LSU AgCenter Research & Extension

The PRIME Times...

a beef cattle newsletter

Volume 7 Issue 1

FEBRUARY 2013

State Hay Show

Congratulations go out to Bob Pitre for having the overall champion hay exhibit at the state hay show in December. Bob won this honor for his first place clover hay entry. In addition, Andre' Arcement won second place with his bermudagrass hay.

Master Cattle Class

I am in the process of getting together a 4th Master Cattle Producer class. I need about 15 people to be able to have the class. So far, I have 5 people that are interested. If you are interested in participating, please call me and get your name on the list. The cost is $150 per person. The class meets once a month for 12 months. Each class lasts about 2½ hours, and a meal is served at each meeting. It is a very good program, and I would encourage any new cattle producers, as well as some of your more experienced cattle producers, to participate. Call me at 985/446-1316 if you are interested.

Basic Tips When Vaccinating Cattle

Good sanitation practices can reduce the risk of spreading infection from one animal to another, reduce the chance of contaminating the vaccine and reduce injection site reactions.

Here are some basic tips:

1. Don't go back into the vaccine bottle with the same needle you use to vaccinate. This can contaminate the vaccine.
2. Change needles frequently—at least every 10-15 uses—or every syringe full of vaccine.
3. If a needle develops a bend or a burr from being bumped against the chute, for example, discard it immediately because it will tear the tissue.
4. Disposable needles are an economical way to ensure sanitation.
5. When using killed vaccines, keep a saucer or sponge of alcohol or disinfectant nearby and wipe off the needle after each use. Do *not* disinfect needles between injections when using a modified live vaccine, because the disinfectant can destroy the vaccine.
6. Make sure the injection site is clean. Injecting into a spot that is damp, muddy or covered with manure greatly increases the risk of infection.
7. Clean transfer needles regularly to avoid contamination.

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Upcoming Events:

Annual Select Heifer Sale

March 9, 2013
1:00 p.m.
Zero Brahman Ranch
Sale Barn
Thibodaux, LA

28th Annual Select Heifer Sale

March 9, 2013 – 1:00 p.m.

Zero Brahman Ranch Sale Barn
Thibodaux, LA

92 HEIFERS CONSIGNED

85 F_1'S	**Brahman X Angus F_1's, Brahman X Hereford F_1's, Most certified – All from registered or purebred cows and registered bulls**
5	**Brangus heifers – registered**
2	**¾ Angus x ¼ Brahman**

*******CONSIGNED HEIFERS ARE*******

10	**2 yrs. old or older with calves or bred**
18	**15-23 month heifers – some open, some exposed, some bred**
69	**12-14 month heifers - open**

All heifers calfhood vaccinated for Brucellosis—From Brucellosis certified or clean herds.

CONSIGNORS INCLUDE: Sylvia Naquin, Zero Brahman Ranch/Don Robichaux, Zero Brahman Ranch/David J. Robichaux, Jr., Laurel Valley Plantation, Double G Farms, Rene Hebert, Paul Dufrene, Randy Toups, South Louisiana Farms/David C. Robichaux, Neal Schexnayder.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
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KSU Feedlot Update

Looking back at 2012, the most dramatic numbers in the latest Kansas State University's "Focus on Feedlot" report were the cost of gain figures. To say those costs were burdensome would be an understatement. Largely, performance of cattle sold followed rather normal trend of slight annual improvement.

Feedlot cost of gain (cost of feed, yardage, processing, etc.) has been generally on the upswing since 2008 and reached a new high in 2012. For steers sold in 2012, feedlots reported the average steer cost of gain at $111.23 per cwt., $13.88 above a year ago and $25.91 over 2008's. During 2012, feedstuff costs moved cost of gain within a wide range starting the year (January) at $113.28 per cwt., dropping to $103.79 for June closeouts, and then climbing to over $120.00 for the first time ever in November. Feedlots reported December's average at $119.25 per cwt. Heifer cost of gain in 2012 averaged $117.36 per cwt., about $6.00 over that of steers. Cost was the highest for heifers sold in December at $124.34. As with steers, that was record high.

Projected feedlot cost of gain was estimated by surveyed feedlots in mid-January 2013. At $123.67 and $127.67 per cwt. for steers and heifers, respectively, those projections were up dramatically compared to a year ago (up $14.00 to $15.00 per cwt.). Those costs were based on corn about $1.00 per bushel above a year ago and hay up nearly $19.00 per ton.

Animal performance continued to generally improve in 2012, but those improvements were modest. Steer average daily gain for the year was 3.67 pounds up from 3.61 in 2011. For the first time in any month, average daily gain for all steers reached 4.00 in December's closeouts. Pounds of feed (dry matter basis) required per pound of gain declined slightly - for the year steers averaged 5.93 compared to 5.95 in 2011.

Ticks and Lice

I've seen a couple of instances so far of cattle whose ears are dropping to the side of their head. Upon a closer look, their ears are full of ticks. It appears that environmental conditions this year have favored the increase in tick population. Ticks are blood sucking pests that reduce efficiency in cattle and carry diseases. When working your cattle, be on the lookout for ticks.

Blood sucking and chewing lice numbers increase on beef cattle when temperatures begin to decrease during the fall and winter months when the beef animal's hair coat thickens and the skin becomes dry. Conversely, when temperatures begin to increase in the spring the beef animal's hair coat thins and becomes oily, then lice numbers decrease. Where fly control programs have been effective, lice problems usually appear later than normal.

Adult lice mate on beef animals. Females attach eggs to hairs. Each female lays about 90 eggs in her lifetime. Small nymphs emerge from the eggs and begin feeding on cattle. Lice can usually be detected by examining the animal for dark patches of bluish lice, especially on the head and neck.

Heavily infested animals appear in poor condition and have large areas rubbed free of hair, with the remaining hair coat rough and matted in appearance. Heavy infestations of sucking lice cause marked anemia. A small number of cattle in a herd tend to be more heavily infested than the majority of the herd. These animals, called "carriers," act as a reinfestation source for the other animals.

There are several products available for control of lice and ticks on cattle. They follow on the next page.

LOUISIANA RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONTROL OF LIVESTOCK PESTS (cont'd)

Animal and Pest	Insecticides	To Make 50 gals	To Make 3 gals	Minimum Days Treatment to Slaughter	Precautions
BEEF CATTLE:					
Ticks	Rabon (50%WP)	4 lbs.	4 oz.	0	**Saber:** Do not treat more than once every two weeks or more than four times within a six-month period.
Sprays	Ravap (23% + 5.7%EC)	1 qt.	2 ozs.	0	
	Amitraz (Taktic 12.5%) (other Amitraz formulations available)	1 pt.	1 oz.	0	
	Co-Ral (42%) DIP	1-2 pts.		0	
	Co-Ral (6.1%)	1 gal.	8 ozs.	0	
	Co-Ral (11.6%)	0.5 gal.	4 ozs.	0	
Ear Tags (Ear ticks only)	Apply 1 tag in each ear				
	Brand Name	Formulation			
	Avenger	30% endosulfan		0	
	Optimizer	20% diazinon		0	
	X-Terminator	20% diazinon		0	
	Patriot	40% diazinon		0	
	Co-Ral Plus	20% diazinon + 20% coumaphos		0	
	Dominator	20% pirimiphos-methyl		0	
	Cylence Ultra	8% beta-Cyfluthrin + 20% PBO		0	Once every 10 days. Do not treat calves under 6 months of age. Do not treat Brahman.
	Saber Extra	10% Lambdacyhalothrin + 13% PBO		0	
	Python	10% Zetacypermethrin + 20% PBO		0	
Lice	Co-Ral (6.1% EC)	2 qts.	4 ozs.	0	
Sprays	Co-Ral (11.6% EC)	1 qt.	2 ozs.	0	
	Ravap (23% + 5.7%)	2.6 qts.	5 ozs.	0	
	Rabon 50%	2.66 lbs.	2.5 ozs.	0	
	Amitraz (12.5%) Taktic (other Amitraz formulations available)	1 pt.	1 oz.	0	
Pour-ons (Ready-to-use)	Ivomec 0.5% (and other Ivermectin products)	Apply 1 ml. per 22 lbs. of body weight.		48	
	Dectomax	Apply 1 ml. per 22 lbs. of body weight.		45	
	Cylence	Apply down back line 8 mls. per 400 lbs. per body weight; 24 mls. for animals over 800 lbs.		0	
	Saber	Apply down back line, 10 mls. per head for cattle less than 600 lbs. 15 mls. per head for cattle larger than 600 lbs.		0	
	Eprinex or Cydectin	Apply 1 ml. per 22 lbs. of body weight along back.		0/0	
	Permethrin Pour-ons	Many formulations; refer to labels.		0	

Copper Deficiency in Cattle

Soils high in organic matter are sometimes associated with signs of copper deficiency in cattle. Copper deficiency can be caused by a diet deficient in copper (primary) or be due to interfering substance(s) in the diet which reduces absorption of copper from the gut (secondary). Copper deficiency seen in cattle on pumpland soils appears to be secondary in nature but the exact cause is not clear. It may be due to increased molybdenum in spring grass leading to increased molybdenum in milk and interference with copper in the nursing calf.

Chronic diarrhea and "ill thrift" in calves nursing cows grazing spring forage suggests copper deficiency. An occasional calf may be lame with tight tendons which causes a short, stiff gait in the front legs. Older calves may appear to have swollen fetlock joints, but on close examination the ends of the bones are actually wider than normal. Hair color around the eyes may change from black or dark red to light yellow or grey.

The number of calves affected and the severity of signs varies considerably from herd to herd and year to year.

Copper deficient calves with chronic diarrhea often respond dramatically to copper oxide wire boluses. Stools often return to normal within 1 or 2 days. Blood samples can be checked for copper content. Liver from calves that die for one reason or another is a good copper test sample. Newborn calves with very low liver copper content have been seen in coastal areas. Blood serum from cows may or may not be low in copper.

Cattle are relatively resistant to excess copper but poisoning can occur so care is needed in using it. Copper injections at 60 day intervals has been used in nursing calves in Lafourche and it does appear to stop the diarrhea and to increase growth rates in affected herds.

Copper can be added to trace minerals and made available free choice to the cow-calf herd. Although nursing calves may not eat the mineral mix, cows may be able to provide enough copper to the fetus to insure adequate copper in newborn calves.