



NORTHEAST TEXAS FARMERS CO-OP

NETFC NOW

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GENERAL MANAGERS VIEWPOINT BY Chuck Smith

Employees continue to be any business's most important asset. Have you noticed how many businesses have "Help Wanted" or "Now Hiring" signs in front of their establishments? It is a universal problem throughout our state and country today. We will be very happy as a business when the general public decides to rejoin the workforce. Our cooperative and our members appreciate our employees who choose to work hard for a living by serving our agricultural needs. Our Year-End was March 31, 2024. With that comes our Year-End Audit. Your Board of Directors and our Management Staff are working closely with the Auditors to assure that the year-end inventories and financial results are verified accurate. The Audit process will take approximately another month to complete. Your Cooperative is in good Board Governance and Management Staff hands. Our Northeast Texas Farmers Co-op Annual Meeting is scheduled for June 6, 2024 and will be held at the Hopkins County Civic Center. Have a Blessed May!



RETAIL FARM SUPPLY & SULPHUR SPRINGS FERTILIZER

by Jim Ratzlaff

903 885 3143 Store 903 885 5036 Fertilizer
800 722 0174 Fertilizer

- Cattle prices should remain pretty strong for at least two more calf crops or even a third calf crop. This is due to the heifers that should be going back to the herd for replacements are going to slaughter and while the cow herd is getting older, this means less fat cattle in the future that could hold a strong weaning and yearling market price.
- Improvement of profits for weaning calves and yearlings gives producers a chance to improve their operation to prepare to do better in tighter markets. Inflation has raised the cost of producing hay. This cost has been passed on to the cost of feeding the cows. What makes this worse is if the quality of the hay is low, and there are weeds in the hay, the cattle will not eat. Then there is the other factor, cattle tend to waste more good hay if the hay has a lot of weed in it. The key is raising more hay with higher quality and then putting it up on time. This is true whether one is grazing or raising hay to feed next winter.
- The most money return on making forage whether it is for grazing or for making hay, is controlling unwanted plants that rob your hay of nutrients, keeping those nutrients from your cattle. It also robs your grass of nitrogen which is needed for both forage production and keeping the protein levels higher. Of the big three, nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium, nitrogen is usually in the highest need. So, if your grass is being restricted because its neighboring weed is taking nitrogen from it, the protein will be less as well as hay production will be less. And if the year is a little below normal in rain, that neighboring weed will again take that moisture away from your good forage. A good early applied herbicide program pays big dividends whether one is raising forage to graze or making hay.
- Here is how your nitrogen works, for every one pound of nitrogen will potentially make 6.25 lbs. of crude protein. Think of this, there is 6.25 lbs. of nitrogen in 31 lbs. of 20% cubes. And at the present price of urea the costs less than 70 cents per pound of nitrogen. So, the big question is, why would we not control unwanted plants and then be sure to fertilize. Now, to help us figure out the equation even better, Texas A&M says it takes 50 lbs. of nitrogen to produce 2000 lbs. of dry forage. If we aim to produce 4000 lbs. of dry forage per acre we will need 100 lbs. of actual nitrogen, since urea is only having .46 lbs. of nitrogen per pound of urea, we will need 217 lbs. of urea per acre to get our 100 lbs. of nitrogen. Now with all of that in mind, we should get 4000 lbs. of dry forage per acre, and it has the potential to be a 14% crude protein or better if we put it up before the grass started to head out. According to the NRC for beef cattle, a heavy nursing stock cow with a calf only needs 12.5% crude protein to meet her protein requirements. And, if we put up the forage on time, the energy level would be pretty good as well, so all this cow would need with that nursing calf is to feed Beef Cow Plus Mineral. I would fertilize using a soil test to ensure that we had the pH where it is needed to be as well as having sufficient amounts of phosphorus and potassium present.

- We have three ways to adjust the soil pH. We have pelletized lime available in Greenville and Sulphur Springs, which can be put down along with your fertilizer, or we have Soil Zyme which can be put down along with your herbicide in your spray rig. A third option would be to use the UltiGraz program by allowing us to impregnate DuraCor with your fertilizer and pelletized lime and get it all done at once. The earlier we do this the better our chances of keeping the moisture we need to make good hay later.
- How much hay is wasted by our feeding method? Waste can be between 20 and 30%, and even more if there are unwanted plants in the hay. The problem is that if there are weeds and stuff in the hay that cows will not eat, one will have to force them to dig out the good hay. Doing this limits the consumption of hay and this shortens the level of nutrition the cows are getting on the forced clean up day and the cows do not do as well.
- To keep fence rows clean you can treat under the fences with either of two products, Ecomazapyr 2 SL or Pramitol 25 E. If you have stuff growing now, you can mix either of these two, 1 quart with 2.5 gallon of Round Up or a generic 41% Glyphosate. Both of these soil sterilizers will control plants for about a year. It will not kill woody plants right way, but after a few years, trees and vines will die if sprayed within their root zone. Therefore, if you want to keep that tree, do not spray within it's root zone. By keeping your fences clear, it will last a lot longer and if needed will be easier to repair.
- This summer, controlling flies can be one of the best things we can do for our cattle. It will lower the stress that flies put on them, plus if you have horn flies which ride on the backs of cattle and suck blood, as much a half pound per day! Or stable flies which like to be on the under belly and legs which suck blood as well. Then you add some Texas heat and humidity to the matrix, and you have a real profit killer happening. The experts tell us we need to use two fly control methods all at the same time. I personally prefer feeding a larvicide a mineral that has either Altosid or Clarifly in it. This works well if we make sure the cattle are consuming the proper amounts of mineral per day. Both of these larvicides work in the manure, therefore, we need to make sure it gets into the manure at the right amounts. I add either cottonseed meal, ground corn, or rice bran till I get the proper consumption figured out. The second thing, is to do a clean up spray once a month to control the flies that flew in. I use a 1% permethrin spray. It is easy to mix up. I use the 36% permethrin. An easy way to mix a 1 percent permethrin from a 36% permethrin, is to mix 35 parts water or mineral oil with 1 part of the 36% permethrin. To do a 2% permethrin spray mix 34 parts water or mineral oil with 2 parts 36% permethrin.
- If you really want to make a good spray, you can add a PBO (Piperonyl Butoxide). Be sure to read the label directions, it is mixed according to which insecticide and the amount you are using. It is easy to do, you know how much insecticide you are putting in the spray mix, just look up on the chart on the label to see the amount of PBO you need to add. Why use a PBO? It does two things, first it makes the insecticide more effective, and secondly it makes the insecticide last much longer on the cattle.
- When spraying many complain that they are not getting long term control. The reason if you are using a 1% pour on you are putting on 6 to 8 ounces per cow. If we spray, they get about an ounce per cow in place of 6 to 8 ounces with the pour on. To solve this problem, kick your percentage up of the insecticide 6 to 8 times the amount to spray with. Meaning you make an 8% spray solution in place of a 1%. That way you get the proper amounts of insecticide on the cattle.

**ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING
THURSDAY, JUNE 6TH
HOPKINS COUNTY CIVIC CENTER**

GET YOUR TWO FREE TICKETS PER MEMBERSHIP FROM ANY OF OUR FOUR LOCATIONS

WILL CREEP FEEDING PAY?

If you read the research reports and the articles on creep feeding, it soon becomes clear that it does not always make you money in a commercial herd. The common things that are brought up are feed costs, feed efficiency, decrease in value of each pound as the calves increase in size, and cattle prices. In the following table I have results from a current local sale.

I would offer these comments when you study this table. First, this is not a comparison of creep fed vs non-creep fed animals. These calves are only grouped by the sizes of the animals being sold. Second, we see in this example sale that there is a difference in value of each pound of extra gain as you change types of cattle. I don't know that this is consistent from month to month, and I did not compare multiple months to find out. I was more interested in seeing how much the current gain was worth as an average. Third the increase from group to group is somewhat different. The first two groups are very similar to the difference you see reported in the difference in weaning weight of creep fed vs non-creep fed animals.

TYPE OF CATTLE	WEIGHT IN POUNDS	VALUE PER POUND	TOTAL VALUE	TOTAL \$ ABOVE PREVIOUS SIZE	\$ PER POUND OF EXTRA GAIN
EXOTIC X STEERS	380	\$3.68	\$1,398.40		
EXOTIC X STEERS	450	\$3.45	\$1,552.50	\$154.10	\$2.20
INCREASE	70				
BLK & BLK BALDY STEERS	390	\$3.70	\$1,443.00		
BLK & BLK BALDY STEERS	450	\$3.41	\$1,534.50	\$91.50	\$1.53
INCREASE	60				
CROSSBRED STEERS	389	\$3.70	\$1,439.30		
CROSSBRED STEERS	575	\$3.10	\$1,782.50	\$343.20	\$1.85
INCREASE	186				

The next thing we need to consider is the cost of gain. I would suggest controlling the cost of gain, but possibly not the way you think. First, I would feed the calves free choice until they were eating 1.5% of body weight. I generally recommend starting with a bagged feed (doesn't sound like controlling cost of gain, does it?), and once they are eating at the 1.5% of body weight level, they can be changed to a salt limiter feed. The two feeds I would recommend are the bagged 18% Calf Developer w Bovatec or 18% Calf Started Medicated to start with, and followed by the Blue-Ribbon Backgrounder with Rumensin and 8% Salt. This should limit the intake to slightly over 1% of body weight. Both of these feeds have proven to be very good feeds for feed efficiency. They are both top of the line feeds, but the return is greater than the extra cost. I expect that following this program will give the 60 to 70 pounds of increased weight per head at weaning at an expense of about \$1 per pound.

Robert T. Winn DVM

WE WILL BE CLOSED ON MONDAY, MAY 27TH IN OBSERVANCE OF MEMORIAL DAY.

THANK YOU TO THE ONES THAT SACRIFICED THE ULTIMATE FOR OUR FREEDOM!

EMPLOYEE ANNIVERSARIES

Northeast Texas Farmers Co-op would like to congratulate the following employees on their years of services as of April 30, 2024.

Eusebio Vazquez completed 34 years of service on April 23rd. Eusebio works at our Sulphur Springs Feed Mill.

Freddie Dale completed 16 years of service on April 7th. Freddie is our Greenville Fertilizer Manager.

Irene Hanson completed 9 years of service on April 27th. Irene works in our Sulphur Springs Lab.

Shawn Moore completed 7 years of service on April 12th. Shawn is our Assistant Sulphur Springs Mill Manager.

Falyn Bryant completed 7 years of service on April 17th. Falyn works in our Sulphur Springs Farm & Ranch Center.

Thank you for your service!

WE HAVE VEGETABLE AND FLOWER PLANTS AT ALL OUR LOCATIONS AND SOME HAVE HANGING BASKETS AS WELL!

Come see us for all your gardening needs! Check with your local Farm & Ranch Center for availability!

