



Animal Science Newsletter

July 2003

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Dates to Remember

July

- 1 State 4-H Horse Events
(Demonstrations, Public Speaking, Quiz Bowl, Horseman of the Year Interviews)
- Gainesville, FL
- 7-11 Florida 4-H Legislature - Tallahassee, FL
- 10-12 State 4-H Horse Show - Tampa, FL
- 16 Food Safety and Quality Program and Serv-Safe Test - Inverness, FL
- 17 Santa Rosa County Farm Tour - Milton, FL
- 21-25 Florida 4-H Congress - Gainesville, FL

Prepared by Extension Specialists in Animal Sciences

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August

- 14 4-H Swine and Beef Workshop - Gainesville, FL
- 20 Food Safety and Quality Program and Serv-Safe Test - Inverness, FL



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Beef Management Calendar

July

- Cut corn silage.
- Control weeds in summer pastures.
- Apply nitrogen to warm season pastures, if needed.
- Check mineral feeder.
- Check for army worms and mole crickets, and treat if necessary.
- Wean calves and cull cow herd.
- Watch for evidence of footrot and treat.
- Consider preconditioning calves before sale including vaccination for shipping fever and IBR at least 3 weeks before sale.
- Check dust bags.
- Update market information and plans.
- Revaccinate calves at weaning for blackleg.

August

- Treat for liver flukes as close to August 15th as possible, if they are in your area.
- Cut hay.
- Apply lime for fall and winter crops.
- Harvest Bahiagrass seed.
- Check mineral feeder.
- Update market information and marketing plans.
- Check for army worms, spittlebugs, and mole crickets, and treat if necessary.
- Check dust bags.
- Wean calves and cull cow herd.
- Watch for evidence of abortions.
- Observe animals regularly for signs of disease.
- If cattle grubs were found on cattle last winter or heel flies were observed in the pasture, treat for cattle grubs this month.
- Pregnancy test and cull open heifers from replacement herd.

September

- Cut hay.
- Heavily graze pastures to be interplanted to cool season pastures.
- Check mineral feeder.

- Check for mole crickets, spittlebugs, and grassloopers, and treat if necessary.
- Check dust bags.
- Wean calves and cull cow herd if not already done. Remove open, unsound, or poor producing cows.
- Train cowboys to observe normal and abnormal behavior and signs of disease.
- Be sure any replacement purchases are healthy and have been calfhood vaccinated for brucellosis.
- September or October is a good time to deworm the cow herd if internal parasites are a problem.
- When replacement heifers are weaned, give them required vaccinations and teach them to eat – then put them on a good nutrition program.
- Determine bull replacement needs, develop selection criteria, and start checking availability of quality animals.
- Review winter feed supply and feeding plans so that needed adjustments can be made before supplies tighten and prices rise.



Livestock Summary

The USDA is predicting a continuing decline in red meat production in 2004 totaling about 84.4 billion pounds because of a national reduction of animal inventories. This figure is predicted to be slightly down from this year and 1.5 percent below 2002 levels.

Cattle inventories this spring exhibited few signs of stabilizing and a major improvement in moisture and forage conditions will be necessary to even begin a movement toward female retention in 2004.

First-quarter beef and dairy cow slaughter reached their highest levels since 1997 rising 5 and 14 percent, respectively.

Summer and fall forage conditions will have to improve to create any incentive to decrease these slaughter levels. Shifts toward heavier feeding

weights and expansion may be slow even if forage conditions improve. At this time, the industry will be attempting to rebuild its financial base in 2004.

Strong demand, especially for higher grading cattle, have kept prices \$5 to \$10 per hundredweight (cwt) above what they were a year ago.

The retail level experienced record beef prices in February and March with a record high \$3.57 per pound set in March. Retail prices for Choice beef are expected to continue to rise modestly in 2004 with a likely 4 to 5 percent increase this year.

Beef exports will likely be up less than 1 percent this year and are expected to increase nearly 4 percent in 2004, possibly reaching a record 2.55 million pounds. Cattle prices are predicted to increase as well and should continue to register gains again next year.

Total U.S. beef exports are holding their own and even slightly increasing despite declining production and temporary decreases in demand. This suggests that figures are likely to spike to record levels in 2004 as world economic growth picks up and bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) concerns decline in Japan.

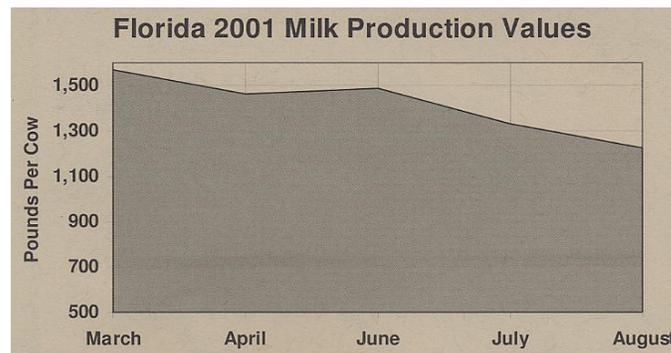
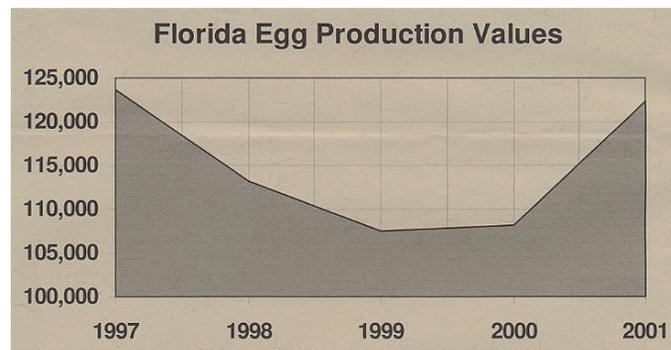
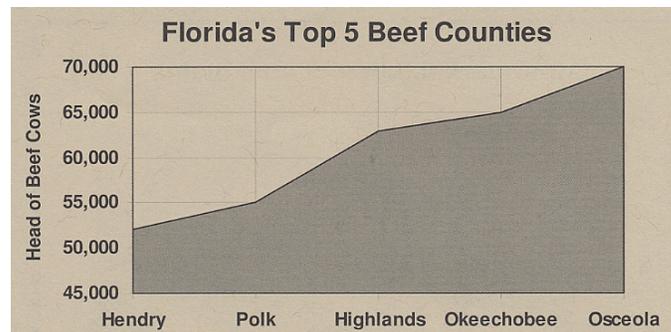
The two most disappointing markets for beef exports this year are Japan and Mexico. Japanese exports have plummeted due to BSE. Mexican exports have sharply declined because of the peso losing 20 percent of its value against the U.S. dollar over the last 12 months. As a result, this has raised prices in terms of the peso and thus has reduced Mexican demand for U.S. beef.

Drought in Canada and the tight feeder cattle market in the United States will limit U.S. feeder cattle exports to Canada as well. While these numbers might be up from last year's dry-weather figures, feeder cattle exports to Canada are expected to be significantly below historical levels.

There are two particular factors that could affect future beef production in 2004. One is the Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) law which is scheduled to become mandatory after September 30, 2004. The other is the possible continuation or

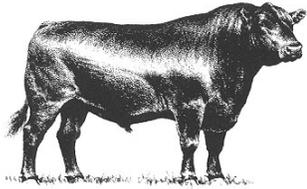
re-emergence of Sudden Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in Asia.

Livestock Trends



SOURCE: The Florida Agri-Journal
 Researched by Tony Young
 Marketing Specialist I
 Division of Marketing
 Release – June 5, 2003

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Daschle, Johnson Urge USDA to Slow Repeal of Canadian Cattle Ban

In a letter to Veneman dated June 11, Daschle said he hopes USDA proceeds with caution before lifting the moratorium on Canadian beef, and that COOL be enacted before the ban is nixed.

"I am hopeful Secretary Veneman will proceed with caution before lifting the moratorium on Canadian beef, and implement COOL, which will serve as another important tool to add to our country's comprehensive food safety regime, in a timely fashion," Daschle said.

Daschle, the Democrats' leader in the Senate, has been one of the more vocal members of his party since a lone case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or mad cow disease, was discovered last month in Alberta. He applauded Veneman's decision to ban Canadian beef and goats and has expressed concern that the USDA could be in a rush to reopen the border.

"I am hopeful that before you lift the moratorium, you ensure that Canada completes its epidemiological work to exhaust all leads in tracing animals linked to the original infected cow," Daschle wrote to Veneman.

Johnson's position on lifting the ban mirrored Daschle's.

"It was prudent of the USDA to freeze imports in response, and I oppose allowing Canadian beef or cattle back into our markets until USDA has fully implemented (country-of-origin) labeling," Johnson said. "Relaxing the restrictions on imports before mandatory labeling could kick the legs out from underneath consumer confidence in American beef."

During a Wednesday (June 11) teleconference with reporters, Veneman said USDA has not set a

timetable outlining when and how the ban might be lifted.

"We simply aren't prepared, at this point, to provide any kind of indication of when we're going to have market opening with regard to the Canadian beef," Veneman said.

Alberta Premier Ralph Klein hopes to discuss the border issue with Vice President Dick Cheney during a visit to Washington on June 23. "There's a possibility we will be meeting with Mr. Cheney and I'll bring this up if the borders are not open," Klein said.

Paul Haddow, executive director of international relations at the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, said Canadian officials would send a letter to Washington later on Thursday asking that low risk meat products from cattle and other ruminants, or cud-chewing animals, be allowed in.

"With any luck at all we should start seeing certain products moving within a very short period of time," Haddow told Parliament's foreign affairs committee.

"But as to when everything will be back to normal, I couldn't hazard a guess," he said.

An interim report on Canada's handling of the case is expected to be ready on Thursday and officials hope that will help end bans in key markets around the world, which the industry estimates have been costing it up to \$27.5 million (\$20 million) a day.

"We're going to be requesting that the Americans -- based on science -- remove the measures on a low-risk group of goods and we will give them a definition of what we mean by low risk goods," Haddow told the Reuters news service.

"It would include muscle cuts from younger animals," he added, saying the list was also likely to include veal, as well as products from other ruminants such as sheep and Arctic muskox.

Iowa Senator Chuck Grassley said on Tuesday the U.S. Department of Agriculture planned to ease the ban and would allow imports of muscle cuts and live cattle younger than 30 months of age.

SOURCE: FASS Track
<http://www.fass.org>
Release – June 18, 2003

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Insist on Health Certificate Before Buying Pet, Officials Urge; Exotic Animals Pose Even Greater Danger to Health

State veterinary, health and wildlife officials urge Floridians to insist on obtaining health certificates before purchasing or importing any pets - especially in the case of exotic animals.

Caution was issued jointly by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Florida Department of Health (DOH), and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) in the wake of human cases of monkeypox in Midwestern states.

"We are finding that more and more animal diseases can be transferred to humans, so it is imperative that an animal has a clean bill of health before purchasing it," said Florida Agriculture Commissioner Charles H. Bronson, who oversees the State Veterinarian's Office.

Bronson's office has asked all veterinarians in Florida to be on the lookout for prairie dogs, rodents or rabbits - animals associated with the outbreak of monkeypox in the Midwest. Veterinarians, pet shop owners, and the general public also are being asked

to notify the State Veterinarian's Office of any recent shipments or knowledge of recent shipments of prairie dogs to Florida. A 24/7 toll free number for reporting such information is (800) 342-5869.

"To reduce disease exposure, DOH and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) do not recommend owning exotic or wild animals if you have young children or immunocompromised people in your house," said Deputy State Health Officer Bonnie Sorensen, M.D., M.B.A.

Human monkeypox is a rare, zoonotic viral disease that occurs primarily in the rain forest countries of Central and West Africa. It is a member of the orthopox family of viruses. In humans, infection with monkeypox virus results in a rash illness similar to but less infectious than smallpox. Monkeypox in humans is not usually fatal. The incubation period is about 12 days.

Monkeypox is transmitted through contact with an infected animal. Symptoms include fever, cough, headache, myalgia, rash, or lymph node enlargement within three weeks after contact with infected animals.

Officials recommend that before buying a pet from any source, make sure it has a health certificate indicating that it is in good health. If you are importing an animal from another state, it requires what is known as an "Official Certificate of Veterinary Inspection" (OCVI) issued by a licensed and USDA-accredited veterinarian from the state from which it was sent.

Before buying or importing an exotic animal - such as rodents, reptiles, deer, big cats, or zoo animals - check with the State Veterinarian's Office, (850) 410-0900, and the FWC, (850) 488-6253, to determine whether it is legal to own or import such animals and what the conditions are regarding licensing and possession.

Officials say it is critically important to avoid letting exotic animals go free, as diseases they may harbor could be a threat to wildlife. It is illegal to release these animals into the wild.

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For more information about monkeypox, please visit the CDC website at www.cdc.gov or call (888) 246-2675.

Updated information may also be found at <http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/ai/monkeypox.htm>. To report a disease or suspect, contact the Office of the State Veterinarian at (850) 410-0900 or fill out and submit the form at <http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/ai/disease.htm>.

If you have any questions, input, or reports, please feel free to contact one of the following:

Animal Industry, M-F, 8-5	(850) 410-0900
Animal Industry	(877) 815-0034
Animal Industry's Kissimmee Laboratory	(407) 948-0351
Agricultural Law Enforcement	(800) 342-5869 (850) 245-1300
Emergency Operations Center (EOC)	(850) 413-9909
Department of Health	(850) 254-4401
USDA's 24/7 hot line number	(800) 601-9327

SOURCE: Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DOACS)
<http://doacs.state.fl.us/>
Dr. Lee Coffman
(850) 410-0900
Dr. Carina Blackmore
(850) 245-4299
Release – June 11, 2003

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Does Creep Feeding Calves Pay?



Creep feeding calves is a way to put additional weight on calves prior to weaning. However, the performance of calves and the economics of creep feeding is not a sure thing.

A three year creep feeding study conducted in Alabama by Auburn University showed that calves fed creep feed for 182 days prior to weaning gained an additional 36 pounds. Calves consumed 507 pounds of creep feed. Today, the additional gain is worth about \$30 per calf (avg. heifers and steers). However, the cost of creep feed (at \$200 per ton) was \$50 per calf. Obviously, with these costs and returns creep feeding is not economical.

In a three year study in Oklahoma, heifer and steer calves fed creep feed for 159 days prior to weaning were 30 pounds heavier than non creep-fed calves. Creep-fed calves ate 363 pounds of feed. Today, the additional gain is worth approximately \$25 per calf and the cost of creep feed is about \$37 per calf. Again, with these cost and return values creep feeding is not profitable.

Another Oklahoma study involved creep feeding calves nursing two-year-old first-calf heifers. Calves creep fed 135 days were 108 pounds heavier at weaning than calves not creep fed. With the higher price per pound market value for the smaller non-creep fed calves, the advantage is only about \$50.00 per calf fed creep feed. Calves ate 740 pounds of creep feed which would cost about \$74. With these cost and returns, creep feeding is not profitable even for calves nursing two-year-old heifers.

In a four year creep feeding study at Brooksville, Florida, calves received creep feed for 60 days prior to weaning. The average increase in gain from creep feeding was 27 pounds per calf. It is interesting that the average gain response to creep feeding varied from 6 pounds per calf in the poorest year to 50 pounds per calf in the best year. A breed response to creep feeding also occurred, with a 52 pound increase for Hereford calves, a 34 pound increase for Brangus-type calves, and only an 8 pound increase for Brahman calves. Over all, calves consumed about 600 pounds of creep feed. With a feed cost of about \$60 per calf, creep feeding would be far from being profitable.

Creep feeding calves is not an economical practice in most situations. Gain responses might offset feed costs during a drought or for calves nursing first-calf heifers. Also, the \$200 per ton cost

for creep feed is for that delivered in 50 pound bags. Creep feed purchased in bulk quantities would cost much less which would help return a profit. But even with discounted feed prices, profits from creep feeding nursing calves are questionable. Also, the above economic analysis does not include the cost of creep feeding equipment nor labor.

SOURCE: Findlay Pate
UF/IFAS, Range Cattle REC, Ona,
Florida
Published in "The Peace River
Farmer and Rancher"
June - 2003

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EVA Remains a Concern for Equine Industry

Despite many efforts, equine viral arteritis (EVA) continues to hamper international trade activities in the U.S. horse industry, according to Amy Mann, director of regulatory affairs for the American Horse Council. Mann made her remarks to the National Institute for Animal Agriculture's Equine Health Committee at an April meeting in Cincinnati, Ohio.

"Unfortunately, the U.S. has been and continues to be denied exports of many valuable stallions and their semen because of their infective state," said Mann. She says action is needed "because a significant number of top breeding stallions worldwide are EVA carriers and these stallions represent some of the best genetics in their respective breeds." While primarily a respiratory disease, EVA can cause abortions in mares and death in neo-natal foals.

Mann points out that the U.S. is the only major horse breeding country not regulating the disease. "USDA does not feel it can implement an import program because we don't have a domestic program," said Mann. Currently, only three states have regulations governing EVA.

In the mid-1990's, Mann said the American Horse Council established a working group to review the issue and develop guidelines to assist stallion and mare owners who wish to use EVA shedder stallions when breeding to a susceptible mare. The document was widely distributed, said Mann, although only a handful of breed registries have adopted the guidelines.

With educational efforts continuing, Mann credits USDA with the production of an excellent video on EVA that has been widely distributed and with holding a video teleconference with state veterinarians to discuss industry's concerns.

She said another step in the educational process has been the publication of an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) in the Federal Register, which sought industry input on a number of options for addressing EVA. Mann said comments suggested "overwhelming" support for the option of calling for the determination of the serological status of imported stallions and allowing the state of destination to determine how best to "handle the animal."

Mann said, currently, interest in the disease seems to have diminished, based on fewer reports of outbreaks and vaccine orders. "Despite all our efforts, EVA carrier stallions and infective semen are still freely imported into the U.S. and few states have taken action to address the disease within their borders." Mann said the industry remains concerned that many U.S. horses are being denied export to Europe because of their shedder status, yet some of the same European states are not enforcing established EVA programs they have in place. She said USDA has agreed to take up this matter with the European Commission.

A proposal by USDA to regulate EVA domestically has not been approved. However, a previous meeting of industry and government officials resulted in an agreement to develop a set of guidelines or possibly some uniform methods and rules (UM&R) to assist states and the industry in setting up prevention and control programs. Mann hopes this action will "send a message to the rest of the world that we intend to take this matter

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seriously, including the possibility of regulating EVA."

SOURCE: Equine Health Report
<http://animalagriculture.org>
Spring 2003

-ELJ-

Canadian BSE Slims U.S. Steer Weights

Canadian cattle weights are rising rapidly and marketings from Canadian feedyards are becoming backlogged as U.S. slaughter has increased to fill the void left by the reduction in world beef supplies associated with the closure of Canada's borders.

Federally inspected cattle slaughter the first week of June was the largest in the United States since the mid-1970's and average daily slaughter during the first half of June was nearly 8 percent larger than last year, notes Kansas State University agricultural economist James Mintert. Canadian dressed steer weights climbed about 36 pounds from early May to early June, moving 1 percent above the prior year. In contrast, U.S. dressed steer weights rose just 10 pounds during May and were still 2 percent below a year ago at month's end.

"The longer the ban remains in place, the greater the impact will be on the U.S. market," Mintert said, noting that this is partly because the full impact of the ban will not be felt until reduced supplies of Canadian feeder cattle coming into the United States are reflected in smaller U.S. slaughter cattle supplies. But the ban on Canadian beef exports could also provide a boost to U.S. beef exports as traditional market outlets for Canadian beef turn to other beef exporters, including the United States, to meet their needs.

"The ban on Canadian beef exports could also provide a boost to U.S. beef exports as traditional market outlets for Canadian beef turn to other beef exporters, including the United States, to meet their needs," Mintert said. "Following the United States, the largest Canadian beef export customers during

2002 were Mexico and Japan. It would not be surprising to see the United States pick up most of this business, if the export ban remains in place very long."

Although the USDA hasn't made a decision regarding how quickly the border will be opened, it could easily be several more weeks, or longer, before trade resumes, Mintert said. Moreover, it's likely that USDA will consult with other major trading partners, such as Japan, before reopening the border. If that's the case, it will likely delay the resumption of trade even longer.

"So, in the short run, it appears the biggest impact of the Canadian BSE situation could prove to be the reduction in North American beef supplies," Mintert said.

In their weekly newsletter University of Missouri agricultural economists Glenn Grimes and Ron Plain noted it is difficult to get a good reading on what has happened to beef demand in Canada because of the increase in supply domestically, which has reduced cattle and beef prices sharply.

Grimes and Plain said they could not identify any weakness in U.S. beef demand, even though Choice beef prices have weakened some from the highs of early June.

"However, this weakness is probably due to the very high slaughter of 791 thousand head under Federal Inspection slaughter -- we believe this is the largest weekly Federal Inspected slaughter since 1976 -- which means U.S. feeders are moving marketings forward," Grimes and Plain said. "In fact, our cattle slaughter has run way above year earlier levels since early May and cattle weights are substantially below a year earlier. In fact, our cattle slaughter has run way above year earlier levels since early May and cattle weights are substantially below a year earlier."

SOURCE: Daniel Yovich
<http://www.meatingplace.com>
Release – June 23, 2003

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