TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

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Agriculture Law/Leasing Workshop - August 28, 2018

Deadline to register is Friday, August 24th.
See page 2 for details.

Lack of rain could lead to culling herds

Beef producers might start considering culling options in case drought conditions continue to decrease forage and hay availability.

Dr. Jason Banta, AgriLife Extension beef cattle specialist, Overton, said a shortage of forage and hay could mean producers will be forced to reduce herd numbers. Having a plan to cull herds can save producers money in the short- and long-term.

Banta said there was very little hay carryover from last year due to the extended winter. Cooler than normal temperatures into spring also meant the first hay cutting, which is typically one of the best, was subpar. The second cutting was also below normal in quantity and quality due to drought, he said. Drought conditions are also affecting hay availability in other nearby states, including Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri and Arkansas.

"That means hay supplies will be tight," he said. "A lot of producers are getting worried, and their concerns are justified."

Herd sizes have also increased over the past several years, he said.

"That complicates things more," he said. "It means they will need to look at stocking rates and begin thinking about reducing their herd numbers to save some forage supplies and reduce the need for hay in the winter."

Producers should adjust stocking rates to avoid overgrazing pastures, Banta said. If moisture is received overgrazing makes it more difficult for grasses to recover.

To capitalize on rain, producers should consider keeping a nitrogen fertilizer source with low volatility on better-producing pastures, Banta said. Ammonium nitrate can sit on fields for several weeks with very little or no volatilization concerns.

"There should be nitrogen on pastures in the event that an unexpected rain comes," he said. "It's important because you never know when we might get moisture. It takes less rain to produce one ton of forage when there is good nitrogen available. So, it's best to capitalize on any moisture we get."

Banta said producers should also be mindful to maintain cow body condition. Keeping weight on cows is much easier than recovering lost pounds.

Agriculture Law / Leasing Workshop

Texas Agrilife Extension Erath County will be hosting an Agriculture Law / Leasing Workshop August 28, 2018 at the Texas Agrilife Extension Research Center Stephenville.
The workshop will address:
Landowner Leases and Checklist
Landowner Liability
General Ag Laws
Landowner Leasing Rates and Resources
The workshop will be from 9:00-2:00p.m. at the AgriLife Extension Center, 1229 North US Highway 281, Stephenville. This program will cost $25.00 to cover program cost. This program will be limited to the first 90 participants that RSVP by August 24th.
Guest Speakers will be Tiffany Lashmet – Texas AgriLife Extension Agricultural Law Specialist, Amarillo and Jason Johnson – Texas AgriLife Extension Economist, Stephenville.

Participants will receive a leasing handbook that covers legal issues, designing lease payment structures and calculating payments, and landowner liability. The book also will provide checklists and sample lease forms for negotiating lease agreements.

"There has been a wonderful response to these types programs around the state," Lashmet said. Every one of those people that attended said they would recommend this program to a friend.

Rain - Cont from page 1

Producers may want to wean calves one to two months earlier than usual to help keep cows in better shape going into winter, he said.

"Letting a cow get below a body condition score of 4 will increase the cost to get them back to where they need to be," he said. "A bred cow will do what she has to do to bring her calf to term, but getting her bred the next time is what we're trying to preserve."

Banta said the U.S. cattle herd is the biggest it's been since 2009 so producers need to maximize the value of culls amid lower prices. Poor body conditions can mean even lower prices and lower weights. Taking culls to market in good condition can help maximize dollars per head.

If conditions continue to decline, Banta said producers should be prepared to cull their herds.

"There is no perfect strategy, but there are different options when it comes to culling," he said.

Cows with problems, such as bad udders, bad feet, a bad eye or temperament should always be the first to go.

If additional herd reduction is needed, the list below presents one option

– virgin replacement heifers.

– late calvers.

– 2-year-old cows (they have the lowest reproductive rates).

– 3-year-old cows.

– mature cows (least affected by difficult conditions).

"Virgin replacement heifers are at the top of the list to sell first because those heifers generally have good value as feeder heifers or for breeding in other parts of the country," he said. "There are pros and cons to every strategy, the pros of this approach are lower feed costs and more calf income in the short run. However, it will mean higher replacement rates over a short period of time in the future."

Another strategy is to sell the traditional culls, followed by the late-calvers and any cows age 11 or older. After that a percentage from each remaining group, including virgin heifers, young cows and mature cows, would be sold. This approach keeps the herd age structure intact, but results in higher feed costs and less calves to sell in the short term.

"Cattle prices are lower than in previous droughts so producers can't spend as much on feed and expect a return when they go to sale," he said. "We're not at the point to cull that deep, but it is time to plan and possibly initiate the first parts of the plan. The key is to be ahead of things rather than having to react to a bad situation."

Animal Unit Equivalent Chart - Texas
Domestic Livestock, Native Wildlife, and Exotic Wildlife

Kind of Animal	Body Weight Pounds	Daily Ave Intake % of BW	Annual Forage Intake Pounds	AU per Head	Head per AU (Rounded)
Domestic Livestock					
Beef Cattle (Cow) *	1000	2.6	9490	1	1
Horse	1100	3.0	12045	1.27	1
Domestic Sheep (Ewe)	130	3.5	1661	0.18	6
Spanish Goat (Nanny)	90	4.5	1478	0.16	6
Boer x Spanish Goat (Nanny)	125	4.0	1825	0.19	5
Angora Goat (Nanny)	70	4.5	1150	0.12	8
Native Wildlife					
White-tailed Deer	100	3.5	1278	0.13	7
Mule Deer	135	3.5	1725	0.18	6
Pronghorn Antelope	90	4.0	1314	0.14	7
Exotic Wildlife					
Axis Deer	150	3.5	1916	0.20	5
Sika Deer	145	3.5	1852	0.20	5
Fallow Deer	130	3.5	1661	0.18	6
Elk	800	3.0	8760	0.92	1
Red Deer	350	3.5	4471	0.47	2
Barasinga Deer	350	3.5	4471	0.47	2
Sambar Deer	400	3.5	5110	0.54	2
Pere David's Deer	400	3.5	5110	0.54	2
Sable Antelope	500	3.0	5475	0.58	2
Blackbuck Antelope	75	4.0	1095	0.12	9
Nilgai Antelope	350	3.5	4471	0.47	2
Scimitar-horned Oryx	400	3.5	5110	0.54	2
Gemsbok Oryx	400	3.5	5110	0.54	2
Arabian Oryx	150	3.5	1916	0.20	5
Addax	250	3.5	3194	0.34	3
Ibex x Boer Goat	125	4.5	1825	0.19	5
Impala	130	3.5	1661	0.18	6
Common Eland	1000	2.5	9125	0.96	1
Greater Kudu	450	3.5	5749	0.61	2
Sitatunga	200	3.5	2555	0.27	4
Waterbuck	500	3.0	5475	0.58	2
Thompson's Gazelle	85	4.0	1241	0.13	8
Mouflon/Barbado Sheep	120	3.5	1533	0.16	6
Auodad Sheep	200	3.5	2555	0.27	4

This chart is based on the standard concept of an Animal Unit being one 1000 pound beef cow consuming an average of 2.6% of her body weight daily throughout her yearly production cycle. Actual daily consumption will vary considerably throughout the year.

Young of the year (calves, lambs, kids, fawns) are considered as part of the mother until weaning. After weaning, they are considered a separate animal and should be added.

* Other sizes and classes of cattle are usually calculated as 0.1 AU per 100 pounds of body weight. (700 pound steer = 0.7 AU; 1200 pound cow = 1.2 AU; 1500 pound bull = 1.5 AU; etc)

For wildlife species, the AU Equivalent is based on a normal population consisting of females, males and yearling animals. If a specific herd has an unusually high proportion of females, the average weight will be lower and the AU Equivalent may need to be adjusted.

Chart developed by Steve Nelle and Stan Reinke, NRCS with input from literature and other specialists CE and TPWD.

CE and TPWD.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension provides equal opportunities in its programs and employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity Individuals with disabilities who require an auxiliary aid, service or accommodation in order to participate in Extension activities are encouraged to contact us at 254-965-1460 to determine how reasoable accommodations may by made.

Texas A&M Beef Cattle Shortcourse August 6-8, 2018 at Texas A&M University

The Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course has a rich tradition and historical place in the programs emanating from the Department of Animal Science at Texas A&M University. Dating as far back as 1942, Professor John K Riggs started the first in a series of Beef Cattle Short Courses held on the campus of Texas A&M College to discuss the results of beef cattle research from the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station with Texas beef producers. This historical beginning and purpose is still the standard today for the Beef Cattle Short Course held at Texas A&M University. Today the highly respected TAM Beef Cattle Short Course is nationally and internationally recognized as the largest attended beef cattle educational program of its type in the world. It has gained the respect from organizations, associations, Land Grant universities and agencies alike as the focal point for beef cattle educational information. The Cattleman's College features more than 20 concurrent sessions. Topics include animal health, nutrition, reproduction, breeding, genetics, selection, research, marketing and handling. Management sessions will cover business, forage, range, and purebred cattle. Topics such as landowner issues and fence building will be featured at this BCSC. Sessions are designed for everyone, from the newest member of the industry to the most seasoned producer. A number of pesticide CEUs, veterinarian CECs and BQA credits are available to attendees Additionally, over 150 agriculture related businesses and trade show exhibitors annually attend the course and attest to the fact that it is the most highly attended activity of its kind anywhere in the United States. Annually over 1,700 participants attend the Beef Cattle Short Course to gain valuable knowledge about beef cattle production. For more information and registration go to https://beefcattleshortcourse.com New this year to the Beef Cattle Shortcourse there will be a Ranch Horse Program on August 5th. Morning activities will include equine nutrition, hay and pasture management, routine health maintenance, and a special presentation over the King Ranch. Afternoon activities will include professional horseman and clinician Mr. Jeff Williams of Post Texas. For more information go the beef cattle shortcourse website.

EXTENSION OFFICE HOURS

The Erath Extension Office is open 8 AM - Noon and 1 PM - 5 PM Monday through Friday.

The Extension Office will be CLOSED for the following holidays:

Monday, Sep 3rd - Labor Day

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For more information on any of the articles or activities listed in this newsletter, please contact the Erath County Extension Office at 254-965-1460 or visit us on the web at: erath.agrilife.org

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