

October Announcements

- Beef Nutrition Shortcourse being offered through distance education sites throughout LA, MS, AL and FL. See page 3 for a list of dates.
- Check out the sites and dates for Calf to Carcass Preconditioning
- Master Cattle Producer Courses near you! Become a Certified Louisiana Master Cattle Producer this year. Check the website to find out more about courses being offered in your area.



Animal Health - Supplementation & Nutrition

PENNY WISE, POUND FOOLISH

Thinking of skimping on winter supplementation of your cows? You might save some money, but what do you lose? You lose pounds of beef to sell for the next two years, and possibly beyond. Proper cow nutrition impacts calf performance, health and survivability more than any other factor. Problems are magnified even more in heifers if they are not properly supplemented. So before you make any hasty decisions, consider what lack of proper nutrition in brood cows during the winter in

spring calving herds actually buys.

THIS YEAR: INCREASED DYSTOCIA:

Underfeeding late gestation cows causes an increase in weak calves and stillbirths, mostly due to prolonged labor. Weak calves are more likely to get sick and die and they have decreased performance. Outcome = fewer and lighter calves at weaning.

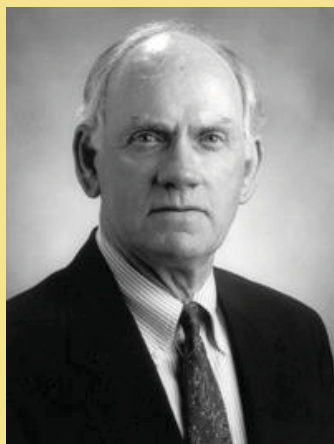
WEAK CALVES:

Birth weights of calves will decrease, as will brown fat storage (important

for generating warmth). Both are important for calf vigor and survivability in the short term and sickness and death rates in the long term.

Have you been losing baby calves shortly after they are born during our cold, wet Januaries and Februaries? Stop looking for a disease and check your nutrition. Outcome = fewer and lighter calves at weaning.

NUTRITION, continued on Page 4



Agent/Producer of the Month

Dr. Donald E. Franke, originally from Center, Texas, has been with the School of Animal Sciences at Louisiana State University for 31 years. Prior to joining our faculty here, Dr. Franke attended Stephen F. Austin State University where he received his BS, then LSU to earn his MS, and finally to Texas A&M University to receive his PhD.

After receiving his PhD, Dr. Franke went to the University of Florida where he was employed in the Animal Science department from 1968-1976 as an Assistant and Associate Professor.

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Calf to Carcass Program

2007-2008 Louisiana Calf to Carcass Schedule and Information

- **October 8th, 2007:** Cattle preconditioned at home must arrive at preconditioning sites by 10:00 a.m. (feeder cattle grades and dollar value will be assigned to all calves)
- **October 9th, 2007:** Cattle will be loaded and shipped to Henry C. Hitch Feedlot in Guymon, OK.

Preconditioning Sites Available:

1. University of Louisiana at Monroe - Monroe, LA
2. McNeese State University, Lake Charles, LA
3. Nicholls State University, Thibodaux, LA

October Checklist for Beef Cattle

CATTLE MANAGEMENT

- Finish weaning late calves (follow September management list).
- Heifers need to weigh about 2/3 of their mature weight at breeding time in March. They usually need to gain 1 to 1 1/2 pounds per day after weaning.
- Watch the body condition of bred heifers. Separate them from the cows and provide supplemental feed as quality of fall grazing declines.
- Identify thin cows and supplement them at a rate where they will reach moderate body condition at calving.

PASTURE MANAGEMENT

- Quality of bermudagrass and bahia declines rapidly from now to frost. Watch condition of cows. Supplemental feed may be needed.
- Finish planting winter grazing in prepared seed beds and begin over-seeding winter annuals in pastures.
- Continue to monitor supplemental feed prices. Corn and by-product feeds like cottonseed are usually cheaper in the fall.

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While at Florida, Dr. Franke taught undergraduate and graduate animal breeding courses and was involved in beef cattle crossbreeding research at the Beef Research Unit in Gainesville, the Genetic x Environment Project at the Brooksville Station with Florida and Miles City Montana Hereford cattle, and the rotational crossbreeding project at the Everglades Station in south Florida.

Since returning to Louisiana State University in 1976, Dr. Franke was awarded McFatter Endowed

Professorship in 2001 and the Rockefeller Prentice Memorial Award in Breeding and Genetics by the American Society of Animal Science in 2002. Additionally, he has directed 35 MS and 15 PhD students. He has been responsible for teaching undergraduate and graduate animal breeding courses and beef production. He has been involved with beef cattle research for rotational crossbreeding, selection for high and low maternal EPDs in Angus and Hereford cattle, the evaluation of Brahman steer carcass data and prediction

of Brahman sire EPD for carcass traits, and evaluation of tropically adapted crossbreds in Louisiana.

Over the years, Dr. Franke has proven to be one of the most influential people in the history of Louisiana's beef industry. His strides to improve maternal traits and carcass merit in Brahman influence breeds are legendary.

Master Cattle Producers Program

The Louisiana Master Cattle Producer program began in the summer of 2004. The course includes 10, 3-hr lectures on all aspects of beef production. With this, producers are also asked to complete the first phase of Master Farmer and Beef Quality Assurance offered from the Louisiana Cattlemen's Association.

The Louisiana Master Cattle Producer program is launching a new series of classes this fall. New to the program are online producer tutorials, various

lecture updates and one new class, beef production systems. Thus far over 600 producers have been certified and we look forward to many more in the upcoming years. Updated information will be posted on our website, www.lsuagcenter.com/beef. For county agents who are interested in hosting a Master Cattle Producer program, please contact Jason Rowntree, jrowntree@agcenter.lsu.edu. Producers should contact their local county agent.



Information provided by
Dr. Jason Rowntree

Beef Cattle Nutrition Short Course - Oct-Nov 2007 Schedule

Hosted over interactive video at sites throughout Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida from 6:00-8:00 PM or 7:00 – 9:00 PM each evening.

OCTOBER 30TH, 6-8 PM

Commodity Feeds in Detail

- FEEDING DISTILLER'S GRAINS
- COMMODITY FEED SUPPLEMENTATION

NOVEMBER 27TH, 6-8 PM

Applied Nutrition Tools

- HEIFER AND BULL DEVELOPMENT
- COWCULATOR AND STOCKER RATION BALANCERS

Our sincere apologies...

The Gulf Coast Beef Education Alliance hosted a distance education program for producers across the four state area this past August. Unfortunately due to technical difficulties at Auburn University, we were unable to broadcast two of the three speakers. We would like to extend our apologies to those of you who attended. In September, although areas in north Louisiana reported some problems, the transmission of the program was successful. In fact, 90 sites across Louisiana, Mississippi, Florida and Alabama were involved. We are in the process of making a DVD of the August program and will mail these to all involved county agents when finished.

** For information on participating distance education sites or other short course questions contact your local Extension office or contact the person listed on the registration form under your particular state.*

SICK CALVES:

A decrease in calf birth weight and vigor increases the chances of calves not getting colostrum in time. To compound this, cows that are nutritionally deprived cannot produce good colostrum. Both of these problems lead to failure of passive transfer (FPT) in calves. Calves with FPT are more likely to get sick and die. Even if calves survive an illness, they do not grow as well as healthy calves. Outcome = fewer and lighter calves at weaning.

VACCINE RESPONSES:

Having a scours problem and decided to vaccinate the cows prepartum to protect the calves? Cows can only respond to a vaccine if they have proper energy, protein and mineral levels in the diet. If a cow isn't taking in enough protein to maintain her body condition, she can't make antibodies, which are protein, and put them in her colostrum for her calf. Therefore, vaccinating cows to protect calves through colostrum will only work with proper cow nutrition. Calf vaccine response is also poor in calves that don't get adequate colostrum. So even if vaccines are administered, calves will still get sick and possibly die. Outcome= fewer and lighter calves at weaning.

FUTURE YEARS:

INFERTILITY: We've known for years that females in poor body condition don't breed back as readily. Letting cows drop to body condition score of 4s instead of maintaining them at 5s can drop to conception rates 15%. In a herd of 100 cows, that is potentially 15 calves either not born or born late! As mentioned above, dystocia rates increase also as body condition drops. Increased dystocia leads to poor conception rates and delayed conceptions. Outcome=fewer and lighter calves at weaning two years from now and increased calving interval for years to come.

REPLACEMENT HEIFERS:

As mentioned before, calves that have FPT, weather or not they get sick, do not grow as well as calves that get good levels of immunity from colostrum. This difference in growth carries through the feeding period in feeder calves. So what happens to replacement heifers? Increased time to breeding and time to mature weight for a start. Recent research has also focused on the influence of cow nutrition during gestation and its impact on subsequent growth and fertility in their female offspring. In one study, heifers born to cows that were

deprived of protein supplementation during late gestation, had lower average daily gains, delayed onset to puberty, and lower conception rates compared to heifers born to protein supplemented cows. So, if you are retaining replacement heifers, the long term reproductive health of your herd may be impacted by cow nutrition this year. Something else to consider is that improper supplementation of heifers has a direct effect on their own future performance, not just that of their calves. It leads to decreased pelvic size which can impact their dystocia rate for life. Outcome=fewer and lighter calves for years to come.

BOTTOM LINE:

We know that winter feeding costs are usually our biggest expense. So, we have to be smart in selecting a feeding program that is cost efficient. However, making sure nutrient requirements are met during this time is critical to future profitability. An investment now can pay dividends for years to come.

*Article Written by Christine B. Navarre, DVM, MS, DACVIM
State Extension Veterinarian*

Louisiana Market Report - September

Cattle receipts at the 10 reported La. Auction markets started to increase at mid month. Calf prices were 2.00 - 3.00 cwt. lower during September compared to September, 2006, but still higher than we thought in January of 2007. Slaughter cow prices remain 3.00 - 4.00 cwt. higher than September, 2006. Record corn harvest for Louisiana seen this year with a 12 bushel per acre yield increase over 2006 corn crop. Cattle will continue to move to market during October and up until Thanksgiving. Our concern is the winter wheat and ryegrass plantings for backgrounding. If problems occur (weather, high price for wheat which will limit grazing), we may see a weakness in price for our calves.

Article Written by Dave Foster, USDA Market News.



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