

# THE SCOOP

AGRICULTURE | GARDENING | COMMUNITY



## Spring Has Sprung!

The Scoop is a quarterly newsletter that is mailed out to inform you about all things agriculture, gardening, and community. The information in this newsletter will be relevant to our producers and reliable through research of the University of Arkansas Extension Services. Please feel free to call the office at (870) 895-3301, or email me at [abarnett@uada.edu](mailto:abarnett@uada.edu) if you have any questions.

This edition focuses on tips and tricks for producing beef, forages, and gardens from end of March through June.

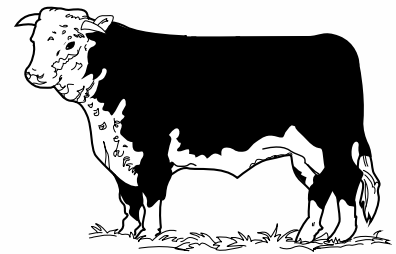
## Upcoming Events

- April 1 - Broiler Chain Chick Distribution
- April 8 - 4-H Poultry Chain Distribution
- April 10 - North Central Arkansas Hay Day, Melbourne, AR
- May 12 - Barn Quilt Block Workshop, Salem, AR
- May 16 - Fulton County Spring Livestock Show
- May 20 - Smart Grazing for Small Acres Small Ruminant Workshop, Batesville, AR
- July 11-18 - Fulton County Fair
- Anytime - Online Private Pesticide Applicator Training
- TBA - Rabies Clinic

Check out our Facebook page [UADA - Fulton County](#), for details on upcoming events.



# Beef Cattle



## • Spring Calving Herds

- Assessing body condition scores is essential in maximizing cow herd efficiency.
- The processes of fetal development, delivering a calf, milk production and repair of the reproductive tract are all stresses that require large quantities of energy.
  - Calving difficulty (dystocia) is a very important economic problem in the U.S. beef cattle industry. Approximately 3% of calves born in the U.S. will be lost due to calving difficulty. Several factors play a role in calving difficulty including heavy birth weights, abnormal fetal position, limited pelvic area and the female's age.

## • Bulls:

- Have bulls tested for breeding soundness before spring breeding season begins. 20% of bulls fail a breeding soundness examination. The breeding soundness evaluation (BSE) is a practical method to identify bulls with less than satisfactory breeding potential. This evaluation should be conducted on every bull at least 30 to 60 days before each breeding season to allow enough time for replacement of deferred or unsatisfactory bulls.
- During the breeding season monitor the activity of each bull. Be sure all bulls are walking properly and checking cows for estrus activity. Sometimes bulls can become lame or injured which could affect their ability to locate and breed cows. Feet, legs, penis, front shoulder, hip and eyes are few areas that can get injured affecting a bull's ability to breed cows.

## • Lactating Cows:

- Switch to a high magnesium mineral to help prevent grass tetany for lactating cows on spring pastures (Fact Sheet 3035).

## • Calves:

- Castrate male calves at birth or at 3 months processing. Castration early in life is less stressful on the calf. Research with calves castrated at birth grow at similar rates of gain compared to their intact male pasture mates.
- Don't forget to collect calving records. Valuable records for selection and management include body condition at calving, calving difficulty score, calf gender, calf birth weight, and don't forget to tag calves - records are less valuable when they cannot be linked to animals and herds.
- Calf scours is a very costly problem for many producers. Calves that suffer from scours can become critically ill in a short period of time.

## • General Herd:

- April is the time of year to deworm cows and calves. The need to control internal parasites will exist as long as cattle are grazing pastures. Young cattle will typically have more internal parasites than older cattle. The effects of internal parasites on cattle will vary with the severity of infection as well as age and stress level of the animal. Therefore, the methods of controlling internal parasites should be developed to fit individual production situations.
- Provide free-choice mineral and fresh water.
- Assessing body condition scores is essential in maximizing cow herd efficiency.

# Bermudagrass

## March:

- Apply burn-down herbicide to dormant bermudagrass. Reapply herbicide if needed.
  - This is very important for keeping bermudagrass pastures clean of broadleaf weeds as much as possible.
- Herbicide of choice is glyphosate before Bermuda green up occurs. Adding a broadleaf herbicide such as metsulfuron, Grazon P+D or GrazonNext will improve control on some weeds such as henbit.
- Use rates according to the label.
- Bermudagrass should not be mowed or grazed for 60 days after glyphosate application, so time herbicide application accordingly.

## April:

- Scout for winter damage in bermudagrass.
- Assessing cold injury can't be done in the field until the bermudagrass begins breaking dormancy. Very cold-sensitive varieties may suffer complete winterkill whereas others may exhibit slower and later green up than normal.
- Some practices that may improve recovery include proper fertility, judicious weed control, and proper grazing or hay harvest.
- To promote earlier green up and grazing of bermudagrass, fertilize specific pastures when night time temperatures reach 60°F for a week. Don't apply N fertilizer where clovers are overseeded or where good clover stands exist already to avoid grass competition.

## May:

- Establish bermudagrass for forage from sprigs:
  - Sprig from now until June 1.
  - Sprig 20 to 40 bushels per acre.
  - Some of the recommended varieties are Midland 99, Ozark, Vaughn's, Greenfield, Hardie and Tifton 44.
  - Place sprigs less than two inches deep.
  - Do not sprig when the seedbed is dry.
    - Apply pre-emerge herbicide after sprigging.
      - For more information refer to FSA19.
  - Establish bermudagrass for forage from seed:
    - Plant between May 1 and June 15.
    - Seeding rates are 4 to 8 pounds of pure live seed per acre.
    - Seed can be drilled or broadcast on a conventional tilled firm seedbed or planted with a no-till drill on killed grass sod.
    - Planting depth of 1/4 inch or less is recommended.
    - Variety blends provide faster sod cover and higher seeding year yield.
    - At least 1 variety in the blend should be winter-hardy.
    - Winter hardy varieties in AR include; Wrangler, Cheyenne and KF 194.
      - For more information refer to FSA19, Establishing Bermudagrass

**ALWAYS READ AND UNDERSTAND THE PRODUCT LABEL!**  
**Metsulfuron 60 DF, Chapparral, and Pastora will damage tall fescue.**

# Other Forages



## March

- Fertilize winter annual and fescue pastures and hayfields. Typical rates are 50-60 units N per acre along with P and K according to soil test recommendation.

## April

- Overseed bare spots around hay feeding areas with a desirable grass or legume.
  - The hay feeding area generally is higher in organic matter and soil test P & K than the field. Therefore, providing a good growing media for establishing grasses or legumes.
- Start rotationally grazing pastures at green-up. Don't let cows chase green grass over the entire farm since that will delay significant growth and sustained grazing even longer.

## May

- Begin grazing perennial warm season grasses.
  - Start rotationally grazing pastures at green-up.
  - Rotational grazing improves forage utilization over continuous grazing.
    - Begin grazing at 6"-8", stop grazing at 3"-4".

## June

- Weed control:
  - Apply herbicides to summer annual broadleaf weeds. MP 522 and MP 44 are outstanding resources for weed identification and control.
- Warm season annual forages:
  - Sorghum-sudan or pearl millet are popular choices as summer annual forages. Harvest for hay or graze. In either case, leave 6 inches of stubble to reduce risk of nitrate poisoning. In sorghum-sudan, prussic acid content can be high enough to be toxic and it will also be present in leaves after the plant is stressed from drought and/or low temperatures.
- Hay management:
  - For cool season grasses, leave 2-3 inches stubble height to encourage regrowth. Cut at boot stage/early bloom for optimum forage nutritive value.
  - For bermudagrass cut when about 18 inches high, then cut approximately every 30 days.

## Other Things to Consider:

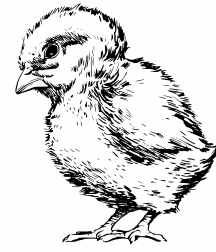
- Start repairing haying equipment for spring harvest.
- Cedar trees – this is one tree that we seem to have an abundance of and they can be a problem in fence rows and pastures. The good thing about cedar trees is you can cut them off near the soil line and, as long as you cut cedars off below any green needles, the stump won't sprout back and will die.
- Implement a summer annual/perennial weed control program.

## Soil Sampling

- If your garden or lawn isn't looking so great, it's time to see how your soil is doing.
- We offer free soil testing to Arkansans.



# Chick Chat

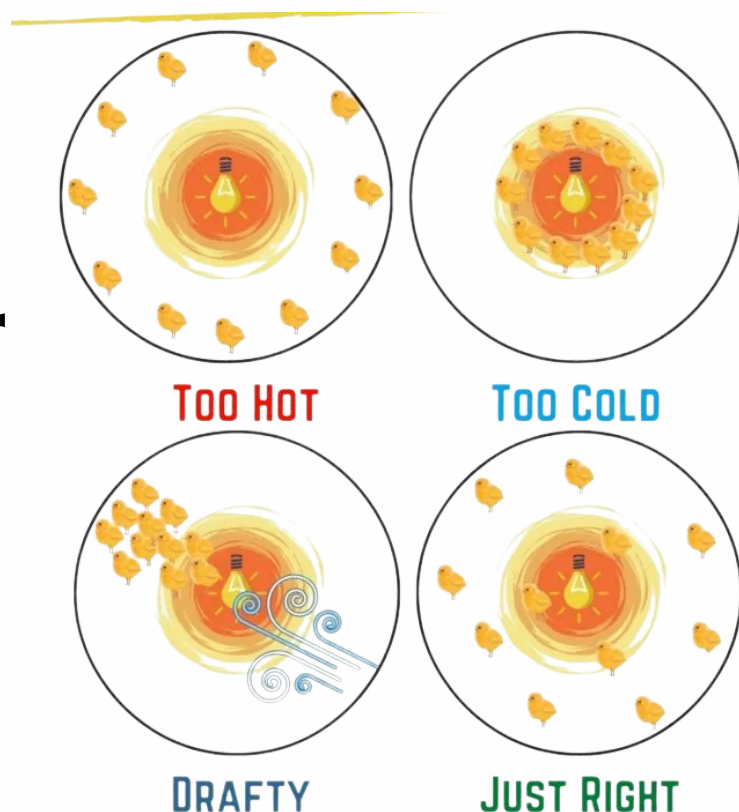


It is that time of year when chicks start making their way from hatcheries or farm stores to our farms or homesteads. Beware, chicken math is real! Here are some tips for caring for new chicks.

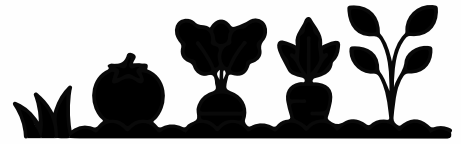
## Brooding Chicks

- Start with the right temperature:
  - Keep the brooder at 90–95°F during the first week, then reduce the temperature by about 5°F each week until chicks are fully feathered.
- Watch chick behavior:
  - Chicks huddled under the heat source are too cold.
  - Chicks staying far away may be too hot.
  - Chicks grouped to one side may be in a drafty area.
- Use clean, dry bedding:
  - Pine shavings work well and should be changed regularly to keep chicks dry and healthy.
- Ensure constant access to feed and water:
  - Use shallow waterers to prevent drowning and clean feeders and waterers daily.
- Protect chicks from drafts:
  - While ventilation is important, avoid direct drafts in the brooding area.
- Monitor chicks daily:
  - Check chicks several times each day to ensure they are eating, drinking, and behaving normally.
- Listen intently
  - Chicks will alert you if something is not right. Listen for high pitched and consistent loud chirping.

## How to monitor chick response to temperature.



# Garden Guide



## Spring Home Flowers - Planting Guide

### April

- Calibrachoa
- Verbena
- Petunias
- Begonias
- Clematis
- Canna
- Dahlia
- Gladiolus
- Tuberose
- Butterfly Weed
- Passionflower
- Hyacinth Vine
- Moon Vine
- Cypress Vine

### May

- Cuphea
- Coleus
- Celosia
- Torenia
- Calibrachoa
- Peonies
- Lantana
- Pentas
- Dragonwing begonia
- Marigold
- Zinnia
- Sunflower
- Cosmos
- Caladium
- Elephant Ear
- Canna
- Gladiolus
- Dahlias
- Lilies

### June

- Daisies
- Sunflowers
- Mexican Sunflower
- Zinnias
- Cosmos
- Marigolds
- Black-Eyed Susans
- Coneflowers
- Lantana
- Pentas
- Clematis

## Spring Home Garden - Vegetable Guide

### April

- Asparagus
- Sweet Corn
- Summer Squash
- Okra
- Peppers
- Cucumbers
- Sweet Potatoes
- Eggplants
- Tomatoes
- Beans (Snap, Lima)
- Edamame
- Kohlrabi
- Swiss Chard
- Lettuce
- Radish
- Beets
- Watermelon
- Cantaloupe

### May

- Edamame
- Asparagus (Perennial)
- Pumpkins
- Tomatoes
- Squash (Summer)
- Southern Peas
- Sweet Potatoes
- Peppers
- Okra
- Eggplants
- Cucumbers
- Watermelon
- Cantaloupe
- Beans (Snap, Lima)
- Collards
- Radish

### June

- Summer Squash
- Winter Squash
- Peppers
- Cucumbers
- Beans (Snap, Lima)
- Edamame
- Watermelon
- Cantaloupe
- Basil
- Tomatoes
- Southern Peas
- Collards
- Pumpkin
- Sweet Potatoes
- Dill

## Seed Starting

Starting seeds indoors is a great way to get a head start on the growing season and ensure strong, healthy transplants. Tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, broccoli, cabbage, and lettuce can all be started indoors to get a head start on your garden.

# Home Fruits



Last Spring, I made quite a few farm visits looking at diseased fruit trees. Now is the time to get a spray schedule on your mind. Don't want to spray your fruit trees? Check out other options at <https://arkansasorganicag.uada.edu/>

Spray Schedule for Fruit Trees			
Time to Spray	Pests	Material/3 gal	Trees to Receive the Application
Dormant – when leaves are off and before buds break (in February)	Peach leaf curl and plum pockets	Bordeaux mixture (2 oz bluestone and 3 oz hydrated lime) or 6 Tb 76% Ferbam	Peach and plum
On a warmish day before new green growth over 1/4" long	Scale	Dormant oil 6 oz Superior summer oil 6 oz	All tree fruits*
Pink – just before blossoms open; include material in each spray for 6 weeks	Apple scab Cedar apple rust	3 Tb 50% Captan or 1 Tb 50% Benlate	Apples and pears
Pink or White – just before blossoms open	Fire blight	Streptomycin – at 5-day intervals till flowers are all gone, 1 tsp 21% Agri-Strep/gal	Pears and susceptible apple varieties
Petal Fall – when most of petals are off and every 7-14 days till harvest: 7 days at beginning and during wet weather and extend to 14 days during dryer, later season	Brown rot Scab Codling moth Plum curculio Plant bugs/Stink bugs	General purpose mix†	All tree fruits*
Mark spray dates, materials used and amounts on a calendar for future reference.			
†Most "general purpose" commercial spray materials contain only Captan as a fungicide. Should fruit rot problems become noticeable, switch to myclobutanil or add Benlate at the recommended rate to the commercial mixture. Benlate or wettable sulfur are effective on powdery mildew (causes crinkly leaves with a dusty surface) and may be added to the mixture.			
NOTE: Cherry tree leaves are badly damaged by a leaf spot which may cause early leaf loss and fruit set the next year. Extend the regular fungicide spray schedule, making one application after harvest, to reduce this problem. Benlate is effective and may be used alone in the postharvest application.			
*All tree fruits" includes apples, pears, plums, cherries, nectarines, peaches. If a severe plum curculio problem occurs, Imidan could be added to the spray on peaches or plums.			
Spray Benlate on the fruit just before harvest (but not within 14 days of harvest) to prevent fruit rot after picking.			
READ INSECTICIDE CONTAINER LABELS CAREFULLY			

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## Spring Pest and Disease Control

- Root rots are preventable by decreasing the length of time garden soil is saturated. Root rots are not curable once your garden plants exhibit decline.
- Identify garden pests before you attempt to control them. If you decide to use chemical control, read the label carefully.
- Reduce mosquito problems by turning over any pots, lids or saucers that might collect water and create a breeding site. Use Bt dunks in ponds that have no fish in them. The Bt dunks are safe with fish; but when fish are present, they will take care of mosquito larvae.
- Wear light-colored clothing, apply repellent, and get in the habit of checking yourself, your children and pets closely for ticks after spending time outdoors.
- Monitor houseplants kept indoors for mealybugs, spider mites, aphids, whitefly, and scale. If spider mites are a problem consider spraying with a labeled horticultural oil or soap and pyrethrum mix. If possible, move the plants outside before spraying and when dry, move them back indoors.

## Brucellosis (Bang's) Vaccinations:

- Spring Bang's vaccinations will be scheduled shortly. Please call our office at 870-895-3301 to get on our list. Include your name, address of where the heifers will be, and a head count for vaccinations. Vaccinations are free of charge. Heifers must be at least 4 months old, but not older than 12 months old to be eligible for vaccination.
- We will use the same procedure as in the past and notify you by letter or phone call when you are scheduled for vaccinations. You will need handling facilities to confine and work the calves. Also, a representative must be present at the time of vaccination or the heifers will not be vaccinated.

## THAT'S THE SCOOP!

Feel free to call or drop by the office for any questions or additional information!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anna Barnett".

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The logo for the University of Arkansas, featuring the letters "U of A" in a stylized, red, serif font.

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