



MANATEE LIVESTOCKER

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South Florida Beef Forage Program Services and Products Directory

I receive many calls from small farmers looking for assistance for services and products. The South Florida Beef Forage Program has a Service Directory on their website for your convenience (<http://sfbfp.ifas.ufl.edu>). We are in the process of updating the site. If you are currently listed in this directory please, take a few moments and review your information to ensure the contact and service information is correct for your business. If you are not listed and would like to be you can visit the website and register to be added to the directory, free of charge. This directory is for all types of agricultural services. Please take a moment to review this site.

Deer & Turkey Short Course

The 1st Annual Deer & Turkey Short Course will be held on Friday, August 18 at the Turner Agri-Civic Center Exhibit Hall. The course will begin with registration at 7:45am and conclude following field site visits and meetings with ranch managers at a local ranch in the area.

This program is designed to educate landowners, managers, and hunters on the ecology and management of Deer and Turkey in Florida. The science-based information will come from a variety of sources, including landowners, the hunting industry, academia, NGO's, and natural resource agencies, and be presented in layperson terms.

The cost of the program is \$50 before August 11, 2006 and \$75 at the door.

Grazing Management School

This course is sponsored by The South Florida Beef-Forage Program of the University of Florida, Cooperative Extension Service. It is conducted with the volunteer assistance of area livestock producers and Allied Industries. It represents separation of the original Forage and Pasture Management School into subject components that can be taught in a couple of days. It is part of a continuing multi-county education effort to help South-Central Florida producers raise and market high quality beef cattle, per cow, per acre, profitably.

Grazing management is the manipulation of livestock grazing to obtain defined outputs of livestock products. It involves careful management of both pasture and livestock resources to meet desired objectives. This new course is offered in a two day sessions. The theories of grazing management concepts and methods are discussed in a classroom setting during the first day at the Hardee County Agricultural Civic Center, and concepts taught are supported by practical applications in the field during the second day tour to selected ranches in the area, and the Ona Range Cattle Research and Education Center.

This is the first offering of a “Grazing Management School” and we encourage you and your personnel to attend. Registration fee for this school is **\$ 60.00 if received by Sept 15, 2006, and \$ 80.00 if received after Sept. 15, 2006.** Registration forms can be obtained at the Manatee County Extension Office or by calling Christa L. Carlson.

Protecting Cattle in a Hurricane

Gary Mikulecky, Highlands County Extension Director & Livestock Agent

It is not recommended to evacuate cattle in preparation for a hurricane therefore we have to prepare ahead of time to protect our cattle. Cattle are herd animals which mean they like to stay together and this offers them added protection. They also have the ability to avoid a lot of flying debris. Rescuers, in the past, have noticed that few cattle received substantial injuries during previous hurricanes.

IDENTIFICATION

All cattle should have identification. Identification can be ear tag, ear notches, neck chain, brand, microchip or EID (Electronic Identification Device). Make sure you secure the paperwork that shows your ownership. If cattle can not be identified and returned to the owner they are awarded to the state. This is another reason to get a Premise ID and put EIDs on your cattle.

TURN-UM-LOOSE

Don't keep your cattle in the barn to prevent debris injury. If your barn collapses – and there is no way to insure that it won't – cattle have no chance to save themselves and are likely to panic if they can't follow their instincts. Relocate livestock to a predetermined safe area. Ensure that they have access to hay, pasture, clean water, a safe area or high ground above flood levels. Do not rely on automatic watering systems, because power may be lost. Close barn and/or stall doors. If cattle are used to sheltering in a barn they will try to enter it when threatened. Open all interior pasture gates. The safest place for cattle to weather a storm is in a large pasture. Cattle may suffer debris injuries, but at least they now have a chance. It should have as many of these attributes as possible: free of exotic trees, no overhead power lines, be well away from areas that might generate wind driven debris, have both low areas that animals can shelter in during the storm, (preferably a pond), and higher areas that will not be flooded after the storm and have woven wire fencing.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

Having the proper medical supplies will help with emergency medical care and management of your cattle. Riders and horses will be needed to round up stray cattle. Restraint equipment will also be needed: portable chutes and corrals, lariats, and rope halters. Trauma cases may require veterinary assistance. Euthanasia may be the most humane treatment option. This may require the use of controlled substances. Consult with your veterinary and plan carefully. If you are forced to euthanize an animal use medical, penetrating captive bolt, or a firearm. After euthanasia, be sure you record animal ID, date of death and reason for euthanasia.

DISPOSAL

Animal carcasses should be disposed of by a commercial rendering service or other appropriate means. Disposal should be made in accordance with all Federal, State and local regulations. The Highlands County Landfill will accept animal carcasses from Highlands County residents. There is one stipulation – you must be able to unload the carcass yourself by means of a dumping truck or trailer. County personnel are not allowed to assist with the offloading of any material by hand or with machinery.

PLANNING AHEAD

There are some things we can do ahead of time to help make it safer for our cattle. One of these is fencing. Woven wire is the safest for livestock. It acts like volleyball net; in many cases falling trees don't even take it down. It doesn't pull apart in high winds. Animals are less likely to get caught or tangled in it. Board fencing blows down and becomes debris. If you use it, back it with woven wire. Avoid using barbed wire. It cuts livestock to ribbons and is easily torn down by flying debris. Lay out your fence lines to keep animals away from power lines. Each year before hurricane season, replace rotten fence posts and make fencing repairs so your fences are as strong as possible. While you're at it, store up fencing supplies- extra wire, posts, staples, and gates. You know you're going to use them sometime anyway. These supplies were in short supply during the last hurricane season. Secure or remove all items that could become air borne during high winds. If you can't remove these hazards tie them down with mobile home anchors or other devices. Secure trailers, propane tanks and other large objects. Boats, feed troughs and other large containers can be filled with water before a high-wind event. This will help prevent them from blowing around; however, additional anchors may be needed. If you depend on a well for water- have a standby generator or install a hand pump. Be sure to store the gasoline in a safe location. Make sure your insurance is adequate and up-to-date. Photograph or video all property and store film in a secure location. After the hurricane how will you roundup or check on your cattle? A pickup truck, four wheeler or horse? Whatever you plan to use make sure it is ready. My guess is only your horse will get you where you need to be immediately after the hurricane. These are just a few thoughts on cattle and hurricanes – make your preparations now. Like my grandfather always said "you don't have it done yet!"

What Makes For Good Horse Hay

Horse owners and hay producers don't always agree on how to identify safe, good quality horse hay. Here is a list of seven key characteristics buyers should consider when evaluating horse hay. Krishona Martinson and Paul Peterson, University of Minnesota extension agronomists, spoke about these characteristics at recent Minnesota Horse Expo seminars.

1) Mold/Moisture — Buy hay baled between 15-17% moisture and it should be free of mold. “With small square bales, you can sometimes get away with baling at 18-20% moisture without spoilage,” notes Peterson. More-dense big square bales should be put up below 16% moisture for safe storage. Hay baled above 25% moisture poses the threat of severe heat damage or spoilage, mold growth, and/or hay fires. Hay put up at 20-25% moisture and properly treated with organic acid preservatives can be fed safely to horses. Horses, however, may require a short adaptation period to readily consume this hay.

2) Maturity — Don't equate seed heads with “good” hay. Seed heads just indicate that the plants are mature, with thick stems, more fiber, less protein and decreasing levels of digestible energy. Horses that aren't working hard or lactating may be able to get by with “stemmier” hay containing more seed heads, Martinson and Peterson say. But hay with more leaves and softer, smaller stems are better quality. Consider grass hays that have been harvested when seed heads have just begun to form. They have good fiber digestibility and more available energy than more mature hay. Legume hay harvested at about the 10% flower stage is usually leafy hay with extra protein that horses will convert into ammonia. Mature legumes make hay that does not exceed a horse's protein level in most cases, but also tends to be very coarse, according to Martinson and Peterson. Softer hay will be consumed more readily, they explain. “If it feels rough to you, it will feel rough to the horse,” Peterson says.

3) Cut or Crop — Don't base nutritional value on when hay is cut, the agronomists say. Maturity, followed by hay curing and storage, determine what nutrients a hay holds. Because plants that grow under cooler temperatures build more digestible fiber, first crop hay may have more digestible fiber than later cuttings — but it is not a guarantee. First cutting can often produce more coarse hay than later cuttings. But good and bad horse hay can be produced in any cutting.

4) Grass Hay Vs Alfalfa — Know how much digestible fiber and energy your horses will need — then find hay that will provide it. Alfalfa and clover generally have higher protein content than grasses. So alfalfa hay is a good protein source for young developing horses. But it may have more protein than what other horses need. Fiber from grasses is more digestible than from alfalfa and other legumes at the same maturity stage, say Martinson and Peterson.

5) Smell — Not all sweet-smelling hay is good, caution the experts. Sometimes hay smells sweet because sugars within it caramelize, which indicates mold presence. Horse owners should look closely at the hay to make sure they aren't dealing with mold issues.

6) Color — A green color is only a fair indicator of hay quality, Peterson says. “Bleached color indicates exposure to sunlight or rain, and can mean vitamin A has oxidized. But other essential nutrients are usually present in bleached hay.” When only bleached hay is available, horse owners should have it tested.

7) Storage Considerations/Spoilage — Once you’ve bought it, keep stored hay away from water and wild animals, which can contaminate it. Studies have shown that up to 50% of a hay bale can be ruined when stored where moisture can be wicked up into it from the ground. Round bales should be dense and well-formed with twine or net wrap, and less than 18% moisture to minimize storage loss potential. Martinson and Peterson recommend that horse owners take representative samples of every hay lot to a forage testing lab for an equine nutritional analysis.

Information about sampling and forage testing can be found at <http://www.foragetesting.org>.

SOURCE: eHay Weekly
Hay & Forage Grower
<http://hayandforage.com/>
Release - May 9, 2006

U.S. Cow Costs Increased By \$36/Head In 2005

Cattle-Fax(R) says its 2005 cow-calf survey revealed cash costs/cow averaged \$351 in 2005 - \$36/head more than the 2004 average of \$315/head. In the past decade, annual cow costs have ranged from \$292 to \$351/head, with a 10-year average of \$307/head.

Cattle-Fax analysts attribute the increase largely to higher energy and fuel costs. The costs cited above don’t include depreciation, opportunity cost or returns to management.

Overall, 96% of producers selling weaned calves were profitable in 2005, a record-high percentage, Cattle-Fax says. Of producers selling calves at weaning, 80% made a profit of \$100/head or more, 44% made \$150/head or more, and only 4% were not profitable.

The results show a strong correlation between high-return producers and lower costs and higher production performance. Average cow cost for those profiting \$100/head or more was \$347. Those who profited less than \$100/head had an average cow cost of \$377/head.

The average cow cost for the low 1/2 (least cost) of producers was \$267/head compared to the high 1/2 (highest cost) of producers was \$445, a \$178/head difference. The results also show a positive correlation between weaning percentage and profitability. Producers, who made more than \$150/head, weaned 4% more calves than those who broke even or lost money.

The survey also found 79% of producers use the Internet, 53% have registered a premise ID, 84% precondition their calves, and 78% felt the market rewarded them for preconditioning. —

Tod Kalous,
Cattle-Fax(R) Update, taken from the Michigan State
University Beef Cattle Research Update

SOURCE: BEEF

<http://beef-mag.com/>

Release - May 15, 2006

NAID and EID Management; Big Difference Brantley Ivey, Polk County Extension

There seems to be much confusion nowadays between what is assumed to be required for National Animal ID (NAID), and what can be accomplished by using Electronic ID (EID) management. These subjects are two completely different topics that are tied together merely by a little radio frequency ear tag. Over the next couple of years there will be much debate on how to accomplish the overwhelming task of individually identifying each animal that goes into the market system. It seems confusing, but the basic concept of NAID is simple. The first step of NAID requires every producer in the state of Florida to register his/her premise, and attain a premise ID number. This can be accomplished by simply filing an application through the Florida Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Science. The application is free and upon completion the producer will have registered premise with the State. At this point, the producer requirement of this process has been met. Presently, this is all that is required for cattle producers and nothing more. When and only when, the federal government requires a tag in each animal that is entering commerce will the electronic tag be required. The tag will cost about two dollars and will have to be purchased by a certified dealer (that has yet to be determined). Consequently, in two to three years each producer should have a registered premise ID, and when the time comes each producer will have to place an electronic tag in the ear of those animals that will be going to market. This does not mean that every animal in your herd will have to be identified, just those animals that are entering commerce. In a nutshell, that is NAID.

Electronic ID management is the use of that electronic tag that will be required for NAID, a computer program and a tag reader to keep electronic records of your cow herd. This is not a requirement within the NAID program. The electronic tag itself is the only binding tie between these two programs. You will be required have an electronic tag to comply with NAID, but you can choose to use that tag along with computer programs in an electronic management program. Producers that choose to collect data on their herd can collect the data that is important to their management regiment. It can be as simple as herd inventory, or as advanced as feed yard efficiency and carcass grades on the calves they produce. The basic program (computer and reader) for herd data collection will cost a minimum of \$1,500 to \$2,000 to start collecting electronic data on your animals, but these programs will do the same thing that a pencil and paper will do for you. What EID does is manage the data in a computer database that will easily organize the data that you enter. The tag, along with the program, will allow you to keep a wide variety of records, as well as analyze that data that you have collected on your herd. There is a host of computer programs available to manage cattle, most of which require a radio frequency

ear tag. A common misconception is that the tag will automatically keep and maintain the records on your herd. You as a producer will still have to collect and enter the data that is important to you. EID management can be a useful tool for those who choose to utilize it, but if you do not keep records now this program will not be beneficial. EID is exactly what is says; it is electronic management of manually collected data.

Beef Management Calendar

Source: <http://www.animal.ufl.edu/extension/beef/documents/BeefCal.pdf>

June

- Last date for planting sorghum.
- Check mineral feeder, use at least 8% phosphorus in mineral and not over 2 ½ to 1 calcium to phosphorus ratio.
- Check pastures and hay field for spittlebugs, mole crickets, and army worms.
- Treat if necessary; best month for mole cricket control.
- Check dust bags.
- Watch for evidence of pinkeye and treat.
- Utilize available veterinary services and diagnostic laboratories.
- Get heifers vaccinated for brucellosis if not already done.
- Pregnancy check cows.
- Update market information and plans.
- Make first cutting of hay.
- Put bulls out June 1 for calves starting March 11.
- Re-implant calves at 90 to 120 days with growth stimulant.

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

Christa L. Carlson
Extension Agent I, Livestock

Return Receipt Requested

Up-Coming Events

July

- 4 Independence Day, Extension Office Closed
- 10-13 Animal Science Day Camp
- 31 Final Ag Land Stewardship Public Meeting, 4:00 pm, Kendrick

August

- 18 1st Annual Deer & Turkey Short Course, Arcadia
- 26 Manatee County Fair Steer Weigh In

September

- 4 Labor Day, Extension Office Closed
- 27-28 Grazing Management School, Wauchula
- 29 FCA 12th Annual Heifer Sale, Arcadia Stockyards