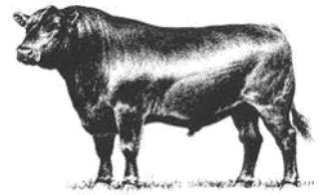




The Beef Bonanza

just shooting the bull



Summer 2019 Issue

McDowell
county center

NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

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McDowell County Cattlemen's Meeting

Thursday, August 22nd at 6:00 pm
McDowell Ag Center
188 Ag Services Drive, Marion

**Please call the Extension Office at 828-652-8104
by Monday, August 19th to RSVP.**

Contact Us

**NC COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION**
McDowell Center

County Administration
Building, Room 226
60 East Court Street
Marion, NC 28752

Phone: 828-652-8104
Fax: 828-652-8104

Upcoming Events

- **Mountain State WNC District Beef Show
Saturday, September 7th at the WNC Ag
Center**
- **Pesticide Recertification Class, September 9th**

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Forages, Weeds, and Fertilization

Written by: Adam Lawing

In this article, we are going to skim over some pretty good topics that you should be thinking about implementing from now till spring of next year. There are many different things that can be done, starting now, that can help your pastures be more productive in the upcoming year. Frost seeding clover, stockpiling fescue, weed management and soil tests are some of the topics we will discuss.

First thing first, getting ready to stockpile fescue fields to graze this winter needs to be started fairly soon. Either clipping pastures or having your cattle graze it is the first process. Be sure not to cut it to close nor let your cattle over graze. That will add stress to the plants and possibly decrease yield. Then anytime from now to around the 1st of September, apply 50 pounds/acre of nitrogen to the pastures. Be sure to let the fields you set aside for this process rest until December. The goal of stockpiling is to allow these areas to grow during the cool days of fall, so that you still have some grass to graze during the winter. Although the forage will not be the quality of nice spring grass, it will however extend your grazing period, saving you some added feed/hay cost.

Frost seeding clover is another practice that can be implemented on pastures that have been overgrazed or just thinning. When pastures are frozen, you can take a drag and scratch up the soil on the bare areas and broadcast clover seed (red clover varieties are more commonly used). The process behind this is that as the ground thaws out and freezes time after time (expanding and contracting), it works the clover seed into the soil for it to germinate in the spring.

Spring and early summer are great times to work on weed control and is a common practice in our area. Fall can also be an appropriate time for chemical applications, primarily on cool season weeds. Weeds are easier to kill the smaller and earlier you spray. Occasional pasture walks are the best way to identify when and what you need to spray. Spray when temperatures are over 50 degrees and when you have little to no wind. Know what weeds you are seeing. Most cases a general broadleaf herbicide like 2,4-D will work just fine, but if you have harder to kill weeds you may need a stronger chemical. Horsenettle and woodier weeds are a couple of examples where 2,4-D doesn't work as well. For these situations, you might need a little more power in your tank. One herbicide that I mostly recommend goes by the trade name Crossbow, but there are generic options. Crossbow is a mixture of 2,4-D Ester and Triclopyr. On the 2,4-D side, remember that there are 2 versions of this chemical, ester and amine. The Ester works better but is more volatile than the amine version. Another chemical that is really popular and works well is Grazon. The only issue with this chemical is the residual that is left in the manure and urine. This is a direct quote from the label, "Manure and urine from animals consuming grass or hay treated with this product may contain enough aminopyralid to cause injury to sensitive broadleaf plants. • Hay can only be used on the farm or ranch where product is applied unless allowed by supplemental labeling." The residual can last up to 18 months, which is one reason this product works as well as it does on weeds. So just take this into consideration before applying this product.

I always push my farmers to submit soil samples for proper pasture management. The NCDA charges for samples during their peak season starting after Thanksgiving. So, if you haven't sent off a sample in the past couple years, I suggest you try and get one in the next couple months. Sending off samples is something I really try to push because it is free for part of the year, easy to do (I will also come and help) and it shows you if you are putting out too much or not enough fertilizer, which can affect your bottom dollar. Another important factor is calibrating your spreader. If you don't know how much fertilizer you are putting out, the fertilizer recommendation kind of gets thrown out to the wind.

These are just a few things that we all can be implementing on our operations to get us started out on the right foot in the coming year.

Another thing I would like to discuss is disasters. I recently got back from our annual agent training and our past natural disasters was a large topic covered. So, what I want you to think about is, do you have a plan if something were to happen? Maybe even a backup plan for the backup plan? Also, how much feed are your livestock eating and how much feed would it take you to get through the winter? We never know when a hurricane, fire or any other disaster might occur nor how impactful it could be. Just remember to try and have a plan if something were to happen. If we ever do face a disaster and you need someplace to hold your animals during an emergency, the Ag Barn on 226S is the counties noted facility for livestock.



Meat Suite

Written by: Adam Lawing

NC Choices, a program with NC State and NC Cooperative Extension is currently working on a free online tool to help source meat. If you sell or are interested in selling meat, give me a call. I have applications and more information! It is also a great resource for those looking to purchase meat from local farmers.

Find your farmer online!



Fill your freezer!



www.meatsuite.com

MEATSUITE.COM is a free online tool to help you easily find locally produced, affordable, delicious meats in bulk. Use MeatSuite to find farmers across North Carolina, and connect with *your* farmer to purchase the full suite of great local meats.

Why buy meat in bulk?

-  **Save Money.** Because bulk local meat offers a low price-per-pound on desirable cuts, you can expect significant savings over meat sold by the piece.
-  **Support Local Farms.** Your local farmer can tell you about their practices including breeds and feeds. Buying whole, half, or quarter animals is efficient and profitable for the farm and your purchase supports the local economy.
-  **Taste the Difference** Locally-raised meats are delicious and flavorful; and you'll have the chance to try new cuts and recipes.

VISIT MEATSUITE.COM TO GET STARTED

www.meatsuite.com

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United States Department of Agriculture
National Institute of Food and Agriculture

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For accommodations for persons with disabilities, contact the McDowell County Center at 828-652-8104, no later than 10 business days before the event.