals by working with them everyday. If you have children or grandchildren interested in showing in the circuit next year, please give us a call so we can help you to prepare.
Winter Feeding for Livestock  
By: Becky Spearman

In the August newsletter, we discussed planting winter annuals. Grazing costs less than feeding hay to animals, so many producers plant winter annuals or cool-season grasses. Winter annuals include annual or Italian ryegrass and small grains such as rye, wheat, oats, barley, or triticale. Winter annuals can provide high quality forage under good management. Even with lots of grazing, producers will probably have to feed some hay during the winter. Hay varies in nutrient content by the type, maturity at harvest, fertilization rates, and other factors. Producers may need to supplement their hay depending on the nutritional needs of the livestock.

Livestock need energy, protein, macronutrients and micronutrients to meet their daily nutritional requirements for each phase of life. Lactating animals have a greater requirement than dry, gestating animals. Growing animals have an increased requirement also. Below is a table with the crude protein and Total Digestible Nutrients (TDN) needs of most classes of animals. Available energy is evaluated as percent TDN for ruminants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class of Animal</th>
<th>% Crude</th>
<th>% TDN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dry Beef Cow</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lactating Beef Cow</td>
<td>11 - 13</td>
<td>63-68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bull</td>
<td>7 - 9</td>
<td>50-63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Heifers</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry Meat Goat</td>
<td>10 - 11</td>
<td>55-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lactating Meat Goat</td>
<td>11 - 14</td>
<td>60-65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buck</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry Ewe</td>
<td>9 - 11</td>
<td>55-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lactating Ewe</td>
<td>13 - 15</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bermudagrass hay can average anywhere from 7-14% CP and 50-58% TDN. Fescue hay has 10-15% CP and 55-60% TDN. Analyzing your hay is the only way to know the nutrient content. Average hay will meet the needs of dry animals, but may not meet the needs of lactating and growing animals. Hay may meet the protein requirements, but be short in energy (TDN). In this case, supplementation is required. Determine whether you need to supplement energy, protein, or both.

The North Carolina Department of Agriculture will analyze hay samples for $10. Extension Livestock Agents can help producers sample their hay and balance a ration based off the forage analysis. Once the forage has been analyzed, ration balancing will determine if supplements are needed. Supplements are concentrates (grains) or by-products. There are many different products a producer can use and one feed may not be the best for all producers.

Plan ahead and have your forages analyzed so you know if you will need to supplement your animals. Contact your Extension Agent to help you plan your winter feeding program.
So your does are pregnant, and there’s nothing else to do but wait, right? No, actually, there are a lot of things that you can do to make the does pregnancy more successful. Feel your does on a regular basis to determine their body condition. Avoid overfeeding grain to does in late lactation. Fat goats are more prone to go off feed, have problems at kidding, and tend to have pregnancy toxemia. This disorder is often fatal to the doe and unborn kid. Overfeeding grain can also lead to foundering the animal.

Loose or block trace mineral salt should be available at all times. Goats are susceptible to copper deficiency. The salt and other feeds should be kept dry and off the ground. Make sure water is fresh and plentiful at all times. Check to verify dry does are in adequate body condition to withstand the draw of nutrients from milk when she kids. Usually, good quality forage is adequate for dry does in good condition.

The dry period is an ideal time to deworm the goats. Internal parasites increase activity during late pregnancy. Goats should be dewormed at breeding and two weeks before kidding. Late pregnancy is the recommended time to give the yearly vaccination boosters that are used in the herd. The vaccines will protect the doe and ensure high levels of antibodies in the colostrum, which will in turn protect the newborn kid.

The doe must be given adequate exercise until the time for kidding is very near. When kidding is about to occur, the doe should be confined in a clean maternity pen. Supplemental selenium should be provided either in the feed/mineral mix or by injection four to six weeks prior to kidding. This is particularly important in selenium-deficient areas in the Southeast where we live. Deficiencies of this important trace mineral are thought to contribute to an increased rate of retained placentia in does. Once you’ve got all these things taken care of, you can sit back and relax until the time comes when you might need to assist the does during kidding.

Feeding Pregnant Mares
By: Tiffanee Conrad-Acuña

Feeding the pregnant mare is easy with a little research. The most common mistakes made in feeding mares are overfeeding during early pregnancy and underfeeding during lactation. Trace mineral supplementation is also very important in late gestation because the fetus stores iron, zinc, copper, and manganese in its liver for use during the first few months after birth. This occurs because mare’s milk is low in these minerals. Below is a table with the expected feed consumption based on the stage the mare is in.

The maintenance stage includes mature open mares and pregnant mares in their first eight months of gestation. Pregnant mares in the nine to eleven month gestation period are in the late gestation phase. Early lactation mares are from foaling to three months of lactation. Late lactation includes those mares in the third month of lactation all the way to weaning. The nutrient requirements are minimal for early gestating mares and similar to those of open mares before breeding or to horses at maintenance. This is because the fetus is not growing rapidly during the first eight months. During the last trimester, the fetus grows rapidly and receives the additional nutrients directly from the mare. The mare’s increased requirements can be met by reducing the intake of hay while increasing the intake of concentrated, high-energy feeds such as grains.

The lactating mare has an additional nutrient need because of the nutrients required for milk production. A light horse is able to produce around 26 pounds of milk per day as compared to draft horses that can produce more than 35 pounds per day. This places a huge nutritional strain on the mare. If you need help calculating your mares feeding program, please contact your Extension Livestock Agent today.