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Cattlemen’s Association Summer Meeting

I look forward to seeing each of you at our next cattlemen’s meeting, which is Tuesday, August 30, at 6:00pm. The meeting will be held at the Brown Farm, currently leased by Dean McClure. The farm is located off of Sugar Hill Road on Old Fort-Sugar Hill Road approximately 1/2 mile on the left.

Brian Ivie with Crop Production Services (CPS) in Hendersonville is sponsoring our meeting as well as presenting a program on fall pasture fertilization.

Molly Sandfoss, our County Extension Director, will also present a program on weed identification. Pesticide credits are being applied for. So if you need recertification credits, you will want to attend this important meeting.

After the programs, we will travel to the Sugar Hill Fire Department for our meal sponsored by CPS, so we need to have an accurate head count. Please RSVP by Tuesday, August 23 by calling my office at 652-7874, so the cooking crew will know how much food to prepare.

The McDowell County Livestock Judging Team participated in the NC State 4-H Livestock Judging Contest in Raleigh on June 28th. The contestants judge 10 classes of 4 animals per class. The 10 classes are made up of 4 divisions, beef, sheep, swine, and meat goats. 125 contestants judged in the junior and senior divisions. John Eric Ellis was our junior member of the group and the senior team was Jamie, Zac, and Angel Schunke. The team was sponsored by Farm Bureau. This was the first contest for this new group of judgers. The team began practicing in March due to their coach starting work in February. They didn’t let that hold them back as their performance proved them to be fast learners. John Eric Ellis was 13th overall in the junior division also placing 9th in sheep, 9th in beef and 15th in oral reasons. In the highly competitive senior division the McDowell senior team was 5th in sheep. Jamie Schunke was 26th overall followed closely by brother Zac Schunke in 30th. The team is eager to keep working hard in preparation for the next contest coming up in late October. If you know of any youth that would like to join the team have them give me a call at 652-7874.
Economics of Hay Production

The ultimate use of hay is as a feed for livestock. There are many designs of hay feeders currently on the market. Some studies have indicated up to a **28 percent loss of hay by not protecting it with a hay feeder.** However, sometimes simply unrolling the bale in the field is more desirable for some producers. This method has the advantages of: 1) dispersing the bale allowing “boss” cows and timid cows to consume the same bale at the same time 2) reducing hoof action damage by relocating where the hay is unrolled and dispersing the cows over a larger stretch of land and 3) controlling the amount of hay allotted by proportioning bales. This practice does have some negative aspects such as excessive waste of hay from unrolling excessive amounts and once the cattle are full they may trample, defecate or urinate on the hay also increasing the amount of wastage. Table 1 lists some of the different designs and the amount of loss that can be encountered in feeding. Clearly, there are some advantages of different types of hay feeders, but the amount of labor should also be taken into account for the different systems.

### Table 1. Hay waste by hay feeder type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of feeder</th>
<th>Hay waste</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cone</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ring</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cradle</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wagon</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Placement of the hay feeding area is also another concern. Hay feeding structures that limit runoff are becoming fairly popular. The cost of these structures may be prohibitive for some producers to consider building. Moving hay feeders throughout the pasture can eliminate many of the problems encountered from feeding hay by reducing the impact of cattle on the pasture. Another practice is having an abuse area in which the hay is fed throughout the winter. This will restrict the damage to the pasture to a planned area. This area can then be fenced out of the pasture for the summer grazing or managed to improve it throughout the grazing season.

Many livestock producers feel that they should produce their own hay. However, this is not always economically viable. The cost of producing hay decreases with the number of acres harvested for hay (Table 2). This is due to the cost of equipment. North Carolina estimates are $74.36 per ton of DM for conventional rectangular bales and $57.59 for large round bales. The major cost difference in these two packaging systems is labor; conventional rectangular bales require more labor than large round bales. Many times the cost of owning equipment is higher than can be justified for smaller operations. The cost of owning equipment is 34% of the cost of conventional small square bale production and 42% of large round bale production. The cost of purchasing hay should be compared to an estimate of the cost of producing hay prior to terminating hay production. If large quantities of hay are needed each year it will be more cost effective to produce your own hay. Another factor that should be included is expansion of the cow herd on land that was previously used for hay production. The purity of hay that is purchased should also be considered. Considerations that should
Economics of Hay Production

also be taken into account when purchasing hay include the purity and nutritive value of the hay. Hay that contains a large percentage of weeds or undesirable grass species can become a problem with pasture management. If the weedy species in the hay have formed seed you may end up with some of these growing in your pasture. The nutritive value of the hay is also important to know when purchasing hay. If the hay is of low quality more supplemental feed will be needed or your cattle will not perform as well. The cost of the hay and the supplement should be factored in to determine if there is a cost savings from purchasing hay.

Table 2. Estimated total machinery cost per acre to harvest grass hay at varying levels of acreage harvested

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operation</th>
<th>Acres harvested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mow</td>
<td>$35.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rake</td>
<td>8.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bale</td>
<td>43.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stack</td>
<td>3.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$91.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assumes each acre is harvested twice annually. **No labor charge is included**, and tractor hours are adjusted to reflect varying hours of use for hay harvest by acreage.

*Adapted from Economics of purchasing hay instead of producing hay. Tim Cross University of Tennessee*

Weeds in pastures often utilize more water and soil nutrients than grasses and other desirable pasture plants. Methods of controlling pasture weeds include clipping, grazing, and chemical application. All three methods have a place in modern agricultural practices. When controlling weeds timing is one of the most critical issues. If weeds are sprayed or clipped after seed has set little control will be achieved. Clipping and spraying should be conducted at an immature stage of maturity. Remember that many weeds are biennials and controlling them in the first year will help reduce the number in the next. However, control will be needed for several years in order to reduce or maintain a low number of weeds in the pasture. When spraying a pasture with broadleaf herbicides remember that most of the legumes in the pasture will be
Forages are harvested at different utilization percentages based on the grazing system utilized. Table 3 shows the differences in forage utilization by grazing system.

Table 3. Utilization of forages as affected by harvest method.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Harvest method</th>
<th>Utilization %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continuous stocking</td>
<td>35-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotational stocking</td>
<td>65-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strip grazing</td>
<td>70-75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mowing for hay</td>
<td>82-85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Arkansas Grazing Manual (5th edition)

As we increase the level of management on our pastures the utilization of the forage is improved. No matter how well the pasture is managed 100% utilization will never be achieved. This is not a goal we should strive for in any case as we need to allow some leaf area to remain after grazing bouts to stimulate rapid re-growth of the forage. Additionally other portions of the forage will be refused by the animals due to soiling by mud, manure or urine, use as bedding or by being trampled by the animals.

Donkeys: Proctors or problems

Many of us are utilizing donkeys as guard animals. They are useful to help deter attacks from dogs, coyotes and other predator animals. The problem comes when selecting the proper animal for the job. Many producers will select the cheapest donkey they can find, and that is usually a jack (intact male). A jack is a great guard animal as they will usually keep unwanted animals out of the pasture. The problem with a jack is they can get VERY AGGRESSIVE with calves, and humans. Jacks have been known to bite, kick, and, often injure and kill the animals they are there to protect. Not a good scenario. If you are looking for a donkey to use for a guard animal, please consider a gelding (castrated male) or a jenny (female). They will be a good guard animal and less likely to injure you or your livestock.
### Spicy Three-Pepper Rub

May be rubbed on steaks, burgers, and roasts

- 4 tsp dried oregano leaves
- 4 tsp sweet paprika
- 4 tsp dried thyme leaves
- 2 tsp garlic powder
- 2 tsp onion powder
- 2 tsp ground black pepper
- 2 tsp ground white pepper
- 1 tsp ground red pepper

Combine all ingredients. Shake before using. Store in airtight container. Makes about 1/3 cup

*Recipe developed by the Beef and Veal Culinary Center of the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Market</th>
<th>Time of Sale</th>
<th>Estimated # to sell</th>
<th>Sale Coordinator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug 10</td>
<td>Siler City (C)</td>
<td>Carolina Stockyards 919/742-5665</td>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
<td>800 Head</td>
<td>Sam Groce 919/542-8202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 18</td>
<td>Norwood (C)</td>
<td>Stanly County Livestock Market 704/474-7681 or Marcus Harward 704/463-5828 (home)</td>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
<td>1200 Head</td>
<td>Steve Lemons 704/983/3987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 7</td>
<td>Canton</td>
<td>WNC Regional Livestock Center 828/646-3700</td>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
<td>800 Head</td>
<td>John Queen 828/421-3446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 8</td>
<td>Norwood^ (Value-Added BQZ)</td>
<td>Stanly County Livestock Market 704/474-7681 or Marcus Harward 704/463-5828 (home)</td>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
<td>1,200 Head</td>
<td>Steve Lemons 704/983-3987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 13</td>
<td>Clinton (C)</td>
<td>Sampson County Livestock Arena 910/592-7455 or 910/592-7161</td>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
<td>900 Head</td>
<td>Paul Gonzalez 910/592-7161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 15</td>
<td>Norwood (C)</td>
<td>Stanly County Livestock Market 704/474-7681 or Marcus Harward 704/463-5828 (home)</td>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
<td>1,200 Head</td>
<td>Steve Lemons 704/983-3987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 21</td>
<td>Siler City (C)</td>
<td>Carolina Stockyards 919/742-5665</td>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
<td>800 Head</td>
<td>Sam Groce 919/542-8202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 22</td>
<td>Statesville (C)</td>
<td>Harward Brothers Livestock Market 704/546-2692 or Marcus Harward 704/463-5828 (home)</td>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
<td>800 Head</td>
<td>Extension Agent 704/873-0507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 29</td>
<td>N. Wilkesboro</td>
<td>Wilkes Livestock Exchange 336/838-3442 or 336/651-7331</td>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
<td>700 Head</td>
<td>Extension Agent 336/651-7300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All Value-Added BQA Sales—Producers must follow a stringent health protocol and BQA techniques and be BQA certified.*
The Foothills Pilot Plant will begin operation this fall. This is a great opportunity for some of us to diversify our farming operations by adding poultry and/or rabbit production. Some of you might not be aware that the plant is in McDowell County and what they have to offer. Here is some information about the plant and how it got started.

Based upon a feasibility study commissioned in 2006, a plan was developed to establish this project in Marion, in partnership with the McDowell Economic Development Association (MEDA), McDowell County Government, independent growers, North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (NCDA&CS), NC State University’s College of Agriculture & Life Sciences (CALS) and NCA&T University. Small family farms and community leaders have supported the development of Foothills Pilot Plant to serve independent growers of poultry and rabbits. Major contributors for the development of this project are: the North Carolina Golden LEAF Foundation, the North Carolina Rural Center, USDA Rural Development and the Appalachian Regional Commission.

Foothills Pilot Plant (FPP) is a non-profit facility created for poultry and small meat animals processing to serve independent growers seeking USDA inspection of their meat products. We will process chickens, turkeys, rabbits, ducks, and other specialty fowl on a fee for service basis. FPP also serves as a center for learning best practices for small flock production of poultry and small scale production of meat rabbits. This facility is another step towards promoting sustainable agriculture in Western North Carolina.

Am I Cut Out To Be An Entrepreneur?

MTCC Small Business Center and Marion Business Association are sponsoring this agricultural program: “Am I Cut Out To Be An Entrepreneur?”. Classes will be held at the MBA office @ the Historic Marion Depot, beginning Monday, September 19, 6:00pm – 9:00pm.

This is an eight week class, and by the end of classes participants will have completed a business plan.

Series include “Am I Entrepreneurial Material?”, “Introduction to the Business Plan”, “Personal Budgets”, “Goal Setting”, “Bookkeeping Basics” and other basic business classes.

Classes are fun and interactive. Best of all they are FREE. Due to space restrictions, the number of participants is limited, so register early by calling the Small Business Center, 652-0633.
Cattle Receipts: 169    Last week: 349   Last year: No sales

(Figures in parentheses are weighted average weights and prices for each category)

**Feeder Steers:** Medium and Large 1-2 260-260 lbs (260) 120.00 (120.00); 330-330 lbs (330) 126.00 (126.00); 355-380 lbs (368) 124.00-135.00 (129.69); 430-430 lbs (430) 120.00 (120.00); 495-495 lbs (495) 124.00 (124.00); 500-520 lbs (508) 126.00-127.00 (126.67); 555-580 lbs (568) 123.00-127.00 (125.26); 605-620 lbs (612) 115.00-122.00 (118.98); 655-685 lbs (675) 118.00-120.00 (119.35); 704-704 lbs (704) 120.75 (120.75); 755-766 lbs (765) 117.00-118.25 (118.13); 813-813 lbs (813) 110.00 (110.00).

**Feeder Heifers:** Medium and Large 1-2 200-225 lbs (213) 125.00-150.50 (137.00); 360-390 lbs (375) 108.00-125.00 (116.98); 425-445 lbs (439) 105.00-122.00 (116.14); 475-495 lbs (483) 116.00-120.00 (117.98); 520-540 lbs (530) 108.00-117.00 (114.57); 555-585 lbs (569) 110.00-116.00 (113.34); 600-618 lbs (611) 106.00-110.00 (108.43); 655-655 lbs (655) 114.00 (114.00); 730-735 lbs (734) 105.00-105.50 (105.40).

**Feeder Bulls:** Medium and Large 1-2 440-440 lbs (440) 123.00 (123.00); 450-470 lbs (461) 112.00-124.00 (118.99); 520-520 lbs (520) 107.50 (107.50); 585-585 lbs (585) 103.00 (103.00); 615-620 lbs (618) 112.00-113.00 (112.50); 655-675 lbs (665) 104.00-112.00 (107.94); 700-700 lbs (700) 107.00 (107.00); 775-775 lbs (775) 100.00 (100.00); 805-825 lbs (815) 95.00-110.00 (102.59); 980-980 lbs (980) 106.00 (106.00).

**Bred Cows:** Medium and Large 1-2 Young 920-1085 lbs (1023) 675.00-820.00 per head 4-6 months bred (764.41). Medium and Large 1-2 Young 1275-1275 lbs (1275) 895.00 per head 7-9 months bred (895.00).

**Slaughter Cows:** Breaker 70-80 percent lean 1305-1380 lbs (1346) 67.00-72.00 (69.14). Boner 80-85 percent lean 825-825 lbs (825) 69.00 (69.00); 915-1395 lbs (1123) 64.00-71.50 (67.30); 1065-1065 lbs low dressing (1065) 59.00 (59.00); 1540-1815 lbs (1678) 59.50-65.00 (62.02); 2110-2335 lbs (2255) 56.00-60.00 (58.01). Lean 85-90 percent lean 920-1365 lbs (1148) 51.00-64.00 (59.82); 1010-1215 lbs low dressing (1113) 35.00-50.00 (41.81); 1465-1465 lbs (1465) 55.00 (55.00); 1650-1650 lbs low dressing (1650) 36.00 (36.00).

**Slaughter Bulls:** Yield Grade 1-2 1270-1395 lbs (1320) 80.00-82.00 (80.88); 1615-1640 lbs (1628) 84.50-85.00 (84.75).

**Cows/Calf Pairs:** (1) Large 1 and 2 1300 lbs middle age cows with 180 lbs calves 1230.00 per pair.


Compiled and edited by:

Greg Anderson
Extension Agent
Ag & Natural Resources

Secretarial support by: Cheryl Mitchell
PLACES TO BE

August 6  McDowell Junior Livestock Show, Ag Center 9am
August 16 McDowell Junior Livestock Banquet, St. John’s Parrish House, 6:00pm
August 23 RSVP to McDowell Cattlemen’s Association meeting by 5:00 p.m. to 652-7874
August 30 McDowell Cattlemen’s Assoc Summer Meeting, Brown Farm, 6 p.m.

September 9-18 Mountain State Fair, Fletcher
September 14 Commercial Cattlemen’s Symposium, Durham
September 19 – November 11 Am I Cut Out to be an Entrepreneur Classes, MTCC, 6:00pm-9:00pm
September 27 McDowell Cattlemen Board of Directors Meeting, ECR, 6:30pm
October 8 Mountain Glory Festival, Marion
October 13 - 23 NC State Fair, Raleigh
October 27 WNC Beef Commission meeting, TBD
November 3 McDowell Cattlemen’s Assoc Fall Meeting, 6:00pm

For up-to-date event schedule check our Events page at: http://mcdowell.ces.ncsu.edu

Mark Your Calendar!

For accommodations for persons with disabilities, contact the McDowell County Center at 828-652-7874, no later than five business days before the event.