



Newsletter

June 2007

In This Issue...

- | | |
|---|---|
| Horse Racing Road Apples Might Soon Turn a Shiny Profit | 2 |
| Corn Silage and Conserved Forage Field Day | 3 |
| Can Rope Lasso E. Coli? | 4 |



2007 Corn Silage/Forage Field Day Tifton, GA

Thursday, June 14, 2007



See page 3 for agenda and registration information.



Dates to Remember

June

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 2 | Florida Junior Brahman Association State Show - Fanning Springs, FL |
| 3 | Horsemanship School - Welaka, FL |
| 5 | 2007 North Florida Beef Cattle/Forage Field Day - Marianna, FL |
| 5 | Management Decisions for the Cow/Calf Herd in Stressful Times - Hastings, FL |
| 9 | 8 th Annual Plenty of Class Brangus Female Sale - Fairmont, GA |
| 9 | 27 th Annual Carolina Brahman Breeders Assoc. Sale - Clemson, SC |
| 10 | Horsemanship School - Welaka, FL |
| 14 | 2007 Corn Silage/Forage Field Day - Tifton, GA |
| 14-16 | Senepol Cattle Breeders Association Convention - Kissimmee, FL |
| 15-16 | Northeast Florida Youth Classic Prospect Steer & Heifer Show - Callahan, FL |
| 17 | Horsemanship School - Welaka, FL |
| 18-19 | FCA Cattlemen's College - Marco Island, FL |
| 19-21 | FCA/FCW Annual Convention & Allied Trade Show - Marco Island, FL |
| 20-22 | Applied Management of Conservation Lands in FL - Orlando, FL |
| 22 | State 4-H Horse Events - Gainesville, FL |
| 24 | Horsemanship School - Welaka, FL |
| 26-28 | 4-H Hog & Ham - Gainesville, FL |

July

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 5 | Lake County Summer Equine Workshop - Tavares, FL |
| 12 | Lake County Summer Equine Workshop - Tavares, FL |
| 12-14 | State 4-H Horse Show - Tampa, FL |
| 17-20 | NCBA Annual Summer Conference (Adams Mark Hotel) - Denver, CO |
| 18-20 | 2007 Farm to Fuel Summit - St. Petersburg, FL |
| 19 | Lake County Summer Equine Workshop - Tavares, FL |
| 26 | Lake County Summer Equine Workshop - Tavares, FL |

Horse Racing Road Apples Might Soon Turn a Shiny Profit

On June 9, the final horse race of the Triple Crown, the Belmont Stakes, will run. But there'll be more than confetti to pick up afterwards.

Horse tracks like Belmont Park produce up to 600 cubic feet of manure a day—with or without a race. Add to that the thousands of horse farms around the country and you have one big problem.

But researchers at the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) say those road apples may soon be marketable.

The trick is composting, a process that breaks down organic waste into fertilizer. While a well established practice for cow manure, composting has never been applied to horses—for good reason.

"With horses, you're not just collecting the feces. You have to take all the bedding and other mess that's in a stall with the horse," said Lori Warren, a UF equine nutritionist. "Until now, that meant dealing with a lot of junk filler — mostly wood chips or straw — that landed you with something that would barely make a decent mulch."

Consequently, horse waste was usually taken to a dump or spread in empty fields.

"Horses have been overlooked because there just haven't been enough of them to really matter," Warren said. But the horse population has skyrocketed since the late 1990s and new environmental regulations make disposal more expensive, she added.

"In Florida, we're expecting some pretty major restrictions to come down in the next few years," Warren said. "So a lot of us are just trying to get a head start on turning a negative into a positive."

Composting horse waste has been tried before. Keenlands Racetrack, near Lexington, Ky., tried and abandoned the process because it didn't yield viable fertilizer. Instead, they've returned to the costly process of shipping waste hundreds of miles to a farm where it's used to grow mushrooms.

Butch Lehr, operations manager at Churchill Downs, home of the Kentucky Derby, said that his racetrack employs an operation called Equine Organic. The company carts the waste away and composts it; however, it has yet to develop a viable fertilizer from the waste it

collects.

A viable composting method is important because horse waste contains large amounts of nutrients such as phosphorous. Most are essential to fertilizer, but raw manure releases nutrients too fast, polluting the environment, Warren said.

With composting, bacteria digest and excrete those nutrients as part of complex organic compounds.

"You're basically turning it into a time-release fertilizer," said Sara Dilling, a graduate student working with Warren. "And the heat that the bacteria produce as they're digesting everything kills off any type of bad bacteria that could hurt people. So you're making it safer, too."

At UF's Horse Education Center near Gainesville, Dilling regularly checks eight test piles of compost for temperature, moisture and pH to measure how different additives affect the process. The 10-foot piles are typically above 100 degrees Fahrenheit inside, some close to 130 degrees.

"The biggest problem we have right now is time," Dilling said. "The compost we have would have to sit for five months before it's anywhere near viable."

The piles are given variable amounts of water from a computerized sprinkler system. Additives such as uric acid are added to slow down or speed up bacterial growth.

Even different bedding types are being tried. Sawdust would be ideal for composting, Dilling said. Wood chips don't offer enough surface area for the bacteria and straw,



Lori Warren, an equine nutritionist, is checking the qualities of experimental compost heaps as they are being moved at the UF Horse Research Center north of Ocala – December, 2007. Fine tuning the composting process for horse manure may soon allow farmers to turn problematic waste into valuable fertilizer. (AP photo/University of Florida/IFAS/Sally Lanigan)

the most popular racetrack bedding, has a waxy coat that protects it from digestion.

A few miles from the UF center, Lambholm South horse farm began composting horse waste six years ago with help from UF researchers. Today, with nearly 300 horses, the farm produces about 150 cubic yards of fertilizer a month.

"It's still not up to the exact quality that we want," said Dana Camp, head of Lambholm's composting program. "But we use it to help seed yards, and we actually sell a fair amount of it, too. So it's starting to become that positive that we're looking for."

To hear one of the buyers, they don't have much further to go.

"You wouldn't want to use it for inside plants, but for outdoor trees and bushes, I've never found anything better to pot them in," said Bill Swann, owner of the nearby Nature's Pharmacy Nursery.

"From a consumer perspective, there's no doubt there's a future for this stuff," he said. "Now we've just got to get the horse farmers to believe in their own ... well, dung."

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Corn Silage and Conserved Forage Field Day

June 14, 2007

Agenda Morning Program

- 8:00 Registration and Refreshments**
- 8:15 Welcome and Introductions**
Drs. Steve Brown and Geoff Dahl
- 8:25 Corn Hybrid Varieties**
Mr. Don Day, UGA and Seed Company Representatives
- 9:05 Corn Variety Testing Updates**
Mr. Don Day, UGA
Mr. Jerry Wasdin, UF

- 9:20 Depart for Tour 1**
(choose 1 of the 3 options)
- 9:30 Tour 1**
 - A - Warm Season Perennials**
Improved cultivars of Bermudagrass and Bahia grass - *Dr. William Anderson*
Feeding value of Bermudagrass cultivars - *Dr. Gary Hill*
Fertility management of warm season perennials - *Dr. Glen Harris*
 - B - Forage Management**
Fertility management - *Dr. David Wright*
Weed control - *Dr. Eric Prostko*
Disease management in forage crops - *Dr. Dewey Lee*
 - C - Forage Quality and Economics**
Summer annual forage quality - *Dr. Adegbola Adesogan*
Value of forages - *Dr. Lane Ely*
Marketing forages - *Dr. Curt Lacy*
- 10:25 Break**
- 10:45 Depart for Tour 2**
(choose 1 of the 3 options)

- 10:50 Tour 2**
- 11:45 Exhibitor Time**
- 12:00 Lunch**
- Afternoon Program**
- 1:00 Adjourn to field for Baleage Production and Field Demonstrations**
Basics of producing round bale silage - *Dr. Matt Herson*
Managing forage quality using baleage - *Dr. Dennis Hancock*

Field Demonstrations

Speakers

- Adegbola Adesogan**
Associate Professor, Ruminant Nutrition
University of Florida, IFAS
- William Anderson**
Research Geneticist
USDA, Tifton
- Lane Ely**
Professor, Dairy Nutrition
University of Georgia, Athens

Dennis Hancock

Assistant Professor and Forage Extension Specialist
University of Georgia, Athens

Glenn Harris

Associate Professor and Extension Agronomist
University of Georgia, Tifton

Matt Hersom

Assistant Professor, Beef Nutrition
University of Florida, IFAS

Gary Hill

Professor, Ruminant Nutrition
University of Georgia, Tifton

Curt Lacy

Assistant Professor, Ag. Econ
University of Georgia, Tifton

Dewey Lee

Professor and Corn Extension Specialist
University of Georgia, Tifton

Eric Prostko

Assistant Professor
University of Georgia, Tifton

David Wright

Professor, Cropping Systems and Conservation Tillage
University of Florida, IFAS

Directions: The University of Georgia Tifton Campus is located in Tifton, GA just off Exit 64 of I-75. The morning program will be held at the Crop Science After exiting I-75, turn North on US Highway 41. Travel 0.2 mile and turn left onto RDC Road. Parking will be available in the UGA Conference Center parking lot adjacent to RDC Road.

Certified Operator Continuing Education

Credit: This field day has been approved for continuing education credit by Georgia (2 hours) and Florida (3 hours). Please provide your certificate number on the appropriate line of the registration form so that we can forward this information to the appropriate agency for credit.

Private Applicator and Certified Crop Advisor

Credit: This field day has been approved for continuing education credit for private applicators and agricultural row crop advisors in Georgia and Florida. A master registration form will be provided at the registration table on site for individuals to sign for credit.

Corn Silage and Conserved Forage Field Day Registration Form

Please complete the form below with the requested information and mail to: Dr. John Bernard, Animal & Dairy Science Dept., P.O. Box 748, Tifton, GA 31794 or fax to (229) 386-3219. Please provide all information by June 10, 2007.

Name: _____

Number Attending: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email Address: _____

GA Certified Operator No. (2 hours) _____

FL Certified Operator No. (3 hours) _____



Can Rope Lasso E. Coli?

Canadian scientists have discovered that hanging pieces of rope in feedlot cattle pens is a fast, convenient and cheap way to detect E. coli O157:H7 bacteria in animals before they are sent to slaughter.

A study involving Alberta Agriculture and Foods called for hanging ropes in feedlot pens the night before cattle were slaughtered. "The ropes were used as sampling devices," AAF scientist Margaret McFall told reporters. "When you put something strange in a pen, the animals are attracted to it and rub and chew on it, and the E. coli in their mouth can be transferred to the rope."

Ropes were tested the day of slaughter for E. coli, with fecal and hide samples taken to compare with the rope samples. The hope is that cattle from pens that are identified as having potentially high levels of E. coli could be managed differently, controlling the spread of the bacteria.

SOURCE: John Gregerson
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