



August 2004

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## Dates to Remember

### August

- 3** Goat Field Day - Range Cattle REC, Ona, FL
- 9-13** NCBA Mid Year Conference - Denver, CO
- 13** Northeast Florida Beef & Forage Group 7th Annual Hay Field Day - Holtendorf Farm, Starke, FL

### September

- 15-17** Florida Cattlemen's Fall Quarterly Meeting - Crystal River, FL
- 16** 2004 FL Equine Institute and Allied Trade Show - Southeastern Livestock Pavilion; Ocala, FL
- 20-24** The Florida Association of Extension Professionals Meeting - Cocoa Beach, FL
- 25** Florida Santa Gertrudis Sale - Bartow, FL



UF/IFAS photo by Eric Zamora.

Other photos are available for news and feature type photography at <http://ics.ifas.ufl.edu/pictures/index.html>.



## Beef Management Calendar

### 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.

### October

- ☑ Plant cool season legumes.
- ☑ Plant small grain pastures.
- ☑ Check mineral feeder.
- ☑ Check for external parasites, especially lice, and treat if needed.
- ☑ Check for spittlebugs and grassloopers and treat, if needed.
- ☑ Watch condition of cow herd; maintain adequate nutrition.
- ☑ Isolate any additions to the herd for 30 to 60 days and observe for signs of disease; retest for brucellosis and leptospirosis.
- ☑ Be sure you have adequate handling facilities, and they are in good working order.
- ☑ If you are raising bulls for the commercial market, October thru December is the main bull-buying season for cattlemen in south Florida and now is the time to have your promotion program fully activated.



### Responsibility of Extension Agents in the Collection and Delivery of Check-Off Payments

I was recently asked about the responsibility of Extension Agents in the collection and delivery of check-off payments for show lambs. Although under some legal scrutiny, there are currently check-off systems in place that require money to be collected and sent for market hogs, steers, and market lambs that are sold at fairs and shows. The show/fair board that runs the sale is responsible for collecting and mailing the money to the correct state or national office. I hope that all of our shows are doing this, thus within the law. Although extension faculty may be involved in these activities as teachers, they do not have the responsibility of handling the money.

Questions can be answered through the following INTERNET sites:



American Lamb Board -  
<http://www.americanlambboard.org>

- ✓ Lamb Promotion, Research and Information Order - <http://www.ams.usda.gov/lsg/mpb/lamb/lambchk.htm>
- ✓ Cattlemen's Beef Board - <http://www.beefboard.com>
- ✓ Beef Promotion and Research Order - <http://www.ams.usda.gov/lsg/mpb/beef/beefchk.htm>
- ✓ Pork Board - <http://www.porkboard.org/home/default.asp>
- ✓ Pork Promotion, Research and Consumer Information Order - <http://www.ams.usda.gov/lsg/mpb/pork/porkchk.htm>

The confusion about extension agent's responsibilities came from a letter sent to agents by the American Lamb Board which used the phrase "extension programs" too liberally. This is one time when the county faculty need to stand fast in their role as an educator supporting the educational value of the fair/show activities, rather than be the "person in charge".

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-TTM-



## New Guide for Veterinarians on National Scrapie Eradication Program Now Available

A new publication, "A Guide to the National Scrapie Eradication Program for Veterinarians" is now being distributed to small ruminant practitioners across the nation and is available to other veterinarians and veterinary clinics upon request.

"This publication is an extremely handy, user-friendly reference piece on the National Scrapie Eradication Program (NSEP) and scrapie genetics, the use of genotyping in the eradication program," says Dr. Cindy Wolf, chair of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture's (NIAA) Sheep and Goat Health Committee and a small ruminant specialist at the University of Minnesota.

"What makes this publication so useful is its format as well as the information it contains. It's designed similar to a wall calendar with tabs representing seven sections, allowing practitioners to quickly find what they need," states Dr. Wolf. "Further, we've prepared this guide so that a veterinarian can use it in explaining the rather complicated subject of scrapie genetics/genotyping to clients."

The guide is being distributed to members of the American Association of Small Ruminant Practitioners (AASRP) as well as state and federal animal health officials. Other veterinarians who would like a copy can email Julie Jones at [jjones@animalagriculture.org](mailto:jjones@animalagriculture.org). The guide can also be downloaded on the Internet at [www.animalagriculture.org/scrapie](http://www.animalagriculture.org/scrapie). The Web site also contains a number of other informational resources on the NSEP and scrapie, most of which are aimed at producers.

The guide is the latest resource developed by the National Scrapie Education Initiative, a collaborative effort conducted by NIAA on behalf of the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services, which administers the eradication program. AASRP provided technical assistance during the guide's development.

**SOURCE:** National Institute for Animal Agriculture  
<http://www.animalagriculture.org/>  
 Release - July 13, 2004

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## AMSA Presents 2004 Achievement Awards to Three Members

The American Meat Science Association awarded three of its members a 2004 Achievement Award during the 57th annual Reciprocal Meat Conference in Lexington, KY.

Dr. Randall Huffman (UF graduate), vice president of scientific affairs for the American Meat Institute Foundation, Rosmarie A. Nold of the University of Nebraska and Duane M. Wulf of South Dakota State University received awards.

"It is truly an honor to receive this award from an organization such as AMSA," Huffman said. "For over half a century AMSA and its members have provided scientific leadership that has led to dramatic improvements in the quality and safety of meat products. To be recognized by my peers within this organization is very rewarding and humbling."

The award is presented annually to "young AMSA members who have demonstrated significant scientific skills in muscle foods research/technology, which contribute to the animal products industry and the American Meat Science Association."

Other awardees honored at the conference include:

■ Ken Fleming, Cargill Meat Solutions - Intercollegiate Meat Judging

### *Meritorious Service Award*

■ Joseph C. Cordray, Iowa State University - Meat Processing Award

■ Floyd K. McKeith, University of Illinois - Distinguished Research Award

■ Ted H. Montgomery, West Texas A&M University - Distinguished Extension - Industry Service Award

■ John A. Unruh, Kansas State University - Distinguished Teaching Award

■ William G. Moody, University of Kentucky - R.C. Pollock Award

### *Signal Service Award*

■ Herbert C. Abraham, Abraham Consulting

■ W. Ronald Osborne, Caravelle Foods, Brampton, Ontario

■ **Roger L. West, University of Florida**

**SOURCE:** Eric Hanson  
<http://www.meatingplace.com>  
 Release - June 30, 2004

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## Dale Sauls Selected 2004 Lancaster/ Sunbelt Expo Southeastern Farmer of the Year for Florida

The beginning of Dale Sauls' agricultural career in Anthony, FL, was far from glamorous or a smashing hit. In fact, in the early 1970's, he lost his job on a beef cattle operation when the beef market fell.

Next focus for Sauls – dairy farming and what a wise decision it turned out to be. He entered into partnership on an older small dairy farm that covered only 80 acres of land and a 70-cow dairy herd.

“I initially supplied half the capital and all the labor and management skills,” said Sauls. “We also began by buying twelve springing heifers, installing pipelines and devising a feeding operation.”

Three years later, he bought out the partnership, moved the operation and built a modern dairy barn on leased land. Today, the outstanding growth in the Sauls’ operation has led to his selection as the 2004 Lancaster/Sunbelt Expo Southeastern Farmer of the Year for Florida as chosen in judging conducted by the Florida Farm Bureau. He was nominated by Robert Shaw.

Sauls now joins seven other Southeastern state winners as a finalist for the Lancaster/Sunbelt Expo Southeastern Farmer of the Year Award for 2004, which will be announced during the Sunbelt Expo in Moultrie, GA, on Tuesday, Oct. 19th.

As the Florida state winner, Sauls will receive a \$2,500 cash award and an expense paid trip to the Sunbelt Expo from Swisher International of Jacksonville, FL; a jacket and a \$200 gift certificate from the Williamson-Dickie Company; a commemorative gun safe from Misty Morn Safe Co.; and a \$500 gift certificate from Southern States. He is also now eligible for the \$14,000 cash award that will go to the overall winner and the use of a Massey Ferguson tractor for one year from AGCO, Inc.

Swisher International, through its Lancaster Premium chewing tobacco brand, and the Sunbelt Expo are sponsoring the Southeastern Farmer of the Year Award for the 15th consecutive year. Swisher has contributed more than \$600,000 in cash awards and other honors since the Award was initiated in 1990. Dairy farming and milk remain the focus of the Sauls operation today and includes massive numbers. The milk production for his 620 milking cows is now over 16,603,600 pounds with a rolling herd average of 26,780 pounds. And that computes out to be 1,930,651.1 gallons!!

There are also 450 head of heifers and what

Sauls classifies as a “hobby” of 25 to 30 beef cattle. Seven thousand tons of corn silage are produced on 300 acres and it’s a crop he’s extremely proud of.

“We have a grower who comes in and grows the crop for us,” said Sauls. “Then we take over with the harvest and storage. It’s some of the finest corn silage grown anywhere.

“All our milk is marketed through Southeast Milk, a local group that I have been an active board member since its inception,” said Sauls, “There’s an agreement with the Marion County Inmate Workfarm for the purchase of all our dairy bull calves.

“The beef cattle are a rewarding project,” he added. “We sell the offspring to kids in 4-H and FFA for their local shows. We also work with them from start to finish of the project – from breaking the animals, to grooming, clipping, showmanship, nutrition and herdsman ship. “

Sauls and his wife Connie have two daughters, Rolly, 20, and Megan, 19. Rolly is a junior at the University of Florida while Megan attends Central Florida Community College.

Previous state winners from Florida include: Ernie Nunez of Dade City, 1990 and 1991; Wayne Wiggins of Plant City, 1992; Leroy Baldwin of Ocala, 1993; Bill Long of Apopka, 1994; Richard Barber, Jr., of Ocala, 1995; Al Bellotto of Lakeland, 1996; Rex Clonts, Jr., of Apopka, 1997; John Hoblick of DeLeon Springs, 1998; Doug Holmberg of Valrico, 1999; Damon Deas of Jennings, 2000; Gene Batson of Mount Dora, 2001; Will Putnam III of Alturas, 2002; and Sonny Williamson, Jr. of Okeechobee, 2003.

Ernie Nunez (1991), Leroy Baldwin (1993), Rex Clonts (1997) and Doug Holmberg (1999) were each chosen as the Lancaster/Sunbelt Expo Southeastern Farmer of the Year.

A distinguished panel of judges will visit the Sauls farm along with the other seven state finalists in August. The judges for this year include 2000 Lancaster/Sunbelt Expo Southeastern Farmer of the Year James Lee Adams of Camilla, GA; Dr. John Wilson, retired state program leader for agriculture

and natural resources for Mississippi State University; and Eric Raby, Vice President Marketing – Massey Ferguson North America.

**SOURCE:** <http://www.sunbeltexpo.com>  
Release - July 8, 2004

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## Food Promotion Act Puts an End to Labeling Stalemate

*Beef, Pork, Seafood, Fruit & Vegetable Producers Urge Support for Voluntary Effort*

Cattle ranchers, pork producers, seafood producers and growers and shippers of fruits and vegetables are among 347 food groups urging support for legislation that will finally implement a long-awaited country-of-origin labeling program. The Food Promotion Act of 2004 (H.R. 4576) will meet these objectives of both consumers and producers: to provide country-of-origin information to consumers, and to promote American agriculture products in a way that is beneficial – not burdensome – to producers and growers.

Introduced June 15 by House Agriculture Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-VA) and Ranking Minority Member Charles Stenholm (D-TX), the bill amends the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a voluntary country-of-origin labeling program for fruits, vegetables, meat (including beef, pork, veal, lamb) and seafood. This market-based program is designed to create a brand for “products of the U.S.” and encourage consumers to choose American products at their supermarkets.

The National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA), National Pork Producers Council (NPPC), National Fisheries Institute (NFI), United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association (UFFVA) and Produce Marketing Association (PMA) are applauding the bill and are urging continued support.

“This bill represents a bipartisan effort and a win-win for everyone,” says NCBA President Jan Lyons, a Kansas cattle producer. “This legislation allows country-of-origin labeling to move forward, giving both consumers and producers a market-driven, cost-effective labeling program.”

“America’s pork producers have been working for years in support of a labeling program that adds value to U.S. pork products,” says NPPC Vice President Joy Philippi, a pork producer from Bruning, Neb. “We’re excited about this effort to inform consumers while giving pork producers another opportunity to build demand for their products.”

Over 75 percent of produce offered for sale in U.S. retail stores is already labeled with consumer information on a sticker or package, which can be adapted to include origin labeling. “We want consumers to have useful information about where their food comes from,” says Kathy Means, vice president of government relations at PMA. “This legislation puts origin information in the grocery stores and promotes American foods in a way that is supported by producer groups nationwide.” UFFVA President Tom Stenzel agrees, noting that “the fruit and vegetable industry is committed to providing consumers the information they want about our products. With oversight by the Department of Agriculture to measure our results, and comprehensive reporting back to Congress, this legislation will help us fulfill our commitment to consumers to provide them with country-of-origin information.”

“This voluntary program realizes a marketing advantage for seafood producers without the cost and confusion of the mandatory rule,” says Justin LeBlanc, vice president of government relations at NFI. “Hundreds of existing voluntary programs have already proven their value for producers and consumers alike.”

The producer groups collectively represent hundreds of thousands of producers who, along with 347 food groups, have pledged their support for this effort that implements a voluntary labeling program that will be beneficial to both producers and consumers.

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 Release - July 20, 2004

-TAT-

## New National Animal ID System Will Guard Against Mad Cow Disease And Animal Health Problems

To fight mad cow disease and other deadly animal illnesses, a new computerized animal identification system will allow state and federal officials to quickly track potential disease threats from farm to plate.

“The first phase of the National Animal Identification System starts later this year, and will eventually allow officials to trace and monitor all animal diseases, particularly those that originate in foreign countries,” said Todd Thrift, an assistant professor of animal sciences with the University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

“Currently, there is no nationwide animal ID system in the United States, although some regional programs are being tested,” he said. “The European Union now has the most comprehensive program for identifying and tracking animals.”

Thrift, who is helping the U.S. Department of Agriculture educate producers about the new system, said it is designed to identify and track within 48 hours all animals and sites exposed to disease — including imported and exported livestock.

“While the first phase focuses heavily on the nation’s \$190 billion cattle industry, the animal ID system is scheduled to become mandatory by July 2006 for all livestock including everything from beef and dairy cattle to goats, hogs, horses and farm-raised fish,” Thrift said.

Under the new system, producers and processors will be responsible for registering animals and

recording their movement from the farm to the harvesting plant. The data will be maintained by USDA in cooperation with state agriculture departments, he said.

The first phase of the program will identify the geographical locations of the producers. No information about individual animals will be recorded, Thrift said.

“Called Premise, the first step will be nothing more than a seven-digit number that identifies where the producer’s farm is located in the state,” Thrift said. “If you’re a beef cattle operator, Premise will record your name and address, phone and email contacts, type of operation and probably some GPS (Geographic Positioning Satellite) coordinates.”

By July 2005, under current plans, the second phase of the program will identify animals that enter interstate commerce. For example, chickens, hogs or catfish from a single farm that go on one truck to a processing plant in another state will be tracked as a group or batch.



*Todd Thrift, an assistant professor of animal sciences with the University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, holds an electronic tag that will be used in the new National Animal Identification System Friday, July 23, 2004. The small white tag, which consists of a microchip and coil of copper wire that serves as an antenna, would cost about \$2.50 per animal. The electronic identification system will track animals from their first point of sale to the processing plant, allowing disease problems to be more quickly contained and eradicated. (AP photo by Josh Wickham/ University of Florida/IFAS)*

“For cattle moving in interstate commerce, we’re going to need a single ID so that each animal can be tracked from the original producer to the processing plant,” Thrift said. “That means an electronic tag with a microchip will be needed because cattle are usually mixed or co-mingled with animals from other farms.

“When you’re dealing with millions of cattle, an electronic tag is the only sure way to accurately track animals from one owner to another. Conventional bar-code tags can be easily lost or damaged, so that they are not readable by scanning devices,” he said.

Cost of the electronic tags is about \$2.50 compared to \$1 for the traditional tags. Thrift said the federal Department of Homeland Security may help underwrite the cost of the animal identification program to help protect the nation’s food supply.

The program’s third phase, scheduled for implementation in July 2006, will identify animals in intrastate commerce, requiring an electronic ID tag for animals moved around inside the state.

“When the system is fully operational, data on animals will be transmitted to a computerized database maintained by USDA,” Thrift said. “When animals are harvested, the processing plant will send a termination report to the database.”

Thrift said other new technologies, such as retinal scanners, will permit processing plants to verify animal identities much like a human fingerprint. Hamburger, which may include meat from several different animals, will be more difficult to trace.

“We have the potential to track animals all the way through the system and also measure how well they perform,” Thrift said. “We can start to manage animals as individuals instead of managing them as groups, figuring out why one animal gained three pounds a day in the feed yard while another gained less one pound per day — or why one animal graded low-select and another graded high choice.”

He said some producers are skeptical about the new federal program, expressing concerns about costs, confidentiality and liability.

“In the 1920s and 1930s, some producers were skeptical about government-mandated programs to control tick fever, and some were concerned about brucellosis eradication programs in the 1970s and 1980s,” Thrift said. “But, experience shows that these programs had positive results, and I believe the national animal identification system will be no different.”

He said the program has great potential for adding value to the industry, providing producers with detailed information on animals throughout their entire production cycle and creating new opportunities for marketing premium products to consumers.

Mike Milicevic, president of the Florida Cattlemen Association in Kissimmee, said the association is working with UF and USDA to develop the animal identification system for the state’s \$1.2 billion cattle industry.

“We understand the need for an effective and rapid response to animal health issues, but we must make sure the system is efficient, economical, flexible and confidential,” he said. “Producers will probably bear a big share of the cost of implementing the plan. If it is designed correctly, the identification system could help generate information to increase production and add more value to their cattle.”

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Release - July 23, 2004

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