

LSU AgCenter
St. Landry Parish

BEEF CATTLE CONNECTION

September 2023



St. Landry Parish

1065 Hwy 749 Suite A

Opelousas, Louisiana 70570

337-948-0561

www.LSUAgCenter.com

September 2023 Events

5: Beef Brunch Webinar: Understanding the Markets

12: Beef Brunch Webinar: Weaning Methods and Pre-Conditioning Options

14: Dean Lee Beef and Forage Field Day

19: Beef Brunch Webinar: Buyer Expectations

21: Northeast Beef and Forage Field Day

26: Beef Brunch Webinar: Market Options and Adding Value to Calves

October 2023 Events

3 and 5: Cattle Pregnancy Determination Clinic (Hill Farm)

4-6: Geaux Beef Heifer Development Program (Receive Heifers at Hill Farm)

18-20: Artificial Insemination School (Dean Lee)

21: Acadiana Beef and Forage Field Day (Iberia Research Station)

25-29: State Fair Beef Cattle Show

November 2023 Events

1-5: State Fair Beef Cattle Show

9: Bull Breeding Soundness Exams (Dominique's Opelousas)

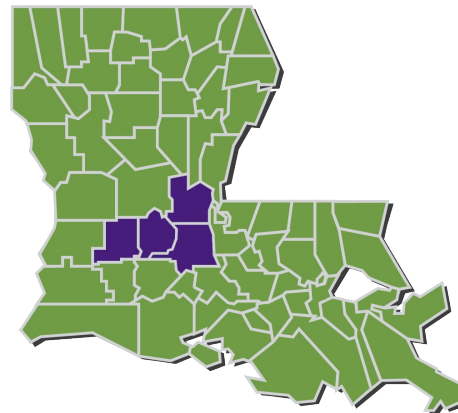
17-18: Jim Bowie Livestock Show

Allow Me to Introduce Myself

Greetings Producers and Friends of the LSU AgCenter!

Welcome to the Beef Cattle Connection Newsletter. Your editor here is Brittany Zaunbrecher, ANR Agent for Beef Cattle and Forages covering parishes of St. Landry, Avoyelles, Evangeline, and Allen. I recently transitioned to this role mid-August of 2023 after working the past nine years in 4-H Youth Development in Cameron Parish.

I grew up raising and showing Simmental Cattle in Donaldsonville, LA in 4-H and across the country. My family had and still has a small seedstock operation. I attended Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge and studied Agricultural Business with a concentration in Management. I was active in the Block and Bridle Club and a member of the livestock judging team. Since working for the LSU AgCenter, I earned my master's in agriculture Extension, Education, and Evaluation (AEEE). I've consistently helped at livestock shows, including the State Fair of Louisiana, SW District Livestock Show, and LSU AgCenter State Livestock Show. I am excited to share my passion for the beef cattle industry here in the central region of the state. Feel free to reach out to me by email at bzaunbrecher@agcenter.lsu.edu.

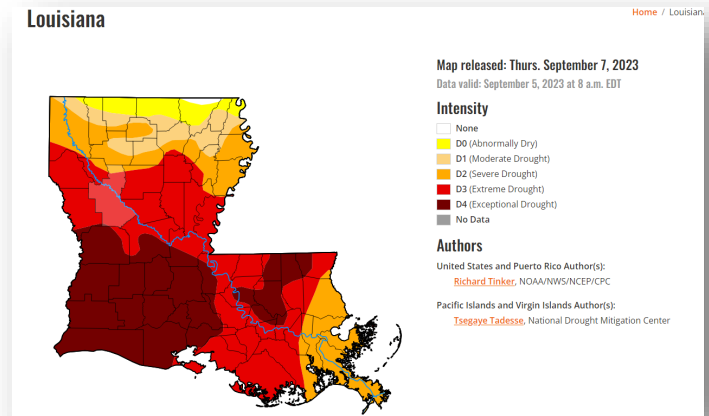


What You'll Find in This Newsletter

My goal is to provide you with information about upcoming events and opportunities in the area and across the state, such as field days, meetings, classes, and any other events that would be of interest. I will also plan to provide you with the latest news and information on the issues affecting you, whether it be drought or other weather-related conditions, pasture and forages planting, fertilization, and management, marketing your cattle, and more.

Drought Monitoring

The latest drought monitor map shows Allen, Avoyelles, Evangeline, and St. Landry parishes in D4 Exceptional Drought. Be sure to check with your local FSA Office to determine if you qualify for the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP). The Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) provides payments to eligible livestock owners and contract growers who have covered livestock and who are also producers of grazed forage crop acreage (native and improved pastureland with permanent vegetative cover or certain crops planted specifically for grazing) that have suffered a loss of grazed forage due to a qualifying drought during the normal grazing period for the county. View the [Livestock Forage Program Factsheet](#) for more detailed information.



Excessive heat, drought may lead to economic losses for Louisiana crops and cattle

Extreme heat and periods of drought this summer will likely lead to losses in several of Louisiana's agricultural sectors.

Economists from the LSU AgCenter expect the worst losses in the beef cattle sector as reduced hay production, the forced downsizing of cattle herds and other factors could lead to estimated losses of \$135 million to \$290 million.

"Certainly, the entire agricultural industry is going to have some impacts from excessive heat and drought, but with beef cattle, they're getting hit on several fronts," said AgCenter economist Kurt Guidry.

Guidry, the assistant director of the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station, developed these estimates by consulting with AgCenter agriculture and natural resource agents who work in communities across the state.

While some cattle have died in the heat, Guidry expects the greatest losses to come from producers weaning their calves from their mothers earlier than normal and from ranchers selling their herds.

"A forced liquidation and early weaning are basically management strategies that producers are having to do to manage the amount of forage they have because grass is not growing," Guidry said.

"To limit the number of mouths they have to feed, they're either selling cows, or they've weaned calves early, and then then have to turn around and sell them."

Most Louisiana cattle raisers use a cow-calf model. They keep a permanent herd of cows that produce calves, which are then raised and sold.

Because of the drought, producers have faced a reduction in available forage to feed cattle. Fewer cattle can graze on a plot of land, and less hay is being produced to feed them later in the year. Reduced hay production caused by lack of rainfall is expected to cost cattle raisers \$62 million to \$108 million, Guidry found.

Guidry found that many cattle raisers weaned 10% to 20% of their calves from their mothers earlier than normal to reduce stress on the mothers and help the mothers maintain better body conditions and reproductive health. Early weaning leads to lower weight cattle at sale and less revenue, Guidry said.

Many producers have been forced to sell between 10% and 30 % of their permanent herds, Guidry said. This leads to future losses as ranchers will have fewer calves reared in coming years, and feeder steer prices are expected to rise 13% next year, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service.

"If you sell cows this year, you don't have those cows next year, and you don't have a calf next year to sell," Guidry said. "Reducing those numbers is really the big impact."

Heat and drought also are affecting field crops grown in Louisiana, said Michael Deliberto, an AgCenter economist. The high price of fuel, especially diesel, leads to higher irrigation costs for farmers who use diesel-powered pumps to pull water from bayous, canals and ponds to water their fields.

"Especially cotton and soybeans, with the amount of acres that we have in the state under irrigation, every time they turn their pumps on, it's more of a cost they're having to incur," Deliberto said.

"They're needing to irrigate because they don't want to sacrifice the yield potential or the quality of their crop."

While diesel prices had dropped earlier this year, as the heat and drought linger, diesel is also rising to almost \$4 per gallon. Each 25-cent rise in diesel costs increases the price of irrigation via flexible field pipe by \$2.14 per acre. A farmer using the center pivot irrigation method will see a \$2.80 increase.

Producers have already picked much of the rice and corn crops, and heat helps the rice dry faster once harvested and placed in bins, one of the few "silver linings" to the heat, Deliberto said.

The full effect of the drought on cotton, soybeans and sugarcane will not be known until after harvest, Deliberto said.

Beef Cattle Water Requirements and Source Management

Sourced from [Mississippi State University Extension Publication P2490](#) ([Download pdf linked for more information](#))

Water is the most abundant nutrient in the body and a critical nutrient for all classes of beef cattle. Cattle need access to adequate supplies of clean water at all times and should not have to travel long distances for water. Water is required for a wide variety of body functions in cattle. It is needed for body temperature regulation, growth, reproduction, lactation, digestion, nutrient use, mineral balance maintenance, pH buffering of body fluids, waste removal, joint lubrication, nervous system cushioning, hearing, and eyesight.

Cattle Water Requirements and Intake Levels

Cattle water requirements and consumption depend on a number of factors, including air temperature, humidity level, water temperature, milk production, pregnancy status, physical activity, growth rate, animal size, breed, diet type, moisture level in the diet, salt intake, and dry matter intake. Lower evaporative losses of water from cattle in high humidity conditions can slightly lower water intake requirements. Diets high in protein, salt, minerals, or diuretic substances that increase urination can raise water requirements of cattle. Brahman-influence cattle have an enhanced ability to adapt to hot, dry conditions and may withstand short-term water deprivation better than other breeds. Water intake studies of Brahmans compared with Herefords revealed lower water intake by Brahmans.

Environmental Temperatures

Seasonal differences in water intake occur. Water intake is highest in summer, intermediate in spring and autumn, and lowest in winter. Providing shade in summer can reduce water intake. Temperature increases from 50°F to 90°F can increase daily water requirements by two and a half times. According to the most recent edition of Nutrient Requirements of Beef Cattle, a 400-pound growing calf requires approximately 5.8 gallons of water per day when the temperature is 70°F. This increases to 9.5 gallons per day when the temperature reaches 90°F. As the size of the calf increases, water requirements also rise. For a 600-pound calf, daily water intake needs are 7.8 gallons at 70°F and 12.7 gallons at 90°F.

Growing beef calf water intake estimates (gallons) at different weights

Weight	90°F
400	9.5
600	12.7
800	15

Finishing cattle water intake estimates (gallons) at different weights

Weight	90°F
600	14.3
800	17.4
1000	20.6

Lactating cow water intake estimates (gallons)

Weight	90°F
900	16.2

Mature bull water intake estimates (gallons) at different weights

Weight	90°F
1400	19
1600+	20.6

The combined effect of temperature and humidity on cattle is important to consider. Humidity can intensify the effects of environmental temperature on livestock comfort, water intake, feed intake, and performance. The Temperature-Humidity Index (THI) serves as a useful indicator of the simultaneous temperature and humidity conditions livestock experience. The Livestock Weather Safety Index classifies THI values as normal, alert, danger, or emergency conditions for cattle. Water intake increases when the Temperature-Humidity Index goes above 75.

Normal: <74, Alert: 75-78, Danger: 79-83, Emergency >84.

Temperature-relative humidity (%) index (THI)

Temperature	30%	35%	40%	45%	50%	55%	60%	65%	70%	75%	80%	85%
100°F	84	85	86	87	88	90	91	92	93	94	95	97
98°F	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	93	94	95
96°F	81	82	83	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93
94°F	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91
92°F	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	85	86	87	88	89
90°F	78	79	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	86	87
88°F	76	77	78	79	80	81	81	82	83	84	85	86
86°F	75	76	77	78	78	79	80	81	81	82	83	84
84°F	74	75	75	76	77	78	78	79	80	80	81	82
82°F	73	73	74	75	75	76	77	77	78	79	79	80
80°F	72	72	73	73	74	75	75	76	76	77	78	78
78°F	70	71	71	72	73	73	74	74	75	75	76	76
76°F	69	70	70	71	71	72	72	73	73	74	74	75

Body Water Losses

Anything that influences body water losses increases a calf's water intake requirements. Cattle lose water through urine, feces, sweat (to a limited degree), and by evaporation from the lungs and skin. Diet influences water losses in feces; lush diets and diets high in mineral content result in higher fecal water output. Health conditions causing diarrhea or loose feces impact water losses from the animal.

Cattle cannot adapt to water restriction very well. Providing less water than cattle need results in decreased feed intake and reduced performance. Water deprivation for extended periods can result in death. Thirst is a result of water need, and cattle drink to fill this need. Thirsty cattle may indicate water needs are not being met. Cattle should be given all the water they can drink to avoid stress, production losses, and possible dehydration. Reduced water consumption may be a sign of illness in cattle. Observe water consumption changes closely.

Water Sources Other than Drinking

Not all water must come from drinking. Feeds and forages contain water, and digestion of feeds can produce water in the body, particularly high-energy feedstuffs. Water intake usually refers to free-drinking water plus water from feedstuffs. Pasture forages, green chop, and silage generally contain large amounts of water, while hay and feed grains tend to contain lower amounts of water. Lush forage may be approximately 75 percent water, while forage in the form of hay may be closer to 10 percent water. Water is listed as moisture on a forage or feed analysis report. Subtracting the dry matter percent of a feedstuff from 100 percent yields the moisture percent. High-energy feedstuffs supply more body water during digestion than low-energy feedstuffs.

Water Temperature

Water temperature has been identified as affecting animal preference to water. Warm water can reduce intake, and cool water can increase both water and feed intake. Cool water helps cattle maintain a proper body temperature. A recent study found that water intake by cattle increased when water temperatures were below 77°F. This increased water intake is often associated with improved feed intake and cattle weight gains. (There are also production benefits to maintaining cool drinking water supplies for cattle.)

Most groundwater supplies to cattle operations are naturally cool. Ponds generally maintain a constant temperature during the day, but the temperature rises with direct sunlight exposure throughout the day. Deep ponds do not usually warm up to the point they will affect intake. Small water troughs in the summer and shallow sloughs and ponds may be a concern. Trough water heats up by late afternoon but then cools down during the night. Cattle water intake typically peaks in mid-morning hours and also during the hottest period of the day. Cattle tend to graze during early morning hours, then seek water, and finally seek shade or graze less intensively during hot afternoon hours.

Join Us!

BEEF BRUNCH Educational Series

Thoughts for Marketing Your Cattle

Understanding the Markets – Dr. Kurt Guidry

September 5th at 10:30 AM

Join by accessing the webinar at <http://lsuagcenter.com/beefbrunch> or by calling 1-225-614-2374 and using conference code 859 229 673#.

Weaning Methods and Pre-conditioning Options – Drs. Marcelo Vedovatto and Ashley Edwards

September 12th at 10:30 AM

Join by accessing the webinar at <http://lsuagcenter.com/beefbrunch> or by calling 1-225-614-2374 and using conference code 887 754 537#.

Buyer Expectations – Mr. Tyler Braud

September 19th at 10:30 AM

Join by accessing the webinar at <http://lsuagcenter.com/beefbrunch> or by calling 1-225-614-2374 and using conference code 273 183 856#.

Market Options and Adding Value to Calves – Mr. Lee Faulk

September 26th at 10:30 AM

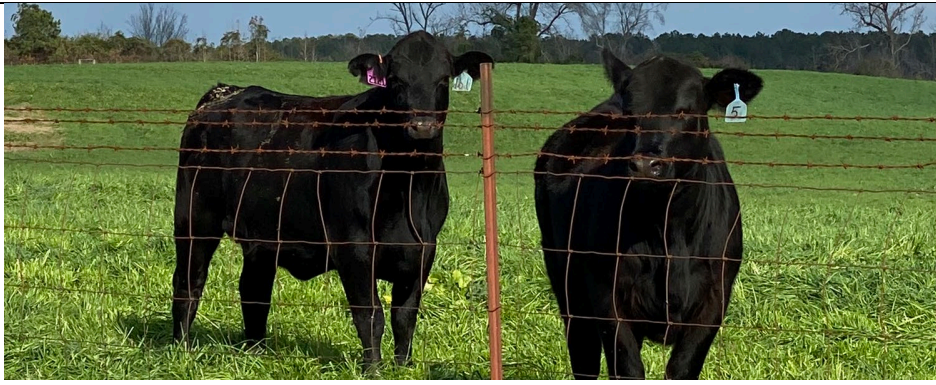
Join by accessing the webinar at <http://lsuagcenter.com/beefbrunch> or by calling 1-225-614-2374 and using conference code 622 129 856#.

For questions regarding the Beef Brunch Educational Series,
please contact Dr. Ashley Edwards at 512-818-5476 or akedwards@agcenter.lsu.edu.



For the latest research-based information on just about anything, visit our website:

www.LSUAgCenter.com



Dean Lee Research Station and Extension Center's

BEEF CATTLE AND FORAGE FIELD DAY

Thursday, September 14, 2023

State Evacuation Shelter

8125 Hwy 71 S, Alexandria, LA

Registration begins at 2:00 PM

Dinner will be provided.

To help us best prepare for a meal, we ask that
you please RSVP by Friday, September 1st by
using the QR code or contacting Dr. Ashley
Edwards at akedwards@agcenter.lsu.edu.



Phase 2 and CEC of Master Farmer is being offered for attending
the Beef Cattle & Forage Field Day.



Cool-season Annual
Forages

Forage Planting
Methods

Weaning Methods and
Management

Herbicide Updates

Cattle Marketing
Strategies

Insects and Diseases in
Hayfields



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Dr. Ashley Edwards
akedwards@agcenter.lsu.edu
512-818-5476



ACADIANA CATTLE PRODUCERS FALL FIELD DAY

DATE: Saturday, **October 21**, 2023

TIME: 8:00A.M.-1:30P.M.

PLACE: Iberia Research Station

(603 LSU Bridge Road, Jeanerette, LA 70544)

REGISTRATION STARTS AT 8:00 AM

Approved for Master Farmer Phase II credit.

Field Day Topics

- **Welcome/Introductions** - (Administration, New Agents, LCA, & LFGC)
- ** Drought and Replacement Female Strategies**
- ** Interpreting Forage Analysis Results & Matching Cattle Nutrient Requirements**
- ** Hay Evaluation & Sampling**
- ** Evaluation of New Herbicide Products for Broadleaf Weed Management**
- **Weaning Strategies to Improve Calf Performance**
- ** Program updates** – (Beef Extension Program and Master Farmer)

LUNCH PROVIDED- DOOR PRIZES-VENDOR EXHIBITS



CONTACTS: Iberia - Blair Hebert (337-369-4440); Iberia Research Station – Dr. Al Orgeron (337-276-5527); Lafayette & St. Martin – Lanie Richard {337-291-7090}; Vermilion & Acadia -Abigail Sartin {337-898- 4335}; Louisiana Forage and Grassland Council - Ed Twidwell (225-578-4564); Beef Cattle Nutritionist – Marcelo Vedovatto (318-473-6520)



St. Landry
Cattlemen's
Association

Dominique's
Stockyard

Lafayette
Cattlemen's
Association



BULL BREEDING SOUNDNESS EXAM

Thursday November 9, 2023

8:00 A.M. – Until Completed

Dominique's Stockyard - Opelousas, LA

Cattlemen from throughout the Acadiana area are invited to bring their bulls. Pre-Registration Required!
(Scan QR Code or Visit: <https://forms.office.com/r/v1vhfbypQR>)

All bulls will be semen tested, visually evaluated, and will have scrotal measurements taken with a written soundness report provided to the producer.

Licensed veterinarians will perform testing at a charge of \$50.00 per bull. Additional vaccinations also available for an additional charge.

Additional Benefits:

- No vet road service charges
- Good working facilities provided
- Free help provided to handle & work bulls
- Educational Information

Bulls will be tentatively scheduled by appointment when producers call to pre-register and tested on a first come first serve basis once they arrive. Bulls may be brought in the afternoon prior, but only if special arrangements are made at the time of call in. All Trich test bulls must be tested first on Thursday morning.

Call Lafayette Assistant ANR Agent Lanie Richard (337-291-7090), St. Landry ANR Agent Brittany Zaunbrecher (337-948-0561) or Mike Dominique at Dominique's Stockyard (337-654-4030) to sign up the bulls and make arrangements.

Find out if your bull is fertile before you lose a calf crop!!

****ADDITIONAL TEST**** -- Testing for Trichomoniasis ("Trich") will be available at a cost of \$100 per bull. Next year's price will increase to \$120. Because Trich testing kits must be ordered in advance, and test kits shipped overnight once the test is completed, *producers who want to have bulls Trich tested must sign up ASAP and plan to be tested on Thursday morning.*

Online Resources



- **Website:** www.lsuagcenter.com/beefcattle
- **Beef Brunch Educational Series:**
 - www.lsuagcenter.com/beefbrunch
- **YouTube:** [LSU AgCenter – Livestock](#)
- **Remind App System:**
 - Text @labeef to 81010
- **Social Media:**
 - Facebook – [@LSUAgCenterBeefCattle](#)
 - Instagram – [@lsu_agcenter_beef_cattle](#)
 - Twitter – [@BeefLsu](#)

St. Landry Parish has a Facebook Page!

<https://www.facebook.com/StLandryLSUAgCenter>

Membership and participation in activities and events are open to all citizens without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, veteran status or disability. If you have a disability that requires special accommodation for your participation in an activity, please contact us at 337-948-0561.

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The LSU AgCenter and LSU provide equal opportunities in programs and employment.
