Baxter County Cooperative Extension Service
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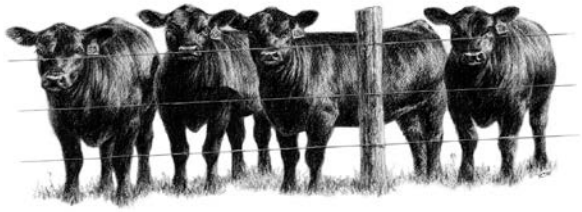
The Cattle Corner



BAXTER COUNTY U OF A COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE NEWSLETTER

October 2020

In this Issue.....

From the County Agent's desk…

Finally, we've gotten a break from the heat and some cooler temperatures to enjoy. With that will come quite a few management practices changes on the farm.

With these cooler night temperatures, bermudagrass will have all but shut off. Consistent nights below 60 degrees will send your bermudagrass into dormancy. If you've got hay fields that haven't been cut a final time and if there's enough there to justify it, go ahead and cut it. It won't grow much more this year.

By now, it's too late to do much about stockpiling fescue. The window to initiate that process only last until around mid-September. Clipping it off short and fertilizing now wont' result in enough growth on the fescue.

As pastures start to run out here in a couple months, everyone's focus shifts to hay feeding. As always, I'll harp on getting your hay tested and working on a winter feed ration that will maintain body condition on your cow herd through the winter.

I hope those few tips and what else follows in this October edition of *The Cattle Corner* will be helpful. Give me a call if I can help you in any way.

Is it Too Late to Fertilize My Forages?

Dr. John Jennings, Extension Forage Specialist

With the recent rains, producers are asking about fertilizing fields for a last hay cutting. For warm season forages such as bermudagrass and bahiagrass, we are at the end of the season. The UA Fertilizer Recommendations Manual states that warm season forages should not be fertilized after September 1. Realistically, on drought stressed forages, the cutoff date should be earlier than that. The reasoning is that even after rain, drought stressed forages make take a week to even show greenup, another week to accumulate any leaf area, leaving only about a week to produce any significant amount of forage before short days and cooler nights in late September start shutting down warm season grass growth. When night temperatures drop into the 50's WSG growth stalls and it could take a few days to restart. When night temps drop into the 40's growth stops and by that time of year there are not enough warm hours in a day to restart the engine.

Arkansas research on stockpiling bermudagrass shows that at Batesville and Fayetteville, delaying N application from August 1 to September 1 reduced forage dry matter yield from 60-80%. That would apply for hay production as well. In south Arkansas that date could be moved from August 1 to August 15. Each day closer to September reduces warm season grass yield potential and viability of making late fertilizer applications economical.

However, timing for fertilizing fescue is right now. Our research on fertilizer timing for fall fescue growth, either for fall pasture or stockpiled winter pasture, showed that early September is the optimum time to apply nitrogen fertilizer. Waiting until early to mid-October produced no more dry matter yield than the unfertilized control. Urea is a viable fertilizer N source if ammonium nitrate is not available. Several Arkansas forage research trials show yield differences between those N sources on warm season grasses to range from 0 to 15%.

So, if producers need fall forage, fescue fertilization is a good option, and it's too late to expect a good response from fertilizing warm-season forages. Other options for fall forage include planting oats or brassicas in early September. Delays past mid-September on planting brassicas essentially produce no grazeable forage in the fall. Millets such as pearl millet, browntop, and Japanese millet, can produce some forage if planted the first week of September. Ryegrass is a poor fall forage producer but can be mixed with winter or summer annual forages to produce spring grazing.

October Beef and Forage Tip Sheet

GENERAL CATTLE TIPS

- Monitor cattle closely for any signs of lameness. Fall is a very common time for foot rot and interdigital dermatitis. Foot rot can extend deep into the tissues; therefore, early treatment is critical for recovery.

Tips for Spring Calving Herds

- Weaned feeder calves can be implanted and all retained calves given access to supplements fortified with Bovatec, Gainpro or Rumesin to improve weight gain. These products work independently from the implants and each result in a 10% or more increase in growth performance.
- Now is a good time to sort cows into winter feeding groups. Cows should be grouped according to stage of production and/or body condition score (BCS). Cows in thin body condition will require additional supplementation to make sure they are in a BCS 5 to 6 by calving.
- Average quality hay in Arkansas (12% protein and 54% TDN) is adequate in nutrient composition for non-lactating cows that are in moderate to good body condition.
- Plan replacement heifer development program. Heifer should be fed to achieve 55 to 65% of mature weight by breeding. Estimate mature weight can be from cow size records or heifer frame size (frame size x 75 + 800 = estimated mature weight).
- Purebred breeders should consider bull development programs to aid in yearling performance evaluation. On-farm bull test or bull station performance test can provide growth data and possibly feed efficiency data for a contemporary group of bulls that will aid in genetic selection.
- Pregnancy test cows. It is very expensive to feed an open cow.
- Vaccinate heifers that are 4 to 12 months old for Brucellosis.
- Forage test hay to determine nutrient value. This will provide much needed information when determining the proper supplementation program.
- Provide free choice mineral and fresh water.
- Cull open, old and non-performance cows and heifers.

Tips for Fall Calving Herds

- Evaluate sire(s) for fall breeding season. If you use AI, now is the time to order semen.
- Perform breeding soundness exam (BSE) and Trichomoniasis testing on breeding bulls.
- Fall calving cows need to be monitored closely for calving difficulties. Facilities and equipment need to be readily available for dystocia.
- Be sure newborn calves receive adequate amounts of colostrum for proper disease protection. Care of newborn calves include dip navels, ear tag, castrate, etc.

- Body condition score cows. Cows should be in BCS 5 to 6 at the time of calving.
- Forage test hay to determine nutrient value.
- Provide free choice mineral and fresh water.

Forage/Grazing Management

- Take soil samples
- Begin strip grazing stockpiled bermudagrass
    - Strip grazing improves forage utilization and may double the number of grazing days compared to continuous grazing.
- Plant winter annuals and clovers in warm-season grass sod
- Defer grazing of stockpiled cool-season grasses until late November or early December.
- Plant clover in short-grazed fescue in early October
- Graze out crabgrass before a killing frost
    - Crabgrass becomes very unpalatable after a killing frost and is usually avoided by grazing animals.
- Rotational graze cool season perennial grasses by mid to end of October or when canopy height reaches at least 6 inches.
- Plant winter annuals between mid-October to late October for grazing in February or early March.

Pasture Management

- Start implementing long-term management during cooler months
    - Fence building and repair
    - Selecting of pastures that are slated for renovation within the next 12 months
    - Setup of grazing paddocks and watering devices
    - Soil fertility management
        - Long-term correction of pH and mineral imbalances
        - Take soil samples from areas that are to be renovated
        - Apply lime if needed

UPDATE (9/15/2020):
Coronavirus Food Assistance Program Payments in Arkansas

Scott Stiles, Brad Watkins, C. Robert Stark, Jr., Alvaro Durand-Morat
Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness

Over $136 million in direct payments have been approved for Arkansas farmers and ranchers through the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) as of Monday, September 13th according to USDA reporting.

Table 1 provides details of the 18,163 applications that have been made through September 13th, with $136,552,000 in payments approved. Payments to livestock producers account for over 69 percent of the approved CFAP payments for Arkansas. Non-specialty crops account for almost 27 percent of the state total. 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. The remaining 3 percent of CFAP payments is split among Specialty crops (2.3 percent), Dairy (.7 percent) and the blended category of Aqua-Nursery-Flora (.6 percent).

Table 1. Coronavirus Food Assistance Program Payments, Arkansas (as of Sept. 13, 2020)

	Payments	Payments (% of Total)	Applications
Livestock	$94,887,191	69.5 percent	14,252
Non-specialty	$36,613,585	26.8 percent	4,014
Specialty	$3,181,520	2.3 percent	63
Dairy	$1,014,595	.7 percent	40
Aqua Nursery Flora	$855,109	.6 percent	20
Total	**$136,552,000**		**18,163**

Source: USDA, Farm Service Agency.

With livestock and non-specialty crops accounting for just over 96% of the state's total CFAP payments, Tables 2 and 3 provide some additional detail in regard to specific commodity payments. As shown in Table 2, cattle accounts for the overwhelming majority of livestock CFAP payments with a cumulative total to date of over $92 million or roughly 97% of the total livestock payments.

Table 2. Livestock CFAP Payments

Commodity	CFAP Payments	Percent of Total
Cattle	$92,142,203	97.1%
Hogs	$2,384,548	2.5%
Lambs-Lambs <2YRS	$305,359	0.3%
Sheep-Sheep >2YRS	$55,081	0.1%
TOTAL	**$94,887,191**	

As mentioned, non-specialty crops account for almost 27 percent of the state's total CFAP payments. Among the eligible commodities, upland cotton, corn, soybeans and grain sorghum account for all of the non-specialty crop payments received in Arkansas. Cotton payments make up approximately 53% of total payments, while corn and soybeans make up 24.7% and 22.4% respectively.

Table 3. Non-Specialty CFAP Payments

Commodity	CFAP Payments	Percent of Total
Cotton-Upland	$19,382,721	52.9%
Corn	$9,030,071	24.7%
Soybeans	$8,186,816	22.4%
Sorghum	$13,502	0.04%
TOTAL	**$36,613,585**	

Table 4 below provides a comparison of cumulative CFAP payments to U.S. and Arkansas producers. USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) has already approved over $9.9 billion in payments to U.S. producers who have applied for the program. FSA began taking applications May 26, and the agency has received 621,919 applications for this program. Arkansas' share of CFAP payments is relatively small at 1.4 percent of the total.

Table 4. Coronavirus Food Assistance Program Payments, U.S. and Arkansas (as of Sept. 13, 2020).

Commodity	U.S. Payments ($)	Arkansas Payments ($)	Arkansas % of U.S. Total	Arkansas Ranking
Livestock	$4,872,174,302	$94,887,191	1.9%	15
Non-specialty	$2,584,080,982	$36,613,585	1.4%	17
Specialty	$647,035,786	$3,181,520	0.5%	22
Dairy	$1,736,703,648	$1,014,595	0.1%	46
Aqua Nursery	$81,612,764	$855,109	1.0%	11
Total	**$9,921,607,482**	**$136,552,000**	1.4%	**23**

Source: USDA, Farm Service Agency.

USDA recently expanded eligibility of CFAP direct assistance to 41 more specialty crops, in addition to the 42 added in July, and has added sheep, frozen and liquid eggs, aquaculture, nursery crops and cut flowers. Sweet potatoes and pecans account for nearly all (99.6% or $3,167,838) of Arkansas' specialty crop payments.

Producers of certain aquaculture are also eligible for CFAP assistance. Commodities under this category include: catfish, crawfish, largemouth bass and carp sold live as foodfish, hybrid striped bass, red drum, salmon, sturgeon, tilapia, trout, ornamental/tropical fish, and recreational sportfish. Catfish accounts for 83% or $713,291 of Arkansas' Aqua-Nursery-Flora payments.

In addition, producers of nursery crops and cut flowers have been extended eligibility for CFAP. Nursery crops are considered decorative or non-decorative plants grown in a container or controlled environment for commercial sale. Cut flowers includes cut flowers and cut greenery from annual and perennial flowering plants grown in a container or controlled environment for commercial sale.

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

The application period for CFAP ended on September 11 for producers in Arkansas. FSA has extended the deadline to October 9, 2020, for certain producers in Louisiana and Texas impacted by Hurricane Laura. More information on the CFAP program and the application process may be found at farmers.gov/cfap.

While Congress has yet to finalize the details of another coronavirus relief package, USDA is expected to announce details of a second CFAP aid program this month. Congress has approved $14 billion dollars in Commodity Credit Corporation funds on top of $16 billion allocated through CARES, which made direct payments based on producer losses in the first quarter of 2020.

USDA officials indicate the second version of the CFAP program will be more inclusive for commodities that weren't eligible for the first program. The second version is expected to cover COVID-19 losses from the 2020 growing season and others, like losses in the cattle industry, which were not addressed in the first program.

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