

Cass County Newsletter

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Pesticide Applicator Training Offered

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office is offering a Pesticide Applicator License Training on September 27th. You need to RSVP by September 6th. \$50 is due upon RSVP so that your supplies can be ordered. The cost of the class is \$30. You will need to go test in Tyler following completion of the class.

When feeding during a drought, there are several issues that can create serious health issues for your herd.

The use of salt to limit feed intake may increase water intake 50 to 75% or approximately 50 gallons of additional water for each pound of salt. Water must not be limited in any way or salt toxicity may result. The over-consumption of urea-containing supplements by cattle on forage scarce ranges can result in urea toxicity. Generally, cattle performance on urea-type supplements is also poor whenever energy or forage is in short supply as the non protein nitrogen must have cellulose containing material to be effectively utilized. Hay cut under moisture stress conditions, especially sorghum type hays, may contain high levels of nitrate. If in doubt, it would be good to test for nitrate before feeding such hays, especially before feeding large amounts. Producers who cut drought corn or sorghum for hay are encouraged to check nitrate levels before feeding. Be sure to take a good representative sample when sending to the laboratory for analysis. In addition, prussic acid or cyanide poisoning can also be a problem in grazing drought stunted plants such as Johnson grass, sorghum, sorghum hybrids, and sudan grass. If forage for hay is allowed to sun cure thoroughly for three to five days, bleaching out any bright green color, prussic acid should not be a problem. Cattle grazing short pasture are more likely to consume toxic plants.

High energy acid-producing feeds tend to decrease rumen pH and fiber digestion and alternate day feeding of large amounts, more than four pounds, simply magnifies the decrease in rumen pH. Further, unadapted cows should be started on grain feeding slowly or the problems of acidosis, founder and even death may result. Rumen impaction may result where cattle receive inadequate protein (less than 7 to 8% CP in total diet) and too much of a low quality high fiber forage such as drought pasture. Lack of adequate water will aggravate the impaction program.

Hay harvested from vacant city lots, roadsides etc., broiler litter and other such feed may contain nails, wire, or foreign objects which can pierce the rumen wall resulting in death of the animal. When roughage supply is limited it may also be necessary to ensure complete consumption of coarse stems, moldy portions, etc. Grinding prevents selective consumption and helps to mix and thus dilute portions of the ration which by themselves are unpalatable or possibly toxic. Grinding does not in itself make the feed any more nutritious; in fact it reduces the digestibility of the feed slightly, but because animals can consume more, a larger proportion of the feed intake is available for production, and a smaller proportion is used for maintenance. When using high levels of poor-quality roughage in the diet, proper supplementation is essential to avoid impaction.

Since many livestock procedures will be using unfamiliar feeds or rations during periods of feed shortage, they should keep a close watch over animal performance and adjust rations as necessary to meet production requirements.