



Stinging Nettles

Every year, cattlemen throughout the area bring in a weed that, when touched stings and burns the person touching it. Cattle don't eat it and it is difficult to control. It is called stinging nettles. It is starting to show up in pastures now and will be tall and vigorous in about 6 weeks. In some pastures it is light green while in other pastures it appears to be purplish. Whatever the color it is the same weed. I have found that Remedy or Crossbow works well. Apply at a rate of 1 quart per acre or if you are spot spraying, make a 2% solution (2 gal of herbicides to 100 gal of water) and hose the plant until it is wet. I have not seen good control with just 2,4-D. It doesn't seem to be strong enough to kill the nettles.

Artificial Insemination School

Arrangements have been made with a representative from American Breeders Services to come to Lafourche parish to conduct an artificial insemination school for cattle producers. A couple of people have spoken to me about this so I'm trying to get this started. The people conducting the class need at least 10 people to justify their time to come over here.

The program runs from a Sunday to a Wednesday. The cost is \$475 per person. You will learn how synchronize cattle, how to artificially inseminate cattle, how to palpate cattle after they are bred. You will also receive a 3 ring binder with printed instructions and information on artificial cattle breeding, reproduction, and nutrition.

It was suggested to hold the program in October or November when it cools off a little, however, we can have it at any time we choose. What I need to know is if you are interested or not. I need at least 10 people to be able to have the program over here. Let me know if you are interested as soon as possible.

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Upcoming Events:

Select Heifer Sale—
 Saturday, March 14,
 2009, 1:00 p.m., Zero
 Ranch, Thibodaux, LA

EMAIL ADDRESSES

With new technology all around us, I'm starting an email address list of live-stock & hay producers. If you have an email address and would like for me to send information to you on your computer, I would appreciate you forwarding your email address to me. My email address is mhebert@agcenter.lsu.edu. This does not mean that if you don't have access to a computer you won't get information sent to you. I will use your physical address to keep you informed. But for those of you with computers, it could save me time and postage to email information to you.



State Hay Show

I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate the following individuals for their placings in the State Hay Show. The winners were announced at the LA Forage and Grasslands Council annual meeting in Alexandria in December.

They are:

Ryegrass—1st Place—Carroll Charpentier

Bermudagrass—2nd Place—Clay Pierce

3rd Place—Allen Thibodaux

Clover—1st Place—Carroll Charpentier

2nd Place—Troy Portier

Grass/Clover Mix—1st Place—Carroll Charpentier

2nd Place—Clay Pierce

3rd Place—Clay Pierce

As you can see, most of the winners in all of the categories were from Lafourche and Terrebonne parishes. If you make some good hay this spring and summer, call me to collect a sample to compete in the State Hay Show.



Lactating Mares



The nutritional requirement for mares almost doubles when they foal and start producing milk. The mare's energy requirement and need for water to produce milk is higher than at any other time.

If supplemental feed is not available the mare will lose weight, be harder to rebreed and the foal's growth will be reduced. This all occurs because the mare produces 30 to 40 pounds or up to 4 to 5 gallons of milk daily during the first 3 to 4 months of lactation. Typically milk production peaks between the 2nd and 3rd month of lactation and declines slowly thereafter. At about 3 months the foal's nutrient needs is greater than the mare's production and therefore the foal should be eating grain and/or pasture to supplement their growth. As indicated previously if the mare is losing weight during the breeding season and becomes thin, she is less likely to rebreed. Thin mares typically take longer to become pregnant, are at a greater risk of losing a pregnancy and have smaller, weaker foals.

Typically a mare should be fed 2 to 5 pounds of grain a day leading up to the foaling. Immediately after foaling she should be on 8 to 10 pounds of grain per day and high quality hay and/or pasture. Protein requirements increase to around 14% and energy needs are drastically increased.

Foals should be provided access to feed as early as possible and fed as much as they will eat for the first 6 to 8 months of their lives. Typically a foal will eat about 1 pound for every month of age, which means a 3 month old foal should be eating about 3 pounds per day. By the 6th to 7th months they should be eating 6 to 7 pounds of feed per day and feed consumption should increase until a year of age. At that time they should be eating 8 to 10 pounds per day. Feed consumption for a foal will correspond to the reduction of milk production in the mare.

By providing adequate feed to the mare when she starts to lactate and providing access to feed to the young colt at an early age, optimal foal growth and mare rebreeding should occur.



Vaccine Handling and Administration

(written by Andrew Granger, Vermilion Parish County Agent)

We often get complaints about infertility in beef cattle. When concerns about nutrition and bull fertility are resolved, diseases affecting reproduction are considered as a possible cause. Leptospirosis, Vibriosis, the viruses BVD and IBR and Brucellosis can all cause infertility and abortions.

Vaccinations for those diseases are common practices for cattle producers. In addition, vaccinations of calves for the virus complex IBR, BVD, BRSV and PI₃ and Blackleg are also becoming normal operating procedure. When giving vaccines cattle producers expect protection against diseases however, even the best quality vaccine will fail to give immunity to disease if not handled and administered properly.

The modified live virus vaccines are especially sensitive to mishandling. Total loss of effectiveness is not uncommon. Killed product and bacterin effectiveness are also compromised by mishandling resulting in less than satisfactory immunity to disease.

Handling and administering vaccines properly are cheap insurance for the time and money spent on protecting the herd from what can be devastating diseases.

Here are tips for vaccine handling:

Keep it cold and in the dark. Transport purchased vaccine in a closed refrigerated container. This rule also applies chute side. Keep the working bottle in a cooler with syringes as well as any unmixed product. Consider using two coolers, one for unmixed product and extra syringes and one for a working bottle and syringes in use.

Don't disinfect with chemical sterilants. Chemical sterilants will kill modified live vaccines and damage killed products. Do not use alcohol, betadine, chlorox or soaps to clean reusable syringes or needles. Only use boiling water on components. This is especially important for disinfecting multi dose syringes.

Use sterile syringes. Avoid continuous feed syringes. They do not allow for vaccine protection and the tubes they use are nearly impossible to sterilize. Consider using one dose disposable syringes and one needle per animal. These are our best option. Anaplasmosis can be spread by reusing a needle on several animals.

Never reenter the vaccine bottle with a used needle. When using a multi dose syringe change to a sterile, sharp needle for each draw or leave a sterile needle in the working bottle and use it to draw vaccine into the syringe.

Read labels and dose properly. Some products have lower dose rates than other and the routes of administration (under the skin or in the muscle) differ. Read the label every time you purchase new product.

Minimize injection site blemishes. Use products with subcutaneous (under the skin) routes of administration whenever available. If intramuscular (IM) products must be used, inject the product in front of the shoulder 2-3 inches below the top of the neck and 4-6 inches in front of the shoulder blade. Sub Q injections should also be given here.

Use the right needle. Always use the smallest needle possible. Use 1 inch needles for calves and 1½ inch needles for yearlings and mature cattle. A ¾ inch needle can be used for sub Q injections if it pierces the hide in a perpendicular or 90 degree fashion. A 16 gauge needle has a larger diameter than an 18 gauge needle and should be used for oil based products. Mist vaccines are water based and an 18 gauge needle should be used.

Proper management can increase the percentage of cattle that respond to the vaccine with sufficient immunity. Besides the above mentioned vaccination practices producers should give vaccines to healthy cattle, avoid giving vaccines during stressful periods (just after weaning or co-mingling), timing of vaccinations is important (i.e. don't vaccinate calves until they are older than 2 months, vaccinate and booster calves with the virus complex before weaning, etc.), and proper nutrition is critical.

24th Annual Select Heifer Sale



March 14, 2009 – 1:00 p.m.
Zero Brahman Ranch Sale Barn



120 HEIFERS CONSIGNED

All heifers are on Merial's SURE HEALTH PROGRAM

Thibodaux, LA

79 F₁'S	Brahman X Angus F₁'s, Brahman X Hereford F₁'s, Most certified – All from registered or purebred cows and registered bulls
21	Brangus heifers registered
20	$\frac{3}{4}$ Angus $\frac{1}{4}$ Brahman

*******CONSIGNED HEIFERS ARE*******

17	2 yrs. old or older with calves or bred
46	15-23 month heifers – some open, some exposed, some bred
57	12-14 month heifers - open

All heifers calfhood vaccinated for Brucellosis – From Brucellosis certified or clean herds.

CONSIGNORS INCLUDE: Sylvia Naquin, Zero Brahman Ranch, Laurel Valley Plantation, Ronald Chiasson, Double G Farms, Cross B Ranch, Circle T Enterprise, Indian Ridge Ranch, Philip Richard, Nicholls State University, Triple Son Farm

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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Census Shows More, Smaller Farms

There are 4 percent or a net increase of 75,000 more farms in the U.S. than in 2002, the 2007 Census of Ag indicates. Since 2002, 300,000 new farms have begun operating. Average age of farmers is 57.1 years, an increase from 55.3. Sixty percent of farms report less than \$10,000 in sales of ag products. Of the 2.2 million farms nationwide, only 1 million show positive net cash income. The remaining 1.2 million farms depend on non-farm income to cover farm expenses.



January 1, 2008 beef cow number revised down 118,000 head to 32.435 million.

When the USDA revision is combined with the January 1, 2009 beef cow herd, the net result is a beef cow herd that has declined 1.2 million head (-4%) in the last two years and is now at 31.671 million head. This is the largest two year decline since the late 90's, and the smallest beef cow herd since 1963.

Futures Prices

Month	Live Cattle	Feeder Cattle	Corn
Feb	\$ 83.650		
Mar		\$ 94.350	3.77 1/4/bu
Apr	\$ 86.700	\$ 95.525	
May		\$ 97.250	3.87 1/2 bu
Jun	\$ 84.075		
Jul			3.97 3/4 bu
Aug	\$ 85.075	\$ 99.400	
Sept		\$ 99.700	4.08 1/2 bu
Oct	\$ 88.400	\$ 99.650	
Nov		\$ 99.050	
Dec	\$ 90.550		4.21 3/4 bu
Jan		\$ 98.025	

Source: DTN



Primary Business Address
Your Address Line 2
Your Address Line 3
Your Address Line 4

The **PRIME** Times...

a beef cattle newsletter

We're on the web!

lsuagcenter.com

February 2009