



September 2004

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Dates to Remember

September

- 4-5 Fall Arabian Festival - Canterbury, Newberry, FL
- 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

October

- 1 10th Annual FCA Quality Replacement Heifer Sale - Ocala, FL
- 1 The Farm Bull Sale - Okcchobcc, FL
- 7 North Florida REC 3rd Annual Fall Field Day - Quincy, FL
- 9 Cow Creek Ranch Bull Sale - Aliceville, AL
- 12 Herd Health Management Seminar - Hardee County Agri-Civic Center, FL
- 14 Range Cattle REC Field Day - Ona, FL
- 14-17 Florida Quarter Horse Show - Canterbury, Newberry, FL
- 16 Florida Santa Gertrudis Association Auction - Bartow, FL
- 21 Florida Section, Society for Range Management Fall Tour - Sarasota, FL
- 21 Little Creek Farm Bull Sale - Kissimmee, FL
- 21 Meadows Creek Bull Sale - Kissimmee, FL
- 21 Callaway Angus Bull Sale - Kissimmee, FL
- 22 Ankony Angus Bull Sale - Ocala, FL
- 22 Graham Angus Bull Sale - Okeechobee, FL
- 23 Debter Hereford Bull Sale - Horton, AL
- 27 Circle G Bull Sale - Hampton, GA
- 29 Lemmon Cattle Company - Okeechobee, FL





Beef Management Calendar

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.

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.

November

- ☑ Have soils tested.
- ☑ Observe cows daily to detect calving difficulty.
- ☑ Use mineral with high level of magnesium if grass tetany has been a problem in the past.
- ☑ Check for external parasites and treat if needed.
- ☑ Maintain adequate nutrient level for cow herd.
- ☑ Calve in well-drained pastures.
- ☑ Survey pastures for poisonous plants.
- ☑ Start summarizing your annual records, both production and financial-then you will have time to make adjustments for tax purposes.
- ☑ Re-evaluate winter feeding program and feed supplies.
- ☑ Get breeding soundness exams on bull battery so you have time to find replacements if some fail.
- ☑ Implement bull conditioning program.
- ☑ Review plans and arrangements for the upcoming breeding season.
- ☑ Check progress of developing replacement heifers - are they going to meet your target weight by the start of the breeding season?



UF/IFAS Extension Service Responds To Hurricane Charley

In the wake of the nation's second most expensive hurricane — loss estimates may exceed \$25 billion — state and federal agencies are scrambling to help residents in Hurricane Charley's southwest-to-northeast swath across Florida.

“With extension offices in all 67 Florida

counties, the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) is making the vast resources of the university available to residents in hard-hit counties," said Charles Vavrina, extension district director at the UF/IFAS Southwest Florida Research and Education Center in Immokalee.

Vavrina, who is coordinating extension recovery efforts in South Florida, said county extension faculty in Charlotte, DeSoto, Hardee and other counties are working to get their damaged offices back in operation. They're also providing residents with information on various types of aid and other services available, including information on food and water, feed for animals, and insurance claims as well as disposal of rotting food, controlling mosquitoes in standing water and preventing mold in structures that are without air conditioning.

Topping the list of extension resources available to residents is The Disaster Handbook, a comprehensive document that provides detailed information on all aspects of hurricane preparedness and recovery.

Available online at <http://disaster.ifas.ufl.edu/>, the handbook was produced by UF/IFAS. The university also works with the Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN), a consortium of extension disaster experts from 45 states and Puerto Rico," said Carol Lehtola, an extension safety and health specialist in Gainesville. She also is extension's point person for the UF/IFAS Disaster Information Program and Florida's primary contact for EDEN.

As residents begin to recover from Hurricane Charley, injuries from chain saws and misuse of other equipment are common. In fact, three deaths have occurred from carbon monoxide poisoning when generators were used indoors, she said. To learn about avoiding accidents, Lehtola recommends checking the UF/IFAS Agricultural Safety Web site at <http://www.flagsafe.ufl.edu/>.

Next week, new public service announcements (PSAs) for radio stations can be downloaded from UF's www.radiosource.net Web site, she said.

Vavrina said another online resource is UF/IFAS

extension's Electronic Data Information Source (EDIS) that provides information and educational materials in English and Spanish on many topics, ranging from agriculture and natural resources to food safety, consumer credit counseling, and child and family stress. Hurricane disaster information is available on the EDIS Web site, <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/>, by searching for hurricane recovery, flood recovery and wind recovery.

In addition, he said the UF/IFAS Broward County Extension Service maintains a comprehensive Web site on hurricane preparedness that's available at <http://broward.ifas.ufl.edu/>.

In the planning stage is a new State Agricultural Response Team (SART), an interagency program to respond to future emergencies and disasters in the state. SART, which will become operational early next year, involves experts at the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Department of Community Affairs, U.S. Department of Agriculture and the UF/IFAS Extension Service.

In addition to helping establish response teams in each county, SART will identify county resources available for an emergency or disaster, promote cooperation between state and county agencies, and train personnel to respond to emergencies or disasters such as hurricanes.

SOURCE: Charles Vavrina, Professor and District Director
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-TTM-



NFREC 3rd Annual Fall Field Day

The North Florida Research and Education Center (NFREC) of the University of Florida and the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, located in Quincy, Florida, is hosting their third annual Fall Field Day on October 7, 2004. This Fall Field Day will be an information-packed day designed to provide hands-on educational experiences and research results to farmers, growers, and agricultural distributors on the various types of research and technologies provided by the research center as well as opportunities to find possible solutions to crop and garden problems.

Please visit <http://nfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/Calendar/NFRECQFallFieldDay.pdf> for a detailed agenda or registration form.

For further information, please call (850) 875-7100, ext 0 or visit our website at <http://nfrec.ifas.ufl.edu>.

SOURCE: NFREC, UF/IFAS
Quincy, FL
Phone: (850) 875-7100

-RSS-



FLORIDA SECTION
Society for Range Management

Fall Tour

Thursday, October 21, 2004
Longino Ranch, Sarasota, FL

Registration Fee: \$15.00 per person for SRM members (includes lunch)
\$20.00 per person for non-members (includes lunch)

If possible, please register in advance so it is known how much food to order.

Make checks payable to: **Florida Section, Society for Range Management**

Send checks to:

Ken Lackmann
c/o USDA NRCS
324 8th Avenue West
Suite 104
Palmetto, FL 34221

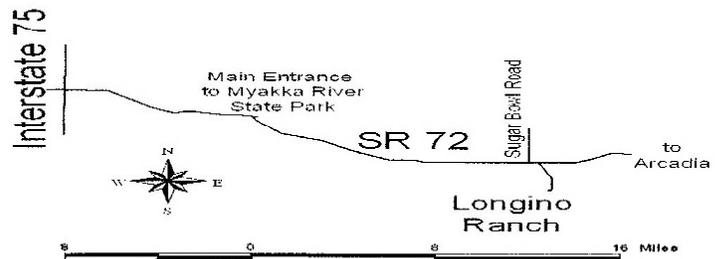
For additional information contact:

Ken Lackmann
Phone: (941) 729-6804
Email: ken.lackmann@fl.usda.gov

Jack Creighton
Phone: (941) 907-0011
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Registration/coffee from 8:30 to 9:00 a.m.
Tour & Presentations will begin at 9:00 a.m.

Program Presentations: Brush Management Research, Conservation Easements, Farm Bill Programs, Quail Management Research



The entrance road to Longino Ranch is approximately 22.5 miles east of I-75 on SR 72.

The entrance road to Longino Ranch is just past Sugar Bowl Road on the South side of SR 72.

From SR 72 to the ranch headquarters is approximately 2 miles.

SOURCE: Florida Section, Society for Range Management

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2004 Tri-State Hay Show

County Extension Agents and Forage Specialists from the Land Grant Universities in Alabama, Florida and Georgia in conjunction with the Sunbelt Agricultural Exposition have organized the 2004 Tri-State Hay Show. For a small fee of \$10, hay producers from have an opportunity to gain information about the quality of the hay they produce and compete for recognition as the top hay producer in three states. The first part of this show will be the forage quality competition. The second part will be educational seminars held during the Sunbelt Ag. Expo in Moultrie, GA on hay and forage quality. Hay entries will be on display at the Sunbelt Ag. Expo October 19-21, 2004.

The forage quality contest will have eight categories (ex. Bermudagrass, Alfalfa, Perennial Peanut, or Grass legume mix) that should cover most of the forages grown in the southeast United States. Only dry hay samples will be accepted. Round bale silage entries will not be accepted due to storage difficulties. Hay will be judged based on a Relative Forage Quality (RFQ) index, which takes into account protein, energy and fiber digestibility. The contest is open to any hay producer in Alabama, Florida or Georgia that would like to enter, but the producer who actually grew the hay must submit the entry. Hay samples, entry fees (\$10 per sample), and an entry form must be submitted no later than September 20, 2004. For more information, contact your local County Extension Agent or on the internet at <http://www.georgiaforages.com>.

SOURCE: Doug Mayo
Jackson County Extension
Marianna, FL
Phone: (850) 482-9620
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-RSS-

Does Preconditioning Feeder Calves Pay the Cow-Calf Producer?

Feeder cattle buyers and feedlot managers have touted the virtues of preconditioned feeder calves for more than a decade now. However, that does not mean that they will willingly pay for the value added from preconditioning feeder calves. In fact, most will admit they are only going to make one more bid than the next buyer. Therefore, feeder calf producers must fully describe their preconditioned feeder calves and market them in an environment where they will be compensated for the increased value.

What Does Preconditioning Mean?

Feeder calf preconditioning means different things to different people. Thus, in order to at least have an opportunity to get paid for what you do, the feeder cattle producer needs to represent the product he is selling by fully describing the preconditioning program that the feeder calves have received. A common feeder calf preconditioning program includes a complete health approach (initial and booster vaccinations, deworming, castration, dehorning, etc.). These calves are weaned and taught to feed out of a trough for a minimum of 45 days. Producers have been known to vary from this standard practice, but for whatever method is used, it is very important for cattle producers to fully describe their preconditioning program. This way, buyers will be aware of the enhanced value of these animals and bid appropriately.

Preconditioning and Shrink

One cannot talk about preconditioning feeder calves without considering shrink. Many cattle producers are unaware of the shrink they leave in the cow pen on sale day. Feeder calves that are sold at weaning typically incur a larger shrink than those that have been preconditioned. The primary reason for this is that preconditioned calves have recovered the shrink incurred during gathering and sorting. A conservative estimate by some cattlemen is that

feeder calves will shrink 2 percent from gathering and 4 percent from sorting. An additional 2 percent is often incurred during loading. Also, cattle buyers typically get a 2 percent pencil shrink on the gross weight of the feeder calves. Summing these four items will give you a total shrink on the feeder calves, which in this example amounts to 10 percent. Depending upon the conditions (weather, time of day, nearness to working facilities, cattle disposition, number of cattle to be sorted, etc.) shrink may be more or less than this estimate.

How to Evaluate the Preconditioning Opportunity

A comparison of feeder calves sold at weaning which were not preconditioned with feeder calves sold after 45 days of preconditioning will help determine if preconditioning pays the cow-calf producer. Table 1 provides an evaluation to determine if preconditioning pays the cow-calf producer.

The feeder calves sold at weaning (non-preconditioned) alternative is the simplest to evaluate. Let's assume an initial weight of 640 pounds, 2 percent gathering shrink, 4 percent sorting shrink, 2 percent loading shrink, and 2 percent pencil shrink. Thus, a 10 percent total shrink on 640 pounds per head will result in a total shrink of 64 pounds per head. The net pay weight would be 576 pounds per head (640lbs-64lbs). Assuming a sale price of \$117 per hundredweight for the 576 pound feeder calf would result in gross receipts of \$673.92 per head. Since no preconditioning costs were incurred with this alternative, the net receipts would also be \$673.92 per head.

The feeder calves sold after 45 days of preconditioning alternative requires a little more effort to evaluate. The feeder calves will receive a complete health program (initial and booster vaccinations, deworming, castration, dehorning, etc.). The preconditioned feeder calves are weaned from the cow, sorted by sex, weight, and quality, and bunk broke (eat/drink from a trough) for an additional 45 days longer than the non-preconditioned feeder calves. Let's assume the preconditioning cost is \$1.34 per head per day. Thus, the total preconditioning cost

would be \$60.22 per head ($\$1.34/\text{Hd}/\text{Day} * 45 \text{ days}$). Let's also assume the feeder calves will realize an average daily gain of 2.25 pounds per head per day during the 45 day preconditioning period. Thus, the gross pay weight would be 741 pounds per head ($640 + 45 * 2.25$). The shrink for the preconditioned feeder calves is estimated to be 5 percent (3 percent loading shrink and 2 percent pencil shrink). The net pay weight is approximately 704 pounds per head ($741 - 37$). Assuming a sale price of \$110 per hundredweight for the 704 pound feeder calf, gross receipts result in a total of \$774.61 per head. Net receipts for preconditioning feeder calves for 45 days is \$714.38 per head ($\$774.61 - \60.22). The difference in net receipts between the preconditioned and non-preconditioned feeder calves is an additional \$40.46 for the preconditioned calves.

Table 1. An Evaluation To Determine If Preconditioning Pays The Cow-Calf Producer¹.

Item	Feeder Calves Sold At Weaning Non-Preconditioned	Feeder Calves Sold After 45 Days Preconditioning ²
Initial Weight, Lbs.	640	640
Days Of Preconditioning	0	45
Preconditioning Cost/ Hd./Day	0	\$1.34
Preconditioning Cost/Hd.	0	\$60.22
Average Daily Gain, Lbs./Hd./Day	0	2.25
Gross Pay Weight, Lbs.	640	741.25
Gathering Shrink, %	2	0
Sorting Shrink, %	4	0
Loading Shrink, %	2	3
Pencil Shrink, %	2	2
Total Shrink, %	10	5
Total Shrink, Lbs.	64.00	37.06
Net Pay Weight, Lbs.	576.00	704.19
Sale Price, \$/Cwt.	\$117.00	\$110.00
Gross Receipts, \$/Hd.	\$673.92	\$774.61
Preconditioning Cost, \$/Hd.	\$0.00	\$60.22
Net Receipts, \$/Hd.	\$673.92	\$714.38
Difference in Net Receipts (Col. 2 - Col. 1), \$/Hd.		\$40.46

¹Feeder calves are assumed to be of comparable breed, lot size, quality, uniformity, etc.

²Feeder calf preconditioning includes a complete health program (initial and booster vaccinations, deworming, castration, dehorning, etc.). The preconditioned feeder calves were "weaned from the cow," sorted by sex, weight, and quality, and bunk broke (eat/drink from a trough) for an additional 45 days longer than the non-preconditioned feeder calves.

Is Preconditioning Feeder Calves for Me?

In order for preconditioning to be beneficial to the producer, the producer must:

- Fully describe the preconditioning program to potential buyers.

- Have adequate working facilities to perform preconditioning management practices.
- Have enough cattle to achieve truck load units.
- Be able to meet nutritional requirements and attain reasonable weight gain during the preconditioning period.
- Identify market channels that will reward them for the added value.

With today's high feeder calf prices, preconditioning and weaning feeder calves is beneficial to buyers as well as the beef industry. Preconditioning (weaning, recommended vaccinations, health procedures, bunk broke, etc.) reduces the amount of sickness, weight loss, and death loss associated with the feeder cattle industry. Managing this important transition period for the feeder calf (pasture to feedlot) adds more dollars to everybody's bottom line.

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Auburn University
Auburn, AL

-MJH-



Bronson Urges Vaccinations to Protect Horses From Mosquito Borne Diseases

With the rain and standing water from Hurricane Charley triggering exploding mosquito populations, Florida Agriculture and Consumer Services Commissioner Charles H. Bronson today urged horse owners in the state to make sure that their horses are vaccinated against West Nile Virus (WNV) and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE).

Bronson encouraged Florida horse owners to check with their veterinarians to verify that their animals have been vaccinated against the mosquito-borne diseases and to make sure that the shots are up to date.

“Our mosquito populations are increasing dramatically, especially in areas hit by the hurricane, and horses are at risk of contracting these diseases if they have not received their shots and boosters,” Bronson said.

To minimize the threat of mosquitoes, which can transmit not only WNV and EEE, but St. Louis Encephalitis and malaria as well, Bronson's department has established a response team in Lee County to coordinate efforts with federal, state and local officials to monitor mosquito populations and provide both aerial and ground treatments to reduce mosquito populations in Southwest Florida.

The Commissioner cautioned, however, that no amount of mosquito control can eliminate all mosquitoes and recommends that individuals take precautions to minimize their exposure. They include getting rid of standing water on property, wearing long sleeves and pants and using a mosquito repellent containing DEET.

For more information on mosquito borne diseases and prevention, Floridians are encouraged to call the department's toll-free hotline -

1-800-HELP-FLA (435-7352) - or visit the department's website at <http://www.doacs.state.fl.us>.

SOURCE: Terence McElroy
Phone: (850) 488-3022
Florida Department of Agriculture
and Consumer Services
Tallahassee, FL
Release - August 24, 2004

-ELJ-



U.S. Agricultural Exports Expected to Reach a Record \$62 Billion in FY 2004

The United States Department of Agriculture's final export forecast for fiscal year 2004 indicates sales are expected to reach \$62 billion, \$5.8 billion more than last year. This represents the highest sales ever, eclipsing the old record of \$59.8 billion set in fiscal year 1996. This forecast is up \$500 million from May's estimate largely due to stronger-than-expected cotton, beef and pork exports.

"The export performance for this year confirms that our efforts to expand economic opportunities for our nation's ranchers and farmers are working," said Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman. "Moreover, U.S. agricultural trade supports close to a million American jobs, so this record benefits the entire American economy. Our goal in the months ahead will be to expand trade possibilities even more through the World Trade Organization and other negotiations."

Canada remains the No. 1 market for U.S. agricultural products with exports estimated at \$9.6 billion, followed by Japan at \$8.9 billion and Mexico at \$8.6 billion.

In fiscal year 2004, Asia is projected to be the United States' largest regional market, with sales there expected to reach \$24.5 billion. This compares

to \$23.3 billion forecast to be shipped to markets in the Western Hemisphere. Exports to China are expected to reach \$6 billion, up from \$3.5 billion last year. China now is the leading importer of U.S. cotton and soybeans, and also imports large quantities of U.S. wheat and hides and skins.

USDA also released its initial forecast for fiscal year 2005, placing sales for next year at \$57.5 billion. The decline in value from this year is mainly due to increased competition and lower prices expected for cotton, wheat and soybeans. The export volume of major bulk commodities actually is forecast to rise 2.1 million tons to 118.7 million tons, with increases for corn and soybeans more than offsetting decreases for wheat and cotton. Horticultural product sales are expected to reach a record \$13.8 billion in 2005, with key markets being Canada, Mexico, several Asian countries and Europe.

For 2005, imports are forecast to increase 5 percent, reaching \$55.0 billion – another new record and up \$9.3 billion since 2003. The accelerated import growth that occurred between 2002 and 2004 is largely due to higher processed product prices that resulted in part from a weaker dollar. These price gains are expected to slow in 2005.

USDA's Economic Research Service, Foreign Agricultural Service and World Agricultural Outlook Board release agricultural trade forecasts quarterly. The summary and full report of USDA's "Outlook for U.S. Agricultural Exports" may be accessed from the ERS Web site at <http://www.ers.usda.gov> or the FAS Web site at <http://www.fas.usda.gov>. The next quarterly report will be issued in November 2004.

SOURCE: Ed Loyd
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United States Department of
Agriculture
Washington, D.C.
Release - August 26, 2004

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