



The Quarterly Beef News

Summer Edition Newsletter



McDowell County Center

August 2024

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Contact Us!

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August Cattlemen's Meeting

I hope everyone is looking forward to the next cattlemen's meeting. It will be held, August 22nd at 6 PM at the McDowell Senior Center. We will have a guest speaker Evan Davis who is the Director of Farmland Preservation with the NC Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services. Evan will be talking about farmland preservation and loss and what the projections are for the coming years.

I hope everyone is having a great summer so far and staying cool. With the high temperatures and high heat indexes that we have had, it is important to keep a regular check on your livestock. I wrote an article titled "**How to Keep Your Livestock Cool in the Summer Heat**" it has tips & tricks to help keep your livestock cooler in the summer heat. Also, I have included an article written by the University of Wisconsin-Madison titled "*Keep Cattle Cool and Comfortable in Summer*". This article talks about what you should look for when checking on your cattle and it talks about ways to keep your livestock cool.

Please **RSVP** for the cattlemen's meeting by August 20th, you can call the office at (828) 652-8104.

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How to Keep Your Livestock Cool in the Summer Heat

As summer temperatures rise, it's crucial to ensure your livestock stays cool and comfortable to maintain their health and productivity. Here are some tips and tricks to help keep your livestock cool during the hot months:

1. Provide Adequate Shade

- Ensure that your livestock has access to plenty of shaded areas. Trees, shade cloths, portable shade structures and barns can offer relief from the sun's intense rays.

2. Optimize Ventilation

- Good airflow is essential. Use fans and ventilation systems in barns and shelters to help circulate air and reduce heat buildup.

3. Hydration is Key

- Keep fresh, clean water available at all times. Livestock can drink significantly more water during hot weather, so check and refill water sources frequently.

4. Feeding Strategies

- Feed your animals during the cooler parts of the day, such as early morning or late evening. Digestion generates heat, so feeding during cooler times can help reduce heat stress.

5. Grooming and Shearing

- For animals with thick coats, regular grooming can help reduce heat retention. In some cases, shearing might be necessary to provide immediate relief from the heat.

6. Plan for Extreme Heat

- Have an emergency plan in place for heatwaves. Know the signs of heat stress in your animals, such as excessive panting, drooling, lethargy, and reduced feed intake.

By implementing these tips and tricks, you can help ensure that your livestock remains healthy, comfortable, and productive throughout the summer heat. Prioritizing their well-being during hot weather not only benefits the animals but also supports overall farm efficiency and success.

Keep Cattle Cool and Comfortable in Summer

The latest long-range forecasts from the National Weather Service show that Wisconsin has a 40% to 50% chance of a hotter-than-normal summer. Long periods of heat stress are more likely to have lasting effects on cattle, including early embryonic loss in heifers and cows, poor semen quality in bulls, and reduced gains in feeder cattle.

Cattle have a comfort zone of 32 to 77 degrees F. When temperatures rise above this range, cattle use valuable energy to stay cool. Environmental factors contribute to heat stress in cattle, including ambient temperature, humidity, wind speed, and solar radiation.

Watch for signs of stress

Measuring breathing rate is the simplest way to evaluate an animal's current level of heat stress. Set a timer for 60 seconds and count how many breaths per minute (BPM) the animal takes:

- less than 90 BPM—normal
- 90 to 110 BPM—closely monitor
- over 110 BPM—indistress
- over 130 BPM—intervene now

Other signs of heat stress include spending more time standing, restlessness, and drooling. In extreme cases, cattle may open-mouth breathe, and breathing appears labored. Young calves and

heavy cattle are more sensitive to heat and have a greater risk of heat stress.

Beat the heat

Shade structures or trees provide areas where the temperature is lower, plus less solar radiation reaches cattle. Cloud cover also reduces solar radiation. Cattle on pasture with no shade experience higher temperatures and more intense solar radiation, which increases their risk of heat stress. Beef cows should have access to about 30 square feet of shade per head. If there is not enough shade area, animals may congregate under the limited shade and reduce their ability to dissipate heat.



*Beef cows and calves utilize tree shade on pasture.
(Photo: Kim Kester)*

Drinking water helps animals regulate their body temperature. Ensure they have fresh, clean water that is easily accessible. On an 80-degree day, a 500-pound growing calf needs roughly 8 gallons of water per day, and a lactating cow needs up to 18 gallons. Water can also be used to spray down mounds or the ground where cattle bed down in the evening. Cooling the ground temperature will help cattle stay comfortable as they rest for the night.

Air movement is critical to reducing cattle body temperatures. If cattle are fed or housed in a shed or barn, consider using fans to move air across the herd. Leave overhead doors open to increase airflow. Cattle on pasture can dissipate additional heat if there is a breeze or if they can access hills. Feedlot animals with outside lot access can spread themselves out and have better airflow with access to earthen mounds.

Avoid feeding during the hottest parts of the day, because body temperatures increase as feed is digested.

Also avoid herd health events or shipment during periods of extreme heat. Many handling facilities do not allow for adequate airflow while cattle are being held. If handling must occur, plan it for early morning or late evening when temperatures are lower. If you must haul cattle, minimize stops to ensure air circulates through the trailer while you drive as much as possible.

Monitoring your herd's behavior, providing access to shade and water, and making minor changes to management strategies can reduce the risk of heat stress in cattle. This will have a positive impact on animal welfare and your bottom line.

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<https://www.farmprogress.com/cattle-news/keep-cattle-cool-comfortable-this-summer>



GRILLED RIBEYE STEAKS AND POTATOES WITH SMOKY PAPRIKA RUB

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 beef Ribeye Steaks Boneless, cut 1 inch thick (about 12 ounces each)
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 large russet potatoes, cut lengthwise into 8 wedges each
- 1 tablespoon minced green onions
- Sour Cream and Onion Sauce (recipe follows) (optional)

Seasoning:

- 2 tablespoons smoked or Spanish paprika
- 1-1/2 teaspoons sugar
- 1-1/2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon ground red pepper

1. **Combine** seasoning ingredients in small bowl; remove and reserve 2 tablespoons. Press remaining seasoning evenly onto beef steaks; set aside. Combine reserved seasoning, oil and salt in large bowl. Add potatoes; toss to coat.

2. **Place** steaks on grid over medium, ash-covered coals; arrange potatoes around steaks. Grill steaks, covered, 10 to 14 minutes (over medium heat on preheated gas grill, 9 to 14 minutes) for medium rare (145°F) to medium (160°F) doneness, turning occasionally. Grill potatoes 14 to 17 minutes (over medium heat on preheated gas grill, 13 to 15 minutes) or until tender, turning occasionally.

3. **Carve** steaks into slices; season with salt, as desired. Sprinkle green onion over potatoes. Serve potatoes with Sour Cream and Onion Sauce for dipping, if desired.

Sour Cream and Onion Sauce: Combine 1/2 cup dairy sour cream and 2 tablespoons minced green onion. Sprinkle with smoked or Spanish paprika, as desired. Yield: 1/2 cup

Cow Herd Management Calendar

July/August/September:

- Monitoring fly problems, put fly tags in cattle, use pour-on fly spray in addition to fly tags to help with fly infestation.
- Make sure cattle have access to Hi-Mag minerals especially during summer.
- Monitor your calves to ensure they are gaining.
- Make sure the cattle maintain a body condition score of 5 to 6, provide additional feed if necessary.
- Worm cattle as needed.
- Make sure you have minerals and order more as needed.



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Upcoming Events:



- **Cattlemen's Meeting-** August 22nd
- **78th Annual McDowell Junior Livestock Show, Marion NC-** August 2nd & 3rd
- **NC Hereford Association Filed Day at Mitchems Farm 3C, Vale, NC-** September 14th
- **Piedmont Emergency Animal Response Team Training Course, Winstom Salem, NC-** September 17th
- **Biltmore Livestock Sale, Asheville, NC-** September 28th