



Livingston Parish
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Chewing the Cud

May 3, 2010

Angola Beef and Ag Tour

Warden Burl Cain and the staff of Angola State Prison and Danny Hoover Director of Prison Enterprises invite you to a field tour of the Angola beef herd, the pastures and hay fields and other agricultural enterprises conducted at the prison.

This field day will be held **Thursday May 13, 2010 beginning at 9:30 am** with an assembly at the front gate. From here we will load buses and tour the prison farm. Lunch will be provided courtesy of the area cattlemen's associations and will be served at the conclusion of the tour.

Angola State Prison is located at the end of Louisiana highway 66 approximately 25 miles north-northwest of St. Francisville. The prison encompasses 18,000 acres with approximately 8,000 acres in pastures and hay meadows. Prison Enterprises runs about 1,825 F-1 females and annually contracts 1,500 feeder calves. In addition to beef production, corn, cotton, soybeans, wheat, milo and vegetable crops are grown within the prison compound.

In order to adequately prepare for lunch please call Kenny at 225-686-3020 or email ksharpe@agcenter.lsu.edu and RSVP for the tour and meal by Tuesday, May 11, 2010 at 4:00 pm.

Once I see how many people are going I will try to arrange for a carpool site. Also note that no drugs, alcohol, weapons (including pocketknives) are allowed within the prison grounds.

Replacement Female Sale

The Florida Parish Beef Improvement Association is making plans for its third annual select replacement female sale in November 2010. This past year we sold 47 bred heifers sold that averaged \$950. Any producer who is interested in consigning females that are farm raised can contact Lennie Wales at 225-294-3198.

Fertilizing Spring Pastures

We are just coming out of an extremely tough winter. Ryegrass did not grow very well in cold temperatures, water soaked soils and a lack of sunshine. Now it has gotten dry and holding back spring grasses.

It has warmed up and many of you are calling me about fertilizing your warm season grasses.

Overall fertilizer prices have come down a little more this year, but they are not cheap.

Here are price comparisons for the same 2 local farm supplier's average bulk prices:

	<u>May 2008</u>	<u>May 2009</u>	<u>May 2010</u>
DAP -	\$930.00/Ton	\$500	\$570
Urea-			\$440
Ammonium Nitrate -	\$470.00/Ton	\$420	\$410
Muriate of Potash -	\$570.00/Ton	\$800 (falling)	\$520
17-17-17		\$545	\$490

For the average spring pasture fertilization a producer with medium fertility might put out 50-60-60/acre. Using the above prices it would cost :

<u>May 2008</u>	<u>May 2009</u>	<u>May 2010</u>
\$107.75/acre	\$88.05/ acre	\$79.54/acre

As you can see the average cost of the same fertility program has actually decreased by another \$8.50/acre. I have figured the nitrogen cost using DAP and ammonium nitrate for the past 3 years however you could save an additional \$3.67 per acre if you used urea with prices quoted above.

Pay particular attention to potassium levels in your hay fields. When you remove the forage, potassium is also removed from the pasture and fed elsewhere. There is no recycling of nutrients. It takes approximately twice as much potassium for good yields in a hay field as it does in a pasture where cattle are grazing. Be sure to follow the soil test recommendations.

Feed Prices

Comparisons:

	<u>May 08</u>	<u>May 09</u>	<u>May 10</u>
Corn (bu)	\$6.70	4.12	3.63
Soybeans (bu)	\$12.71	11.02	9.87
Wheat (bu)	7.90	5.76	4.86
Live cattle	91.45	82.03	99.03

As you can see, commodity prices are down some over last year but cattle prices have moved up. Every year the issue of creep feeding calves comes up. I would look hard at the cost. The problem is trying to get a handle on how much calves actually gain to be able to pencil out the cost per pound of gain. A lot of the data will tell you to use 9 pounds of feed for 1 pound of gain. If you have to pay \$220/ton of feed you would have \$0.99/lb of gain invested in feed, not counting transportation and labor. The range on feed efficiency goes from about 7 to 12 pounds of feed for 1 pound of gain.

Horn Flies

In a normal year it is usually in May when horn flies reach the economic control level of 100 flies per side (200 flies/cow).

Recommended horn fly controls include:

Sprays - Co-Ral, Permethrin, Rabon, Ravap

Pour-ons – Dectomax, Ivomec, Ivermectrins, Cylence, Saber, Permethrin Pour-On

Backrubber – Co-Ral, Ravap, Permethrin, Lintox-HD

Dust Bags – Co-Ral Dust, Permethrin Dust, Python Dust, Rabon Dust

Ear Tags - **Organophosphate**

X-Terminator (20% diazinon)
Optimizer (20% diazinon)
*Patriot (40% diazinon)
Co-Ral Plus (20% coumaphos + 20% diazinon)
*Warrior (30% diazinon + 10% chlorpyriphos)
Dominator (20% pirimphos-methyl)

Pyrethroid

Python (zetacypermethrin 10% + PBO 20%)
Python Magnum (zetacypermethrin 10% + PBO 20%)
Cylence Ultra (beta-Cyfluthrin 8% + 20% PBO)
Saber Extra (lamdacyhalothrin 10% + PBO 13%)

Chlorinated hydrocarbon (Cyclodiene) Tags

Avenger (endosulfan 30%)

All ear tags will provide approximately 10 weeks of control for susceptible flies. For resistant horn flies, tags with an asterisk (*) are more likely to give satisfactory control.

Remove old tags at the end of the fly season or when fly populations exceed the economic threshold.

Buffalo Gnats

Dr. Christine Navarre, LSU AgCenter Veterinarian reports that Southern Mississippi and parts of Louisiana are experiencing a buffalo gnat outbreak. The gnats are blood suckers and will take a meal from humans or animals. Buffalo gnats are described as black flies, but they may be gray, tan or greenish in color. Adult black flies are small insects that measure 2 to 5 mm in length, and possess a shiny thorax which is strongly convex, giving them a humpbacked, gnat-like appearance. Adults also have broad clear wings without hairs or scales, heavy veins near the anterior wing margin, a short 11 segmented antennae, and large round eyes.

Needless to say the gnats are a nuisance and reports out of Amite and Wilkinson County Mississippi

say that they are experiencing several heavy swarms of the gnats that are attacking chickens and quail.

Check animals if they seem overly agitated and annoyed. Generations usually only last several weeks and are usually further north.

Weed Control Updates

DuPont just received a label on a new bermdua grass pasture herbicide called Pastora. It is designed to take annual grasses out of Bermuda grass and holds a lot of interest for those with hybrid Bermuda hay fields that need to control crabgrass, broadleaf signalgrass, sandbur, barnyardgrass, foxtails, johnsongrass, and Pensacola bahiagrass.

It does not control smutgrass, broomsedge, or horsenettle. It cannot be used on bahia grass pastures.

DuPont recommends application 7-10 days after the initial hay cutting. They have noted some yellowing and growth reduction of bermudagrass if applied after green-up but prior to the 1st cutting. In trials at the Bob Jones Idlewild Research Station this initial injury was noticeable but much less than that experienced with applications of Plateau.

Of special interest, Pastora has been consistent in controlling winter weeds and grasses when applied during the dormant season. Applications in January or early February have provided excellent control of volunteer ryegrass, little barley, chickweed, Carolina geranium, rescuegrass, buttercup and suppression of thistle, with no injury to the bermudagrass.

Rates range from 1.0-1.5 ounces of product per acre, always add a surfactant.

There are no grazing or haying restrictions. Unlike some other products, DuPont has included all grazing animals (cattle, horses, goats, sheep, others). The product is safe when used according to label. Only injury data we have is on common bermuda and the hybrid Alicia. The product has been tested by other researchers on other (but not all) hybrids. If there is a question about application to a specific hybrid contact a DuPont representative.

Beef Markets

On the supply side, the inventory of cows is down by 336,000 for the U.S. over the past year. Production of red meat is down also. Beef production is down by 1% and pork is down 4.5%. Exports are up as well.

Consumer demand is the wild card. The unemployment rate is close to 10% which is a measure of the people looking for a job. The people who have stopped looking are not counted in that number. There is approximately 17% of the total workforce unemployed. That takes away a lot of buying power.

Dr. Ross Pruitt says that you will see a seasonal price reduction in fed cattle prices in the summer but it should stay strong in the \$90's. He also says that he expects fall calf prices to be up \$6-\$10 dollars/cwt over last year from what we can see now.

Bench Mark Records

Dr. Ross Pruitt, LSU AgCenter Economist is interested in establishing some bench mark data on production cost for Louisiana beef producers. He would like to go in and do a financial analysis with beef producers by looking at production and financial data to determine the cost of the various components of production. This information will then be compiled to get state and regional averages that producers can use to budget and compare their cost to like production systems.

All data collected will remain confidential and only be used to establish averages. After the data is collected Dr. Pruitt will break out the data for large and small production systems and other variables that will make the information usable to all producers.

If you would be interested in participating in the bench mark study, contact Kenneth Sharpe, County Agent, Livingston Parish at 225-686-3020.

Email addresses

If you have an email address and are not currently receiving electronic communication from me please email your address to me at ksharpe@agcenter.lsu.edu.

Budget constraints make it more important that we reduce mailings and use electronic communication as much as possible.

Electronic users already receive more updates than those who receive mail only.

Kenneth W. Sharpe
County Agent
Livingston Parish