

# MANATEE LIVESTOCKER

March 2007

## **Small Farms Livestock Production Conference**

The South Florida Beef-Forage Program Extension Agents will be holding their annual Small Farms Livestock Production Conference at the Manatee County Extension Office in Palmetto, Saturday, March 17, 2007. The Small Farms Livestock Production Conference was designed for ranchette or small landowners who are considering the raising, management and production of livestock for pleasure or profit. This course, “**So You Want to be a Farmer**”, was designed more specifically for new or agriculturally inexperienced landowners who are considering some field of livestock production on their small or limited acreage to help guide them and provide them information for making a more informed decision about what type of livestock producer they may want to be.

This course will provide basic information about all the different animal species as possibilities for a small farming operation. We will explore some economic and business basics of agricultural production; look at specialty production and markets as possibilities; give some basics of animal health, buying healthy animals and keeping them healthy; pasture and forage requirements before you ever get started, including understanding different forage species and their fertility and maintenance requirements will be presented; and what considerations you will need to make for fencing, housing, handling and holding equipment for all types of animal species.

**Cost of the conference will be \$30 for on-site registration, to include lunch and any program materials.** For further information, program brochure including registration form, contact either Pat Hogue in the Okeechobee County Extension office, (863) 763-6469, or Christa L. Carlson in the Manatee County Extension office, (941)722-4524.

## **Weed and Forage Garden / Forage Testing Lab**

Dr. Brent Sellers is developing a weed and forage garden at the Range Cattle REC in Ona. This garden will be used for demonstration purposes for producers to have a place to see problem weeds along with being able to see the different varieties of forages being used across Florida. The first portion of the garden will have 100 separate plots for samples to be grown in. Once the garden is completed and ready for visitors you will be notified. We hope this will be a great educational tool. The garden will be available to all producers and visitors to the RCREC in Ona.

Along with the new Weed and Forage Garden the Forage Testing Lab at the Ona Range Cattle REC is being resurrected. Dr. Joe Vendramini, Forage Agronomist, is working to re-establish a forage testing lab for producers. He is looking for the lab to be operational in July.

### **56th Annual Beef Cattle Short Course**

The beef cattle industry continues to be a changing environment full of challenges and opportunities. Cattle producers face increasing demands for quality and consistent cattle and beef products while facing increasing production costs. This combination of demands looks to re-shape beef cattle production in the coming years. The 56th Annual Beef Cattle Short Course looks to address the issues of production management, profitability, and opportunities for quality strategies. The 2007 Short Course kicks off on Wednesday afternoon with a session identifying aspects affecting enterprise profitability. The program starts with the annual market outlook for the beef cattle industry. The market outlook is paired with an assessment of risk management and the cost of production for beef enterprises. The Wednesday afternoon program includes a discussion of international competition and opportunities for quality beef led by Clint Peck of BEEF Magazine. Persistently infected BVD is a current issue in the beef industry and is addressed during our afternoon program. The afternoon program concludes with an opportunity for the participants to interact and exchange information during the evening reception and Allied Trade Show. Identifying the aspects of quality is the theme for the program on Thursday. The day starts with a review of the 2005 Beef Quality Audit as it relates to cow-calf production. This assessment is a key tool to benchmarking the progress of production in the beef cattle industry. An interesting assessment of the relationships that contribute to the Choice-Select spread continues the theme of quality beef production. The morning concludes with an examination of the factors that affect cattle performance and grade. The morning promises to be an informative and valuable program to improve the quality of beef production. The afternoon program continues the assessment of quality in beef cattle. Live cattle, carcass, and beef production evaluation demonstrations will be utilized to emphasize the need for quality beef cattle production. The annual Cattlemen's Steak-Out on Thursday provides an event for all participants to enjoy a prime rib dinner and time for conversation and relaxation. On Friday, the program splits into two sessions to identify opportunities in Florida production. The first session looks to examine the utilization of Bos indicus cattle in Florida beef enterprises. This session will span the cow herd, growth and feed efficiency, and carcass traits and merit. The second session on Friday morning will address forage management for Florida pastures. Pasture management topics will include the cost of pasture establishment, selection and use of cool season forages, and weed control. The 2007 Beef Cattle Short Course promises to continue the tradition of being the best educational event for cattle producers in the Southeast. The spectrum of topics related to the production, profitability, and quality of beef cattle should provide something for every beef cattle producer. Registration cost is \$90 per participant before April 20, and includes a copy of the Beef Cattle Short Course proceedings, trade show, refreshments, and Steak-Out ticket.

### **A New Website Shares the Realities of Beef Production**

A new beef checkoff-funded Web site tells the beef production story — often in the words of beef producers themselves. The site, [www.BeefFromPastureToPlate.org](http://www.BeefFromPastureToPlate.org), covers the entire production chain, from gestation to dinner presentation, and features producer profiles, a live "Ask a Producer" page, fact sheets, recipes, safety tips and even beef trivia. The Web site gives beef producers, along with other segments of the beef production chain, an opportunity to share their heart-felt passion for their livelihoods and the beef they produce for families around the world. You can read about this and other checkoff funded work at [www.drovers.com](http://www.drovers.com).

### **Bronson Announces End to Horse Virus Outbreak**

Florida Agriculture and Consumer Services

**SOURCE:** FDACS

<http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/>

Commissioner Charles H. Bronson today said he is confident that the outbreak of Equine Herpesvirus-type 1, or EHV-1, has been brought under control. It has been more than three weeks since any horse has tested positive for the virus and the last quarantine was lifted over the weekend. "I credit the cooperation and proactive steps taken by the equine community and the quick response by the Department's Division of Animal Industry with the end of this outbreak," Bronson said. "Identification of infected and exposed horses, implementation of biosecurity measures and other proactive measures taken by horse owners prevented further spread of this disease." While some industry locations instituted voluntary decontamination measures and restricted horse movements, protocol required the state to place 10 locations under mandated quarantine including sites in Wellington, Jupiter, Indiantown, Morriston, Loxahatchee and Ocala. Last week, after lab test results confirmed there had been no new case in three weeks, all but one of the quarantines were lifted. The final quarantine was lifted over the weekend when all lab results were negative. The outbreak started when horses imported from Europe through a federal quarantine site in New York were brought to Wellington in late November. One of those horses was infected with the virus, which spread to other horses early in the outbreak through close contact before movement restrictions were in place. The Department's Division of Animal Industry then set up an incident command post in Palm Beach County to oversee control efforts educate the community and monitor the situation. Six horses succumbed to the disease and 12 others recovered with treatment. "It is extremely tragic that we lost six horses," Bronson said. "But the situation could have been far more deadly were it not for the quick actions of so many people." EHV-1 is a contagious virus of horses that can cause respiratory disease, abortion and occasionally serious neurological signs. It is spread through the air but can also be carried on shoes, clothes, hands and equipment.

Christa L. Carlson  
Extension Agent II, Livestock

## **Beef Management Calendar**

### **March - May**

#### **March**

- Fertilize pasture to stimulate early growth and get fertilizer incorporated in grass roots while there is still good soil moisture.
- Prepare land for summer crops.
- Begin grazing warm season permanent pastures.
- Check and fill mineral feeder.
- Observe bulls for condition and success. Rotate and rest if needed.
- Deworm cows as needed.
- Make sure calves are healthy and making good weight gains.
- Hang forced-use dust bags by April 1st for external parasite control or use insecticide impregnated ear tags.
- Identify, vaccinate, implant, and work late calves.
- Put bulls out March 1st for calving season to start December 9.
- Remove bulls March 22nd to end calving season January 1.

#### **April**

- Plant warm season annual pastures.
- Plant corn for silage.
- Check and fill mineral feeder.
- Check dust bags or apply treated ear tags.
- Check for external parasites and treat if necessary.
- Observe cows for repeat breeders.
- Deworm cows as needed if not done in March.
- Vaccinate against blackleg and brucellosis after 3 months of age and before 12 months of age.
- Market cull cows and bulls.
- Update market information and refine market strategy for calves.

#### **May**

- Remove bulls.
- Harvest hay from cool season crops.
- Plant warm season perennial pastures.
- Fertilize warm season pastures.
- Check mineral feeder.
- Check for spittlebugs and treat if necessary.
- Apply spot-on agents for grub and louse control.
- Check dust bags.
- Vaccinate and implant with growth stimulant any later calves.
- Reimplant calves with growth stimulant at 90-120 days, when you have herd penned.
- Dispose of dead animals properly.
- Update market information and refine marketing plans.
- Remove bulls May 21 to end calving season March 1.

# 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Beef Cattle Short Course

May 2 – 4, 2007  
Hilton UF Conference Center

## Topics / Events

- 🐄 *Identifying Aspects Affecting Profitability*
  - Economic and Market Outlook for 2006
  - International Competition and Opportunities for US Quality beef
  - Risk Management and the Cost of Production
  - Persistently Infect BVD Cattle – A cow/calf perspective
- 🐄 *Identifying the Aspects of Quality*
  - Review of the 2005 Beef Quality Audit
  - Relationships Affecting the Choice-Select Spread
  - Interactions of the Factors Affecting Cattle Grade/Performance
  - Evaluation Differences in Quality of Cattle
    - Feeder/Finish calf evaluation
    - Finished steer and cow carcass evaluation
    - Beef products taste panel
- 🐄 *Identifying Opportunities in Florida Production*
  - Utilization of *Bos Indicus* cattle in Florida beef enterprises
  - Forage management for Florida pastures
- 🐄 *Allied Industry Trade Show and Reception*

## Registration Costs:

Includes: refreshment breaks, exhibitors reception, Thursday's luncheon, one Cattlemen's Steak-Out ticket, and proceedings

\$90 - Postmarked before April 20, 2007

\$120 – Postmarked after April 20, 2007

For More Information

<http://www.animal.ufl.edu/extension/beef/BCSC.shtml>

or

Contact Christa L. Carlson, 941-722-4524

Extension Agent II, Livestock

Manatee County

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IFAS Extension