

LUBBOCK COUNTY

SMALL ACREAGE LANDOWNER NEWS

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The purpose of this newsletter is to assist and educate small acreage landowners to make the best decision for their production needs and keep them updated on educational opportunities. If there is a topic you would like me to address please email me at rj-scott@tamu.edu and I will try to address your request. If you would like to be on the newsletter email list let me know and I will be glad to add you to the list. The Lubbock county Extension website is <http://lubbock-tx.tamu.edu/>.

MEAT GOAT MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP SLATED FOR AUG.18 IN LUBBOCK

Texas AgriLife Extension Service will conduct a meat goat management workshop from 8:30 a.m. until noon Aug. 18 at the Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Center at Lubbock. The Center is located three miles north of Lubbock International Airport on east Farm-to-Market Road 1294. Lubbock has about 2,000 head of breeding-age meat goat does, and the numbers are growing. Those goats generated about approximately \$150,000 last year. Lubbock County has a lot of small-acreage landowners who have 10 to 50 head. The workshop's keynote speaker will be Dr. Frank Craddock, AgriLife Extension sheep and goat specialist at San Angelo. Craddock will address health, nutrition and management during the workshop's initial stage. He'll then speak on reproduction, marketing and selection while evaluating live animals. Individual registration is \$15 by Aug. 11 and \$20 thereafter. For more information and to register, go to <http://lubbock-tx.tamu.edu> and click on **Goat Management Workshop**.

11TH BOB BENSON GOLF TOURNAMENT

The 11th Annual Bob Benson Memorial / 4-H EXCELL Golf Tournament scheduled for August 19, 2008, at Plainview

Country Club, Plainview, Texas. Tournament proceeds support two important South Plains 4-H activities:

1. The Bob Benson Memorial 4-H Scholarship - Fifty percent of the proceeds are used to fund the scholarship.
2. The 4-H EXCELL Scholarship - The remaining fifty percent is used to fund travel for South Plains 4- H members who have qualified for National 4-H activities. EXCELL is an acronym for EXperience, Citizenship, and Examples for Lifetime Leadership. Funds are administered through the South Plains District (2) Extension Office and overseen by the Bob Benson Memorial / 4-H EXCELL Committee.

The format is a 4-person scramble with prizes to the top three teams. Lunch will be provided prior to the tournament.

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|---------------------------|----------------|
| 1. One Team | \$200 per Team |
| 2. One Tee Sponsor | \$150 |
| 3. One Green Sponsor | \$100 |
| 4. One Tournament Sponsor | \$50 to \$99 |
| 5. Door Prizes | 3 items |

Entries and sponsors are due by August 8, 2008.

The tournament is limited to 22 teams so get your entries in early!

For more information contact Bryan Reynolds, Lynn County Extension Agent 806/561-4562

DETERMINING YOUR STOCKING RATE

Because livestock enterprises depend upon forage, the most critical decision you may make is the appropriate stocking rate for your land. Stocking rate is the number of animals per unit area of land. It is typically expressed as acres per animal unit. An animal unit consumes 26 pounds of forage daily. For an example, look at the listings in Table 1. One 80-pound ewe equals .12 animal unit equivalent. So, eight ewes are one animal unit (meaning that eight ewes consume about 26 pounds of forage daily). If you own 20 acres, but only 10 acres produce forage for grazing, you would need to determine how many

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pounds of forage those 10 acres were producing to know how many ewes you could graze on the land. Small acreage landowners usually overestimate the carrying capacity (sustainable stocking rate) of their property. Landowners who graze too many animals for a long period of time will destroy the productivity of their land.

Table 1. Animal Unit Equivalents (AUE).

Kind and class of livestock	Approximate AUE*	No. of head per AU
Sheep, 80-lb. ewe	.12	8
Sheep, 40-lb. weaned lamb	.06	17
Sheep, 125-lb. ram	.17	6
Goat, 100-lb. doe	.15	7
Goat, 45-lb. weaned kid	.07	14
Goat, 180-lb. buck	.24	4
Cattle, 500-lb. stocker calf	.6	1.7
Cattle, 1,000-lb. cow	1	1
Cattle, 1,800-lb. bull	1.7	.6

Overgrazing has these consequences:

- Desirable, nutritious plants disappear and undesirable plants multiply, so animals do not perform well without costly supplemental feed.
- With the loss of native range plants, rainfall can not percolate into the ground easily and tends to run off. Run-off causes soil erosion and pollutes surface water. The regeneration of just 1 inch of topsoil will require several lifetimes.

Cattle

Cattle prefer grass rather than browse (trees and shrubs) or forbs (weeds). If your acreage has mostly grass, cattle should do well. However, if you don't have enough forage to support at least eight to ten stockers for at least 4 months, you shouldn't choose this enterprise.

Goats

Because of their relatively small size, goats are even better suited to small acreage operations than cattle. Goats eat more browse plants than other domestic livestock do. Therefore, they are the best species for managing or sculpting woody plant habitats. Unfortunately, plants such as juniper or mesquite are very low on a goat's list of preferred plants, so do not count on goats to manage these "undesirable" plants.

Sheep

Hair sheep breeds are also produced for meat. They are generally smaller than wool sheep breeds, which makes them more suitable for small acreage. They are also more tolerant of internal parasites. Most wool sheep must be shorn at least once a year. Hiring an experienced shearing crew and marketing small quantities of wool can be difficult chores for the small producer. Sheep prefer forbs (weeds) and grass. Some weeds, such as ragweed, nightshades, thistles, broomweed and prairie coneflower, are not palatable and will not be controlled by grazing. Some plants are toxic (for example, johnsongrass after a frost and silverleaf nightshade) and can kill an animal if eaten in large quantities. Some breeds of hair sheep include:

Barbado. This breed was developed in Texas and is the most popular breed in the state. It was developed by crossing the Barbados Blackbelly with the Rambouillet and mouflon. These sheep have tan or brown bodies with black bellies and legs. They are very prolific. Males are horned and females are polled.

Dorper. A cross between the Blackheaded Persian and the Dorset Horn breeds, Dorper sheep are either solid white or white with black heads. They are very docile. Both sexes are polled.

Predators are the biggest problem in sheep and goat production. As rural areas are developed, predation from bobcats and foxes probably will decrease, but coyotes, unconfined dogs, and feral hogs will be an increasing threat.

For more information on determining your stocking rate. A link is available under **Small Acreage Landowners Info.** at <http://lubbock-tx.tamu.edu/>

BLOCK AND TUB SUPPLEMENTS FOR BEEF CATTLE

Block supplements are a convenient mechanism for delivering supplemental nutrients to grazing beef cattle. As the labels on most blocks or tubs state, they are meant to be used as supplements, not feeds. Success or failure of a block/tub supplementation program will depend on



the availability of forage. If forage is limited or of poor quality, self-fed blocks or tubs cannot make up the nutrient deficit and are not formulated to do so. Blocks and tubs have become increasingly popular because they are easy to store and handle, they are easily accessible, they require little labor, minimal equipment is required and consumption is self-limiting. Blocks are particularly appealing to owners of the smallest herds of cattle (fewer than 50 cows) and owners of large operations of more than 300 cows. Many small producers have off-ranch employment and like the convenience and comfort of knowing supplement is continuously available. Large operators use blocks because they save time and labor. As with other supplements,

blocks and tubs can vary widely in their cost, ingredient composition, nutrient content, storage requirements and consumption characteristics. If you purchase tubs for your sheep or goat herds be sure they are low in copper or copper free. Toxicity levels for copper are much lower in sheep and goats than cattle.

For more information on block and tub supplements for beef cattle. A link is available under **Small Acreage Landowners Info.** at <http://lubbock-tx.tamu.edu/>

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

September is Disaster Preparedness month. Since September 11, 2001, much has changed in our world, nation, state and community. We have become much more aware of the devastation that can be caused by unexpected disasters—whether they are caused by nature, by accident or by terrorist attacks.

We often worry about the “what ifs” and wonder what we can do to protect ourselves and our families. To reduce the threats to Texans, the Governor’s Division of Emergency Management, Texas Homeland Security, Texas AgriLife Extension Service, the Texas Department of State Health Services and many local and national agencies are working together to help prepare our state for potential disasters.

But each individual, family and community also need to take steps to prepare for a possible disaster. This guide and the Texas Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) Web site were developed to explain different types of disasters, suggest protective measures for yourself and your family, and offer sources of additional information. You and your family can be safer during and after a disaster if you become informed and prepared now.

Farmstead Preparedness and Recovery

David W. Smith, Extension Safety Program

Disaster Preparedness

Texas is a leader in agriculture production contributing nearly 18 billion dollars in agricultural output each year from its 229,000 farms and ranches. Approximately 77 percent (or 129 million acres) of the total land in Texas is farmland. Agriculture producers are at significant risk from natural disasters including droughts, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, and wildfires. Agriculture is also susceptible to terrorist acts that seek to damage property, destroy lives, and cause widespread economic damage.

Agriculture producers must realize the effect disasters will have on family members and co-workers, as well as the impact on livestock, crops, farm structures, machinery, water and food supplies, and other bulk materials stored on the farm. They must also be prepared for the economic issues related to loss of life, property, or income that may occur.

Farmstead Disaster Plan

Farmers and ranchers who are prepared for disasters are more likely to preserve life and property. They will also minimize recovery time and resume productivity much faster.

A farmstead disaster plan must consider:

The safety of family members and co-workers, livestock, and emergency response personnel that would assist in recovery efforts; and How to protect crops, equipment and machinery, agricultural chemicals, water supplies and stores of food for animals.

Inventory, Inventory, Inventory

A comprehensive accounting of livestock, property, or potentially hazardous substances is essential to farmstead disaster preparedness. Livestock may be killed, lost, or stolen during an emergency situation. Attach animal ID tags on all animals and note the ID number and description of the animal. Maintain a list of machinery and equipment, including make and model number. Keep an updated list of pesticides, fertilizers, fuels, medicines and other chemicals. During a disaster, these chemicals can wash into streams or contaminate food supplies, placing people and animals at risk.

For more information Disaster Preparedness. Click on Texas Extension Disaster Education Network (eden) icon at <http://lubbock-tx.tamu.edu/>



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Scott".

Robert Scott
Texas AgriLife County Extension Agent
Agriculture and Natural Resources
Lubbock County