Baxter County Cooperative Extension Service
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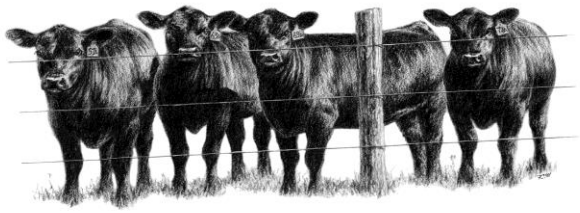
The Cattle Corner



BAXTER COUNTY U OF A COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE NEWSLETTER

August 2020

In this Issue.....

From the County Agent's desk...

A relatively cool, wet spring has finally given up to the heat of July and August. The good news is that it's primetime for warm season grass production. Fescue has long since gotten stemmy and shut down for the summer, for the most part. Bermudagrass is going strong. Some folks are starting to think about taking their second cutting of hay if they haven't already done so. So far, so good. However, anyone that has seen enough summers knows, things can and most likely will turn off dry sometime in these next 6-8 weeks.

Let's just assume and plan that's going to happen. Here's a few things to keep in mind if we face a droughty August/September.

- Don't graze pastures into the dirt, especially those that are predominantly fescue. If you do, when fall rain does return, it may be too far gone to bounce back. You'd be better off to feed some hay and lay off the pasture as much as possible.
- Ensure that there is plenty clean, cool water. Quality water is so often overlooked as part of a cow herd's daily intake.

- Test your hay and start planning for winter feed rationing. If we face a dry spell and the hay supply is low, proper supplementation of low-quality hay is critical to avoid cattle losing body condition this winter, particularly after coming out of a tough summer/fall.
- If you're going to stockpile some bermuda, the time is now to plan to get it grazed or clipped off and fertilized (see the next article).

Also, we want some feedback from all of you farmers, ranchers, grass growers, and fence fixers. Please take a couple minutes to give us some input on the work that we do and the information we provide.
Your responses and the input from our ag advisory committee will directly affect how I'll plan my work for 2021. If you want more information on weed control, say so! If you want to know about cattle EPDs, STDs, IBR, or BVD, say so! Tell us what we're doing well and what you'd like to see more of.
Note: You don't have to live or farm in Baxter County to take this survey. The survey is anonymous.
Click here: https://tinyurl.com/yaonlydk or scan the QR code below.

Poor hay crop?

John Jennings, Professor and Forage Specialist

The 2020 hay season has been fickle at best. Early cool weather was great for fescue, ryegrass, and clover, but unfortunately, rainy weather caused harvest delays leading to low hay quality due to the advanced forage maturity. Cool temperatures also delayed early growth of bermudagrass and other warm-season forages causing yields to be lower than normal at this point of the summer. Many producers have experienced poor hay yields this year. Conversations eventually turn to options for more hay or to reduce the hay requirement this winter. Based on University of Arkansas research, several options can be considered for fall and winter forage that can stretch that short hay crop. Many of these options have been proven in the 300 Days Grazing Program. Recently a producer commented that he thought the 300 Days Grazing Program only worked in north Arkansas. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Actually, most of the forage practices can be implemented more easily in SOUTH Arkansas due to the forage base and climate. Dr. Paul Beck's research at the SWREC station at Hope conclusively showed that adding three simple practices to a bermudagrass pasture base can extend a grazing season to well over 300 days. But, each of those practices require advance planning so don't wait until you need forage to realize you didn't start soon enough. Here are ten forage options that can extend the grazing season based on our research and demonstrations. Many of them can be planted in mixtures to gain a longer productive season. For example, spring oats or forage brassica can be mixed with annual ryegrass. The oats or brassica provide fall grazing and the ryegrass provides grazing the next spring. Seeding rates of each species in a mixture can be reduced by 25-50% to achieve a final seeding rate per acre. Generally, nitrogen fertilizer should be applied at the time of planting at 50 lbs. N per acre. Consider rotational or strip grazing to get more grazing days per acre. To calculate pasture set up for strip grazing or paddock size for your preferred pasture rotation, see our new calculators online at https://www.uaex.edu/farm-ranch/animals-forages/pastures/forage-calculators.aspx. Check with your county extension office for more details.

Warm-season forage options for fall grazing

1. Stockpiled bermudagrass:
    - Starting date: Clip or graze field by Aug. 1
    - Fertilizer: 50-60 lbs N/acre before Aug. 15
    - Fall Yield: 3,000 to 4,000 lbs/acre
    - Potential grazing start date: Oct. 15
2. Browntop millet (earliest maturing warm-season annual)
    - Planting date: Aug. 20 to Sep. 1
    - Seeding rate: 25 lbs/acre
    - Planting method: Tilled seedbed or drilled into suppressed sod
    - Fall Yield: 2,500 lbs/acre
    - Potential grazing start date: Oct. 1
3. Sorghum/sudan
    - Planting date: Aug. 20 to Sep. 1
    - Seeding rate: 25 lbs/acre
    - Planting method: Tilled seedbed or drilled into suppressed sod
    - Fall Yield: 3,000 to 3,500 lbs/acre
    - Potential grazing start date: Oct. 15
4. Pearl millet
    - Planting date: Aug. 20 to Sep. 1
    - Seeding rate: 25 lbs/acre
    - Planting method: Tilled seedbed or drilled into suppressed sod
    - Fall Yield: 3,000 to 3,500 lbs/acre
    - Potential grazing start date: Oct. 15
5. Corn
    - Planting date: Aug. 20 to Sep. 1
    - Seeding rate: 50 lbs/acre
    - Planting method: Tilled seedbed or drilled into suppressed sod
    - Fall Yield: 2,600 to 3,200 lbs/acre
    - Potential grazing start date: Oct. 15

Cool-season forage options for fall/winter grazing

6. Stockpiled fescue
    - Starting date: Clip or graze field by Sep. 1
    - Fertilizer: 50-60 lbs N/acre before Sep. 15
    - Fall Yield: 2,000 to 3,500 lbs/acre
    - Potential grazing start date: Dec. 1
7. Spring oats
    - Planting date: Aug. 20 to Sep. 15

- Seeding rate: 100 lbs/acre
- Planting method: Tilled seedbed or drilled into suppressed sod
- Fall Yield: 2,200 to 3,700 lbs/acre
- Potential grazing start date: Nov. 15

8. Cereal rye or wheat

    - Planting date: Aug. 20 to Sep. 15
    - Seeding rate: 100 lbs/acre
    - Planting method: Tilled seedbed or drilled into suppressed sod
    - Fall Yield: 1,200 to 2,000 lbs/acre
    - Potential grazing start date: Dec. 1

9. Ryegrass

    - Planting date: Aug. 20 to Sep. 15
    - Seeding rate: 25 lbs/acre
    - Planting method: Tilled seedbed or drilled into suppressed sod
    - Fall Yield: 450 to 1,100 lbs/acre
    - Potential grazing start date: Dec. 1

10. Forage brassica

    - Planting date: Aug. 20 to Sep. 15
    - Seeding rate: 5 lbs/acre
    - Planting method: Tilled seedbed or drilled into suppressed sod
    - Fall Yield: 1,900 to 2,900 lbs/acre
    - Potential grazing start date: Oct. 20

"Natural" vs. Conventionally Raised Beef

Fast facts

- Researchers compared quality of naturally raised beef with conventionally raised
- Naturally raised refers to cattle raised without antibiotics or growth hormones
- Research found no significant difference in quality for consumers

Arkansas researchers have shown that consumers experience no tangible differences between steaks from conventionally grown commodity beef cattle and those from branded "naturally grown" programs.

The research from the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture analyzed quality characteristics of ribeye rolls from five "naturally grown" brands and two conventional commodity beef processors.

Janeal Yancey and Tim Johnson, research technicians with the Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station, the research arm of the Division of Agriculture, worked on the study with Cari Keys, a graduate student in the University

of Arkansas' Dale Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences. Keys conducted the research for her master's thesis. She has since gone on to work for Nestle USA. The project was funded, in part, by the Arkansas Beef Council.

Conventionally produced beef comes from cattle raised predominantly on forages for 8 to 12 months and then finished on high-concentrate diets in feedlots for 120 to 200 days before slaughter, Yancey said. Naturally branded products come from cattle that generally follow the same pattern, but without the use of antibiotics or growth hormones.

"Consumers often think that cattle in branded naturally raised products are the same as organically raised or exclusively grass-fed beef," Yancey said. "But these are not the same thing. These cattle are still finished in a feedlot. Other than not using antibiotics or growth promotion products, their production is not very different from commodity beef."

The study did not include "organic" branded products or cattle that are raised entirely on grass pastures, Yancey said.

"Branded fresh beef products make claims about benefits of naturally raised beef programs," Yancey said. "We wanted to see if those claims were founded."

The research compared meat color, amount of beneficial fatty acids, antibiotic residues and tenderness at different cooking temperatures, Yancey said. A panel of taste-testers also assessed consumer preferences in the Experiment Station's Sensory Science Center.

The team found slight differences between the products, Yancey said. The naturally grown meat was lighter in color. The conventionally raised meat lost more volume in cooking.

"Surprisingly," Yancey said, "the only products in which we found detectable levels of antibiotics were steaks from two of the naturally raised branded products. There were trace amounts of penicillin-G."

Johnson said the penicillin residues were probably from injections for a legitimate veterinary health concern. Normally, a treated animal would be kept out of production until the medicine had left the body.

Yancey said their research showed no significant differences in nutritional values or tenderness. And the taste tests showed no significant differences in consumer preferences.

"Products branded as 'naturally raised' often charge a premium price for advertised differences," Johnson said. "And research has shown that consumers are willing to pay for those. But our research found no real difference in meat quality or consumer preferences between the naturally raised products or conventionally raised commodity beef."

To learn more about Division of Agriculture research, visit the Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station website: https://aaes.uark.edu. Follow us on Twitter at @ArkAgResearch and Instagram at ArkAgResearch.

August Beef and Forage Tips for Producers

Cattle Herds

- Foot rot generally occurs in adult cattle. It causes sudden onset of severe lameness and sometimes a mild fever. Often, the coronet (the junction between the hoof and hairline) is swollen. It is common to see foot rot in the heat of the summer.
- Pink eye is a troublesome disease throughout the summer caused by bacteria in combination with external irritants such as face flies, UV light, dust and plant seeds. For prevention or treatment, follow advice of a veterinarian.
- Horn flies can become a problem late in the summer especially when fly tags can lose their effectiveness. Monitor fly population on cattle and treat if necessary. Remove fly tags after they lose their effectiveness to help prevent fly populations developing chemical resistance.
- Free choice mineral is just as important during the hot summer months as any other time of the year.

Fall Calving Herds

- It is important for the cows to maintain a good body condition (BCS 5 to 6) as they enter the fall calving season. Cows at BCS at a 4 or below breed back at a much longer interval and less frequently than those in 5-6 condition.
- It is important to be prepared for the fall calving season. Check calving supplies. Supplies may include bucket, disinfectant (Nolvasan), antiseptic soap (Nolvasan scrub), OB sleeves, OB lubricant, OB chains, OB handles, calf puller, etc.
- Heifers should weigh 65% of their mature weight before their first breeding.

Spring Calving Herds

- Vaccinate heifers for brucellosis. Vaccinate calves prior to weaning. Calves should be weaned at least 45 days prior to sale, castrated, dehorned, and vaccinated with IBR, BVD, , BRSV (a 4- or 5-way viral vaccine), 7-way clostridial vaccine (Blackleg), Pasteurella haemolytica (recently renamed Mannheimia haemolytica) also containing leukotoxoid, Pasteurella multocida, and Haemophilus somnus. Some of these vaccinations can be purchased in combination.
- Body condition score the cows to determine if it is necessary to wean calves early.
- Plan marketing program for weaned calves.

Forage/Grazing Management Tips

- Rainfall has been abundant. If you have excess forage to graze, rotate pastures on a weekly basis to keep grass in a growing stage. This will be worthwhile if drought sets in during late summer. (Savings from improved grazing management = 2-3 weeks more grazing when drought hits)
- Stockpile one or two bermudagrass pastures to be stockpiled for fall grazing.

1. Clip or graze off old bermuda forage to a 2 to 3-inch stubble
2. Apply 50-60 lbs/acre of nitrogen fertilizer between August 1 and 15
3. Defer grazing until October. Savings from grazing stockpiled forage instead of feeding hay = $25-$50 per animal unit or $50-$75 per acre of forage stockpiled.

- Pick a tall fescue field to stockpile for winter grazing.
  1. Clip or graze off old fescue forage to a 3-inch stubble by the end of August.
  2. Apply 50-60 lbs. /acre of nitrogen fertilizer in early September.
  3. Defer grazing until late November or early December.

For more information, refer to factsheet 3133 "Grazing Stockpiled Forages to Reduce Hay Feeding During Fall & Winter": http://www.uaex.edu/publications/PDF/FSA-3133.pdf

UPDATE (7/13/2020): Coronavirus Food Assistance Program Payments in Arkansas

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Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness

Created through the Coronavirus Assistance, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES) and coordinated by the USDA Farm Service Agency, the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) direct payments are designed to provide relief to eligible farmers and ranchers facing financial losses due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Through CFAP, USDA is making available $16 billion in financial assistance to farmers.

Over $86 million in direct payments have been approved for Arkansas farmers and ranchers through CFAP as of Monday, July 13 according to USDA reporting. Payments to livestock producers comprise nearly 75 percent of the approved CFAP payments for Arkansas. Non-specialty crops account for 23 percent of the total to date. Non-specialty crops eligible for CFAP payments include malting barley, canola, corn, upland cotton, millet, oats, soybeans, sorghum, sunflowers, durum wheat, and hard red spring wheat. Rice and soft red winter wheat were excluded from the CFAP program.

FSA began taking applications May 26, and the agency has received 409,423 applications for this program. Arkansas' share of CFAP payments is relatively small at 1.5 percent of the total. Iowa, for example, leads all states in payments for both non-specialty crops (17.8 percent) and livestock (10.3 percent). California leads in specialty crop payments (44 percent). Wisconsin is the top recipient of dairy payments (21 percent).

Eligible farmers and ranchers may apply for CFAP direct payments through county USDA Farm Service Agency offices until August 28, 2020. More information on the CFAP program and the application process may be found at farmers.gov/cfap. CFAP payment data will be updated and released by the USDA each Monday at 1 p.m. central time at CFAP Payment Report.

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