

Cooke County Crop and Cattle Report for Monday, March 25, 2019

Well we received about a half inch of rain Saturday morning following a week of dry weather and some much needed sunshine with warmer temps. It's amazing how fast things dry out this time of year, but the fields still had more than ample moisture. I saw some fields that looked a little too wet to me, but they made it work. A big majority of the corn was planted last week and a little Milo was stuck in the ground too. It's still a little early for most Milo farmers as they shoot for around the first week or two of April waiting for warmer soil temps and trying to avoid the last freeze. The wheat and oats are looking some better with the warm and drier weather last week. So far there have been no reports of leaf or stripe rust in wheat pastures in Cooke County, but there are reports of some much further south, so keep scouting for it, and insect damage too. I visited with a few producers this morning and to my surprise they believe stocker cattle have made some decent gains in the past few months. They didn't seem to think the wheat was as washy as we all had assumed it would be because of all the moisture we have had this winter. Usually when we get a lot of rain it makes the grass washy (too watery), which in turn reduces the amount of protein and energy available to the cattle. Providing stockers with hay or other forms of dry feed in addition to the wheat pasture helps tighten them up, also sometimes allows increased stocking rates, increased gains and usually improves general animal health. One producer said he weighed some calves the other day and they had gained 2 pounds, which is excellent considering the conditions they have been under. Winter pastures are trying to perk up and be productive for the Cow-calf producers too. The cows are busy chasing the green stuff and it shows. The calving season will be over soon for most folks and calving percentages are about the norm this season. Many are still feeding hay and will likely continue for a few weeks until we get some decent growth on all grass types. Warm season grasses like our Native grasses, Coastal Bermuda, Klein etc... are on the verge of breaking dormancy with this warmer weather, and thus warming soil temps. There is still some hay for sale out there if you need some with prices varying according to quality and availability. I have a list of hay for sale here at the office of folks that have contacted me. Holler if you need a copy and I will email it to you. Meanwhile enjoy the nice weather this week!

In the markets as of Mar 23- Slaughter cattle trade a tick higher at \$128. Current feed yard closeouts were \$22 in the black. The live cattle futures for April are at \$130, while Mar Feeder futures were \$143. The cash prices here in Texas for 750 lb feeder steers were at \$1.42 and 550 lb. stocker steers were up 5 at \$1.65. Average dress slaughter cows & bulls, \$2-5 lower, cows at \$55-62 while bulls were \$77-85

Hay report: Unchanged-Coastal Bermuda squares 9.00-12.00 per bale. Large Rounds 70.00-100.00/roll

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