



Improving Lives. Improving Texas.

**Nacogdoches County
Quarterly Ag Newsletter
Summer 2010**



<http://nacogdoches-tx.tamu.edu>

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CEU Breakfast Meeting

The monthly CEU Breakfast Meeting takes place the third Thursday of each month at 6:30 a.m. at Kinfolks Restaurant. Each month we meet for a “Dutch treat” breakfast followed by a one hour CEU (continuing education unit) towards your Private Applicator License covering different pesticide topics each month. Put this on your calendar and make plans to attend. Remember, you need 15 hours in 5 years, of which 2 are in IPM and 2 in Laws & Regulations in order to renew your license.



Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course

The 56th Annual TAMU Beef Cattle Short Course will take place August 2-4, 2010 on campus of Texas A&M University. Registration forms are available at the Nacogdoches County Extension Office or online at the following web site:

<http://animalscience.tamu.edu/ansc/BCSC/index.html>



Local Farmer’s Market

Farmers in Nacogdoches County should look into marketing their produce at the local Farmer’s Market. The Farmer’s Market is really growing and this is a great opportunity for you to market your fruits and vegetables. For more information, contact the City of Nacogdoches at (936) 559-2571.

Private Applicator Training and Testing

The Texas AgriLife Extension Service of Nacogdoches County will be having a Private Applicator Training and Testing on **Thursday, July 8, 2010**. This training will take place at the Extension Office Meeting Room located at 203 West Main beginning at **8:00 a.m.** Study materials are available for purchase. It is encouraged that participants purchase these materials in advance of the training to begin studying as part of the training will be review of the material. Calculators can be used on the test and be sure to bring a current photo I.D. for Homeland Security purposes. To register or more information, contact Mrs. Debbie at (936) 560-7711.

Pesticides...How much do I put in the tank?

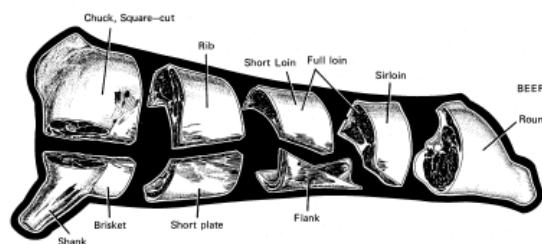
When planning to spray pesticides to control weeds or insects, how much to put in the tank is important, but we need to determine how much is being sprayed out the other side. Calibrating your sprayer is key to knowing how much herbicide you add to your tank. For example, if your 300 gallon sprayer is applying 10 gallons per acre you can potentially cover 30 acres. The same 300 gallon sprayer may apply 20 gallons per acre thus you are potentially covering 15 acres. Most herbicides are purchased in 2.5 gallon jugs. One gallon is 128 ounces so a 2.5 gallon jug would contain 320 ounces of product. Another important factor is to use a proper surfactant when applying herbicides. Dish soap is not designed to serve as a surfactant and can in some cases dilute your pesticide. Be sure to follow all label recommendations as the label is the law when it comes to pesticides.



Wildlife for Lunch Webinar Series

The Texas AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas Wildlife Association are co-sponsoring a lunch-based webinar every third Thursday of every other month from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m. Dr. Billy Higginbotham, Texas AgriLife Extension Wildlife Specialist, will present. The website is <http://forestrywebinars.net> then click on "Wildlife for Lunch" in the Upcoming Webinar section. Dates and topics include:

- ***August 19**—Remote Sensing Cameras—A Valuable Wildlife Management Tool
- ***October 21**—Rio Grande Wild Turkey Tips—A Guide to Habitat Management
- ***December 16**—Trophy Quail Management

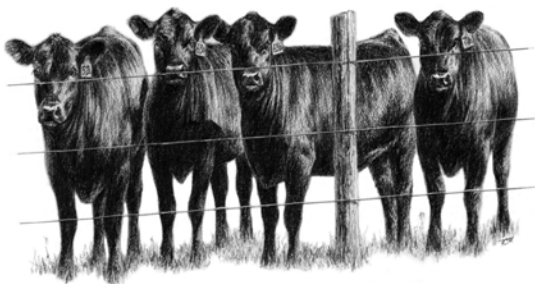


GRAIN-FED OR GRASS-FED GROUND BEEF: WHICH IS HEALTHIER?

Angus steers were divided into three management groups: grazed and supplemented with hay to 20 months of age; fed corn-based

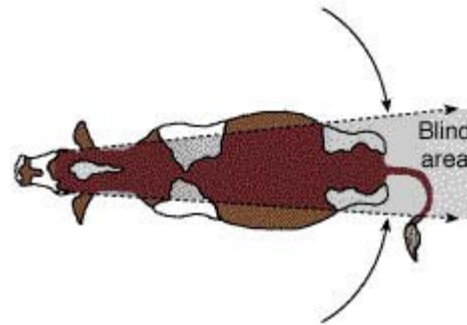
ration to estimated Choice grade; fed corn-based ration to estimated Prime grade. Ground beef containing 24 percent fat was prepared from carcasses of each group. Male humans ate 0.45 lb ground beef patties five days a week for five weeks and then rotated among samples from the three management groups for additional five-week periods. Blood samples were collected from the participants at the start and end of each period.

Consuming ground beef from the Prime group resulted in higher levels of HDL cholesterol and larger LDL cholesterol particles, both beneficial in protecting against cardiovascular disease. The pasture-group beef resulted in higher levels of saturated trans-fat, which is detrimental to cardiovascular health. Other blood parameters were not significantly affected. (AgriLife News, Texas A&M System, 5/27/2010)



EFFECT OF HIDE COLOR ON CALF PRICE

Data were collected in 2005-2006 at three North Dakota auctions on over 31,000 calves (average 537 lb) in November-December and almost 30,000 calves (average 627 lb) in January. Average price was \$1.30/cwt for black, \$1.29/cwt for Charolais-cross, \$1.27/cwt for red, and \$1.26 for mixed color. (J. Animal Sci. 85 Suppl. 2: 53, North Dakota St. Univ.)



High Risk Factors on Farms

The following factors may increase risk of injury or illness for farm workers:

- **Age** – Injury rates are highest among children age 15 and under and adults over 65.
- **Equipment and Machinery** – Most farm accidents and fatalities involve machinery. Proper machine guarding and doing equipment maintenance according to manufacturers' recommendations can help prevent accidents.
- **Protective Equipment** – Using protective equipment, such as seat belts on tractors, and personal protective equipment (such as safety gloves, coveralls, boots, hats, aprons, goggles, face shields) could significantly reduce farming injuries.
- **Medical Care** – Hospitals and emergency medical care are typically not readily accessible in rural areas near farms.

Nitrate Poisoning

Nitrate poisoning can occur when cattle eat forages stressed from severe environmental conditions such as drought. Nitrate is present to some degree in all forages and technically, nitrate poisoning is better described as nitrite poisoning. When livestock consume forages, nitrate is normally converted in the rumen from:

Nitrate to Nitrite to Ammonia to Amino Acid to Protein

Nitrate poisoning can occur when:

- *Forages consumed contain high levels of nitrate;
- *The diet changes rapidly or suddenly;
- *Parasitism or other conditions causing anemia;
- *Livestock consume supplements of urea or high-protein feeds along with forage containing moderate levels of nitrate; and/or:
- *Livestock directly consume nitrite.

Forages can be tested for Nitrate levels. Forages can be tested either as standing forage or as hay. Nitrate poisoning can occur in the following plants: (examples of plants that can reach high levels of Nitrates)

- *alfalfa
- *corn
- *johnsongrass
- *sorghum
- *pigweed
- *millet
- *oats
- *nightshade species
- *rye
- *sudangrass
- *some thistles
- *more.....



Drought Destocking Strategies

Destocking decisions are never easy to make and are seldom made without substantial cost. Drought is an inevitable consequence of ranching in Texas.

Management strategies need to include plans for drought so that ranch managers are never caught unprepared.

A primary objective of partial herd reductions is to optimize animal performance of the remaining breeding herd relative to forage supply. There are four primary rules in destocking:

1. The sooner the problem is identified the sooner appropriate actions can be taken.
2. The sooner stocking adjustments are made the less severe the herd reductions will need to be.
3. Maximize available options and minimize long-term negative impacts on the forage resource.
4. During drought maximize the effective use of precipitation by having enough residual forage to capture and utilize limited precipitation and reduce evaporative loss.

Common Destocking Mistakes

There are three common mistakes ranches make when faced with forced liquidation of the breeding herd:

1. Do nothing now in hopes rainfall will occur or additional grazing can be leased until conditions improve.
2. When the decision to reduce stock is made, the most common strategy is to early wean calves and then hope conditions will improve and cows will not have to be sold.
3. The practice of retaining young cows (less than 4 year old females) at the expense of more productive middle-aged cows (4 to 7 years old), when culling is finally initiated.

Ranch Estate Planning

“Keep the ranch in the family” is the title of the Ranch Estate Planning Seminar hosted by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in cooperation with the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, August 4-5, 2010 on campus of Texas A&M University. Dr. Wayne Hayenga will present information on Wills, Living Trust, Estate Tax Deferral, Gifts, Life Insurance, and more as it associates with ranch estate planning. To register, contact Connie at (979) 845-2226 or e-mail her at csmotek@tamu.edu . Registration brochures are also available upon request from the Extension Office in Nacogdoches County.

“Making Small Acreage Profitable in East Texas” Workshop Series

The Making Small Acreage Profitable in East Texas workshop series will begin again in September 2010. These workshops will focus on addressing information needed to begin or to continue an Agriculture venture on small acreage. Topics include Agriculture Taxation, Livestock for Small Acreage, Alternative Agriculture ventures, and more. If you are interested in attending these workshops, contact the Texas AgriLife Extension Service of Nacogdoches County at (936) 560-7711 to sign up and for more details.



Hay Evaluation Workshop

With the dry conditions this summer, hay supplies have been short in some parts of the county. Testing hay samples is an important tool to determine nutrient requirements of hay produced or purchased as well as how you should supplement your livestock this winter. We will once again begin collecting hay samples to be tested as a part of our Hay Evaluation Workshop. The Hay Evaluation Workshop will be held this fall. More details will be available soon and in the Fall Ag Quarterly Newsletter.



Master Gardener Lunch N Learn

Each month the Nacogdoches County Master Gardeners host a noon luncheon lecture series the second Thursday of each month at the Extension Office Meeting Room, 203 West Main, titled “Lunch N Learn.” The Master Gardeners provide a noon lunch followed by a garden lecture. This meeting takes place beginning at 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m. during the lunch hour. Topics and speakers for the summer months are as follows:

- *July 8—Native Plants by Trey Anderson, Pineywoods Native Plant Center—SFA
- *August 12—Gardening for the Birds and Bees by Greg Grant, SFA Arboretum
- *September 9—Bee Keeping by Marie Kocyan

Texas Beef Quality Producer Program

The Texas Beef Quality Producer program has multiple levels of participation and training.

BQA Training: Classroom style events covering BQA principles, record keeping, environmental stewardship, industry update and best management practices leading to safe and high quality beef.

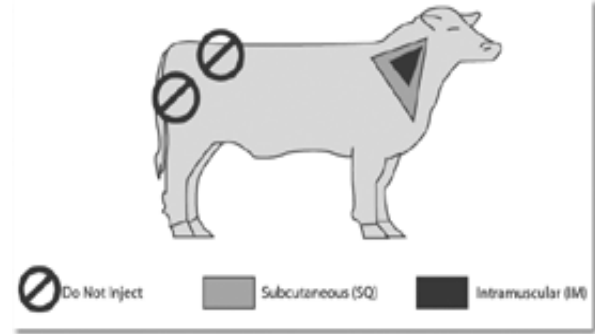
BQA Training - Online: Visit www.bqaonline.com for a self-paced online training.

It's Official: Once the training and initial test have been completed, a producer receives a certificate of completion and an accompanying TBQP program identification number recognizing them as a member of the TBQP program. Completion of this training affords producers the opportunity to purchase TBQP ear tags and use the TBQP logo in their operation for two years.

Within those two years, and for each subsequent two year period, the producer is required to obtain a minimum of 8 Beef Quality Credits to maintain their status as an active member of the TBQP program.

These credits are readily available at meetings/trainings across the state where BQA principles are discussed. By obtaining these credits, you can ensure that you stay up-to-date on BQA principles to help you in your efforts to continue to produce a safe, wholesome, high quality product that strengthens consumer confidence.

Additionally, not only will topics covered at these beef quality credit events aid you in producing a quality product, many of the topics also have the added benefit of providing you with information to help you improve your bottom line.



Insects

Insects in Agriculture can be beneficial but many cause economic losses to crops and livestock. Grasshoppers, armyworms, flies, and other insects can be a problem at times through out the year. The key to controlling insect is early detection. When it is dry, grasshoppers can be a problem.

Grasshoppers in pastures and hayfields can be controlled using Sevin®, Malathion®, Mustang Max®, and Dimilin®.

Armyworms can be a problem in pastures and hayfields as well. Control includes Sevin®, Malation®, Tracer®, Mustang Max®, and Intrepid®.

Flies on cattle can be a problem and producers have several options for fly control. Fly control includes ear tags impregnated with an insecticide, back rubs, sprays and dusts, pour on, and even mineral supplements with fly control to name a few. Alternate or vary these control measures to insure efficacy of these products and that insects do not begin building up resistance to any of these products for fly control. As in all other instances it is up to you to **read and follow all label instructions** when using pesticides on your livestock or crop adhering to withdrawal periods and safety requirements for you and others.