

# Livestock News

November 2022

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### 6-Hour Animal Waste Operator Class (OIC)

There will be an opportunity to receive 6 credit hours for Animal Waste Operators at North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Robeson County Center, on December 7 from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. **Registration is required and the registration deadline is December 2.** You can register at [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdmuvs4RTTJwNTFh2S1hvPZfvXCIF3NaL\\_swKHloX0CADSvmA/viewform?usp=pp\\_url](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdmuvs4RTTJwNTFh2S1hvPZfvXCIF3NaL_swKHloX0CADSvmA/viewform?usp=pp_url). For more information call 910-671-3276.

### 300 Days of Grazing

Join the livestock agents from Bladen, Cumberland, Hoke, Richmond, Robeson, Sampson, and Scotland Counties for a virtual meeting with Dr. John Jennings, Forage Specialist with Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service. He will be discussing how to have 300 days of grazing.

This meeting will be on Tuesday, December 14 at 6:30 p.m.

Register here: <https://go.ncsu.edu/300daysofgrazing>

### Save the Date for the 2022 Cape Fear Cattle Conference

This year's conference will be held in-person on Tuesday, January 25 at 4:30 p.m. at the Southeastern Agricultural Event Center, located at 1027 US-74 ALT in Lumberton, NC.

Dr. Brian Bolt, Extension Livestock Specialist with Clemson Extension will be speaking about dewormer considerations and recommendatinos and dealing with hoof issues. Contact Liz Lahti at 910-321-6862 or [liz\\_lahti@ncsu.edu](mailto:liz_lahti@ncsu.edu) with any questions.

### Hay Directory

North Carolina Department of Agriculture's Hay Alert lists people selling or looking for hay to buy. It is free to list your hay. To access, visit <http://www.ncagr.gov/HayAlert/>.

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Robeson County Center  
O. P. Owens Agriculture Center  
P. O. Box 2280  
455 Caton Road  
Lumberton, NC 28359

Phone - 910-671-3276  
Fax - 910-671-6278  
Website - [robeson.ces.ncsu.edu](http://robeson.ces.ncsu.edu)

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If you are interested in learning more about any information in this newsletter, contact the Extension Center at 910-671-3276 or visit our website at [robeson.ces.ncsu.edu](http://robeson.ces.ncsu.edu). For accommodations for persons with disabilities, contact Cooperative Extension no later than five (5) business days before the event.



Taylor Chavis  
Extension Agent  
Agriculture - Livestock





## Young Bull Management

By: Randy Wood, Extension Livestock Agent, N.C. Cooperative Extension, Scotland County Center

Cattle farms have many seasons they go through during the year. Calving season, breeding season, hay season, etc....you can easily add Bull Sale Season to this list. Private farm sales and bull-test sales will be taking place about every weekend from now till the first of the year. Now, actually buying a bull is the easy part. You just need to show up on sale day and keep raising your hand till the auctioneer stops yelling and points at you. Of course, you still have the problem of how you're going to tell your wife how much you spent on the bull, but you'll have the ride home to figure that out. Once you get him home and off the trailer is when the work starts.

Most bulls that are purchased at bull sales have two things in common. They are very well conditioned (which is just a polite way of saying fat) and are normally 10-18 months old, which is too young to service a mature herd of cows. I have sadly seen many cases where farmers purchased good young breeding bulls and mismanaged them the first year so badly they never received their investment back on these animals. Let's discuss how to manage a newly purchased young bull the first year to ensure he is able to reach his full potential and cover your cows for years to come.

### ***Acclimating the bull from the sale ring to the breeding pasture.***

I could not tell you how many times I have seen young bulls that are purchased on a Saturday morning and are running with 20-30 grown cows that evening. Bulls need time to get used to their new farm and especially their new nutrition level prior to running with a bunch of cows. Never does a bull run across a sale ring without being fed like a king for weeks leading up to sale day. Once you get him home, take some time to "feed him down" and get him used to your base forage. Letting his body get used to operating off of less concentrate and high energy feed will help him get ready to work when the time comes. Certainly, do not take him off of ground feed completely, but feed him a reasonable amount of grain for a few weeks to help him handle this new energy balance. Also remember that bulls that were born into fescue country may have never seen Bermudagrass in their life. Or bulls that were bred in our region may set foot on a farm in the Piedmont and have no idea what fescue is. Give them time to get accustomed to your forage base and make sure he is fully eating it before you ask him to burn thousands of calories chasing cows all day.

### ***Be mindful of how many cows he breeds the first year.***

Most cattlemen know the old rule of thumb of how many cows a bull can breed. At 12 months, a bull can cover roughly one cow per month of his age, maxing out at around 35-40 cows in a confined breeding season. So, an 18-month-old bull can be expected to cover around 18-20 cows during the breeding season. You cannot expect an 18-month-old bull to cover 30 cycling cows. He's going to try his best, but it is very doubtful he will be able to settle that many cows coming into heat all at the same time. What

will happen is he will run himself ragged chasing 2-3 cows every day and maybe get one bred.

The other thing to remember is try to match the bulls age (or size) to the cows he is exposed to. Really young bulls do not do very well being thrown into a group of large, fully mature cows. There's no doubt that by the time a bull is three years old, he will run the roost over the cows. He will be big enough where a cow bullying him and pushing him away from the feeder will be a thing of the past. Before this however, a young bull may very well be pushed back and knocked around by the alpha cows of the herd, who got to be boss cows by being big and mean. Too much of this can not only cause the young bull to lose weight quicker, but it can also reduce a young bulls libido to the point where he may actually quit breeding. Young bulls do much better with heifers or two-year-old females where they can still assert dominance and hold their own at the feeder.

### ***Monitor weight loss closely.***

A young bull coming off an aggressive feeding program is going to lose weight once he starts working. It is inevitable. The only question is how much weight will he lose? If we look at body condition score, it is very common for bulls to run through a sale ring at around a 7 BCS score. This weight will then come off in a hurry, but if he drops to below a 4 during the breeding season you need to keep a close eye on him. Limiting the number of cows he is exposed to and making sure he is not getting run off from the feeder will help him keep enough weight on to stay active. If his weight loss gets too great and he starts acting lethargic get him out of the pasture and get him back on some feed. It is much better to have him breed less cows the first year and have him healthy and aggressive for years to come than work him to skeleton as soon as you get him.

### ***Working a young bull into a multi-bull situation.***

I am personally not a fan of multi-bull pastures, but I can see where some farms and some situations call for them. Where I do draw the line is when farmers will purchase a young (below two years old) bull and throw him into a pasture with 2-3 fully grown bulls. This is almost a waste of time and a waste of money as the young bull will spend all his time running from the older, bigger bulls and sneaking up to the hay feeder. What he will not do is spend any time breeding cows. If you're going to spend your hard-earned money purchasing a new bull, let him get to some cows. Even if it's only a few in a small lot the first year, the young bull will at least get to breed some cows and be ready to hold his own the following season.

While some farms may have difficulty managing separate pastures with bulls in each, or do not want to go to the trouble of "babying" a new bull, after investing anywhere from \$1500-\$3000 for a decent herd bull prospect it is worth the additional trouble and aggravation to make sure he gets off to a good start so you will recoup your investment out of him.

## The American Lamancha

*By: Katie Carter, Livestock Extension Agent with N.C. Cooperative Extension in Craven, Jones, and Pamlico Counties*

The American Lamancha or commonly known as Lamancha is a breed of dairy goat that originated in the US. The Lamancha was first bred in California by Mrs. Eula Frey around 1927. She later moved her herd to Glide, Oregon where she continued developing the breed. It is thought that the breed came about from a small eared Spanish goat brought to California by early settlers. Mrs. Frey bred some of the Spanish short eared goat with Nubians with the ending result being the American Lamancha.

Lamancha goats stand out due to one special characteristic, and that is their very small ears. At first glance it would seem that Lamancha goats don't have ears. Their ears can be characterized in two different ways and neither ear type has an advantage over the other. They can have gopher ears which are no longer than 1 inch or the elf ear which is no longer than 2 inches. The small size of their ears does not affect their earing abilities in any way.

The American Lamancha can come in at 130 pounds and can grow up to 28+ inches tall. They come in a wide array of colors and markings with a short sleek coat. The Lamancha breed has a very laid-back personality when compared to other goat breeds, which makes milking and handling very easy.

Lamanchas produce a high butterfat milk and can be milked for up to 2 years without being refreshed. The American Lamancha is a sturdy, high producing dairy goat that is a great addition to any farm or homestead.



## Colic 101

*By: Stefani Sykes, Livestock Extension Agent with N.C. Cooperative Extension in Wayne County*

We as Extension agents are NOT vets and we do NOT offer veterinary advice. This article is just meant for some basic information and things to watch out for, it is by no means any sort of medical advice. As always, contact your veterinarian with any questions and concerns you have about your horse's health!

That being said, most of us know local horse owners and the conversation of colic commonly comes up. If you've been around horses, you've heard at least one (or twenty) colic stories. Listed below are some things you can look for or make note of, in regard to colic. Colic is abdominal pain, not necessarily a specific disorder, and any horse is susceptible. Common causes include gas, impaction, grain overload, ingestion of sand or parasite infection.

### Common signs of colic:

- Groaning
- Turning head towards flank
- Kicking or biting at abdomen
- Lack of appetite
- Sweating excessively
- Lack of bowel movement
- Rolling

### Things you can do if you suspect your horse is colicking:

- Check your horse's vital signs (heart rate, rectal temperature, check hooves for heat)
- Look for feces in the stall
- Call your veterinarian!
- Walk your horse if it's safe and recommended by your vet
- Don't let them eat or drink
- Keep your horse contained

### Ways to reduce colic risk:

- Maintain a consistent feeding schedule and protocol
- Smaller meals more often are better for the digestive system than one or two large meals
- High-grain diets are linked to increased incidence of colic
- Provide regular exercise
- Maintain an approved parasite control program





## Eastern Carolina Showmanship Circuit Winners

*By: Dan Wells, Livestock Extension Agent with N.C. Cooperative Extension in Johnston County*

The 2021 Eastern Carolina Showmanship Circuit wrapped up in October and awards for each species were presented at the NC State Fair. Livestock Shows in the Eastern Carolina Showmanship Circuit were held in Halifax, Smithfield, Kinston, Elizabeth City, Tarboro, Kenansville, Clinton, Trenton, Wilson, Greenville and Goldsboro.

Participants in the circuit were required to attend at least four shows to be in contention for circuit awards, with their top six scores (beef, goat and sheep) or top four scores (swine) being counted towards their circuit total. The highest point winner in each age division received a championship belt buckle, with reserve winning an embroidered jacket. Third through fifth place exhibitors each received gift certificates from livestock supply vendors.

Sponsors for the 2021 circuit included:

**Signature Circuit Sponsor; Smithfield Foods-Hog Production Division**

**Platinum Sponsors-AgCarolina Farm Credit, Quality Equipment**

**Silver Sponsors- NC Hereford Assoc, Manning The Pulse, Picole Farm**

### Swine Showmanship Winners

Placing	Novice	Junior	Intermediate	Senior
1	Spate Sanderson	Riley Balance	Logan Balance	Justus Meads
2	Eli Price	Evan Mayo	Hannah Cooper	Connor Kennedy
3	William Messer	Mackenzie Cox	Lillie Ann Estes	Faith Kennedy
4		Liza Sullivan	Gage Harris	Colbey Mathis
5		Dylan Briley	Billie Faith Fulcher	Travis Cox

### Goat Showmanship Winners

Placing	Novice	Junior	Intermediate	Senior
1	Carson Norris	Katelyn Hewitt*	Scarlett Denning	Lillie Stallings
2	Anderson Lee	Kennedy Lee*	Taylor Askew	Hattie Jo Powell
3	Emma Briley	Andrew Roberts	Mary Grace Baker	Conner Mills
4	Zoie Bright	Lucas Barbour	Taryn Reams	Justin Richardson
5	Wyatt Norris	Macon Parker	James Baker	Daniel Beasley

### Heifer Showmanship Winners

Placing	Novice	Junior	Intermediate	Senior
1	Eli Price	Sloane Hinnant*	Caleb Davis	Schlyer Crocker
2	Lucas McCoy	Grayson Blankenship*	Ava Wood	Lydia Crocker
3		Makayla Davis	Abigail Blankenship	Hope Latta
4		Lathan Blankenship	Mazie Bunn	Daisy Brown
5		Emma Beasley	Wyatt McCoy	Shane Kendall

### Lamb Showmanship Winners

Placing	Novice	Junior	Intermediate	Senior
1	Meredith Poole	Lexi Barbour	Emma Britt	Kalen Barwick
2	Anderson Lee	Kennedy Lee*	Taylor Askew	Hattie Jo Powell
3	Zoie Bright	Tenley Barbour*	Dava Armstrong	Ellie Elmore
4	Valerie Poole	Kendall Ascue	Annah Claire Sullivan	Emma Raynor*
5	Carter Jennings	Sloane Hinnant	Anna Wells*	Hope Latta*

\*Denotes a tie that was broken on head-to-head competition or dropped scores

## Backyard Flock Egg production

By: Margaret Ross, Eastern Area Specialized Poultry Agent with N.C. Cooperative Extension

So, you just got your own flock of chickens! Or maybe you're just thinking about starting your own flock, but you need to know more about egg production and what they need from you, to be good laying hens. Here is some information on how to ensure you are giving your laying hens a good environment to do their job!

**When should they start laying eggs and how can I keep them laying?** If you got them as chicks, they should start laying around 16-24 weeks of age. This is also dependent upon environmental conditions and breed. Chickens need around 14-16 hours of light per day to produce eggs, which is an issue during the fall and winter months. You have the option to give your hens a break in those months, as laying will decrease or even cease, or you can supplement with a light source to ensure they continue to lay eggs. Also, when the days are getting shorter in the fall and early winter months, your chickens may start losing their feathers. This is called molting and it's a naturally occurring process where they replace their feathers.

**Where should they lay their eggs and what type of bedding do they need?** You can provide your hen a comfortable place to lay by providing them nesting boxes. This is a small space that has soft bedding such as hay, straw, wood chips, or AstroTurf. This gives them an environment to lay their eggs in a safe place and also helps keep the eggs clean, as well as helps you find the eggs! Encourage your chickens not to roost in their laying boxes, by putting a roosting bar in their coop. This helps keep nesting boxes cleaner, meaning your eggs are cleaner.

**What do I look for in a good laying hen?** You want to look for soft, large, red wattles and combs, and bright eyes. Various breeds can have different colors of these features as well. As good layers mature, the yellow pigmentation of the ankles, beak, ear lobe, vent, and eye ring will fade to almost white. However, the yellow color can come back if the hen does not lay for any period of time.

**How long do they lay eggs?** Peak production of egg laying is around 32-34 weeks of age. For ex-

ample: you should get around 9-10 eggs each day from 12 chickens for several months, then you hit peak production, they may slow down to around six eggs each day, by a year after their laying begins. Typically, eggs are laid in the morning hours. Eggs should be collected as soon as possible after they are laid, as well as eggs should be collected twice per day if possible. They should also be refrigerated right away.

**How do I clean my eggs?** First of all, try to keep your nesting boxes as clean as possible to reduce the time it takes you to clean your eggs. Also, if there is organic matter (feces) on the egg shell and it sits for a while, it may stain your eggs which is unappealing to customers. If your eggs are already fairly clean, they may only require a dry cloth to finish cleaning them. If your eggs are dirty, you may use a warm, damp cloth to clean them. Allow your eggs to properly dry. You can lay them on your countertop on a clean, dry paper towel with a fan blowing over them to help them dry quickly, so you can get them into the refrigerator. It is also important to mention that it's hard to sell eggs from your backyard flock and recoup the costs associated with raising your birds/make a profit. You will need to find a niche market and good customers.

There are lots of ways to ensure your hens are laying eggs in a safe, comfortable, and consistent manner. For more information on backyard flock egg production, please contact your local Cooperative Extension Office.



## Cool Season Weed Management Considerations and Identification

By: Liz Joseph, Livestock Extension Agent with N.C. Cooperative Extension in Cumberland and Hoke Counties & Anthony Growe, Livestock and Row Crops Extension Agent with N.C. Cooperative Extension in Richmond County

Before you select any chemical, check the label for usage rates, restrictions, weeds controlled, etc. Weed growth and development are dependent upon environmental conditions. It is important to scout fields regularly during the growing season.

If you had a weed infestation last year, chances are they will be present this year.

**Pre-emergent Herbicides:** suppresses weed seed germination

**Post-emergent Herbicides:** applied to weeds after germination while actively growing

### Cool Season Weeds

Annual Grasses (annual ryegrass, annual bluegrass, bromus species)

- Utilize pre-emergent herbicides in the fall before germination
- Post-emergent herbicides can be used after germination but before weeds reach four inches in height

Annual Broadleaves (purple deadnettle, henbit, buttercup, ground ivy, broadleaf plantain, buckhorn plantain, chickweed, persian speedwell, groundsel, wild radish, curly dock)

- Utilize pre-emergent herbicides in the fall before germination
- Post-emergent herbicides can be used after germination but before weeds reach four inches in height

\*If you have bermudagrass pastures/hayfields a non-selective herbicide, such as glyphosate, can be applied to dormant bermudagrass to help kill the above mentioned cool season weeds. Apply in late winter/early spring prior to green-up.

### Annual Grasses



Bromus species



Annual Ryegrass



Annual Bluegrass

### Annual Broadleaves



Ground Ivy



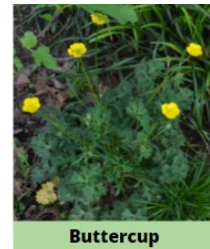
Broadleaf Plantain



Purple Deadnettle



Henbit



Buttercup



Chickweed



Persian Speedwell



Buckhorn Plantain



Curly Dock



Groundsel



Wild Radish