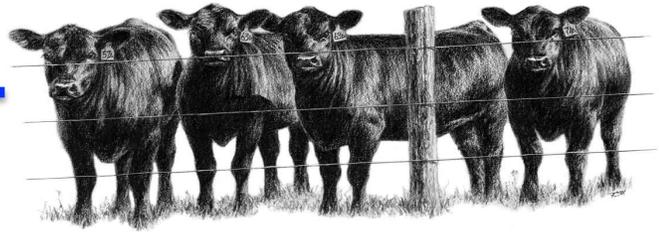


Extension

July, 2015

Cattle Call



Wilkes Cooperative Extension, 201 Curtis Bridge Rd., Wilkesboro * Phone: 336.651.7348 * Fax: 336.651.7516

Managing Cattle in Hot Weather

Allison Brown, Livestock Agent, Alexander County

We have already experienced a string of 90 + degree days in June and typically July and August are our hottest months here in NC. Hot, humid weather is hard on cattle and special precautions should be taken to keep cattle comfortable and avoid heat stress. Producers can implement a number of management strategies to help alleviate heat stress.



Water: An adequate supply of cool, fresh, clean water is essential to keep cattle's internal temperature within normal limits and minimize the effects of heat stress. In the summer, cattle will consume 2 gallons of water per 100 pounds of body weight.

Feeding: Whether you are feeding weaned calves, stockers, replacement heifers, or bred heifers, move the feeding schedule to the evening during hot weather. The metabolic heat of digestion increases when cattle are on dry feeds. Cattle on grass should be rotated through the fields more rapidly and in the evening hours rather than morning. This allows the heat of digestion to dissipate at night when ambient temperatures have declined. Limited and frequent grazing of fescue pastures or clipping pastures early in the season to remove seed heads, will encourage the plant to remain in the vegetative stage of production and thereby reduce the effects of fescue toxicity from the endophyte.

Minerals: A good loose mineral should be an essential part of your year round management program already. Continue to monitor mineral feeding closely during periods of high temperatures. Copper, Selenium, Zinc, and Phosphorus levels should be supplied in your mineral mix. Cattle that are short on copper tend not to shed and maintain longer hair coats, much like cattle that are stressed on fescue pastures. Maintaining an adequate selenium level ensures the immune system is prepared to fight off respiratory infections or even pinkeye. Cattle dealing with mineral imbalances run the risk of heat stress. Certain mineral loss is increased during hot weather due to the increase in water consumption which in turn increases excretion through urination.

Hauling: Do not overcrowd cattle when hauling, especially in hot weather. If hauling to a sale it is likely that you may have to sit and wait in the sun before they are unloaded. High temperatures combined with body heat due to overcrowding can severely stress cattle and even cause death. Not to mention that the more calves are stressed the more shrink you will have to deal with.

Shade: In this part of the country where humidity levels are high, shaded areas are insurance against performance losses. Shade can sometimes be an issue in intensive grazing or rotationally grazed systems. Portable shade or shade structures are a great way to provide animals with shade when there is little to no natural shade available for grazing cattle. Low cost portable shade structure plans can be found at <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/aen/aen99/aen99.pdf>.

Pasture Renovation

Carl Pless, Livestock Agent, Cabarrus County

Fall is the time to reseed cool season grasses in pastures and hayfields. Dry and hot weather in many areas has caused fescue to become dormant. Overgrazing is contributing to a weakening of the stand and weeds often become established in thin areas. Typically we expect to receive adequate moisture and cooler temperatures in late fall which can help achieve success when establishing new forage stands or over-seeding old ones. September and October are usually excellent times to establish or renovate pastures.

Soil analysis can be a useful tool for determining the need to add lime and/or fertilizer. Soil tests in North Carolina are still free to producers from April through November but there is a \$4.00 per sample fee from December through March. Soil test kits are available at the Extension Office.

Clip or graze pastures close before reseeding. Seed germination and emergence and stand establishment are most successful if there is light to the soil surface. The use of a properly adjusted sod drill can give accurate seed placement and good seed to soil contact without planting seeds too deep. If weeds are an issue, it is usually best to control them before reseeding, but many pesticides have plant back restrictions and some can be as much as 120 days to a year so read and follow herbicide label.

Adding clovers to forage mixtures will improve forage yields and quality and lessen nitrogen requirements. Broadleaf herbicides will kill or injure clover, so always control weeds before planting legumes. Again many herbicides have plant back restrictions and clovers are sensitive to most of them, so read the label and act accordingly.

Forage eating insects, such as grasshoppers and crickets can severely damage seedlings as they emerge. In some instances, burning down the existing vegetation before reseeding may be advisable or one may want to wait until a killing frost reduces the insect population. However, the earlier a stand is established, the more time it has for root development and the higher the production the next spring.

Managing a new or reseeded stand correctly can increase the possibility of a long lasting, productive stand. Cattle should be rotated off a new stand until there is 6-10 inches of growth. What you have above the ground in blade growth is what you have below the ground in root growth, so allow the root system to develop properly.

Producers in areas that are experiencing severe drought this summer may supplement grazing this winter by seeding a cereal grain such as rye, triticale, wheat or oats this fall. Higher winter grazing yields result from grains seeded as early as possible. Adequate soil moisture is necessary for establishing a good stand.

NCDR Agronomic Division 4300 Reedy Creek Road Raleigh, NC 27607-6465 (919) 733-2655										Report No: 02239												
Soil Test Report										Educational Sample-Swine Waste												
4300 Reedy Creek Rd. Raleigh, NC 27607										Client: County Extension Director												
1/26/96 SERVING N.C. CITIZENS FOR OVER 50 YEARS										Farm:												
Agronomist Comments:																						
Field Information		Applied Lime				Recommendations																
Sample No.	Last Crop	Mo	Yr	T/A	Crop or Year	Lime	N	P2O5	K2O	Mg	Cu	Zn	B	Mn	See Note							
NH1	Budgrass				1st Crop: Berm Hay/Pas,E	1.77	60-80	90-110	40-60	0	0	0	0	0	0	12						
					2nd Crop: Berm Hay/Pas,M	0	180-230	80-100	120-140	0	0	0	0	0	0	12						
Test Results																						
Soil Class	HM%	W/V	CEC	BS%	Ac	pH	P-F	K-F	Ca%	Mg%	Mn-Al (1)	Mn-Al (2)	Zn-1	Zn-Al	Cu-1	S-1	SS-1	Nb-N	Nb-N	Nu		
MN	0.41	0.84	3.8	53.0	1.8	4.5	21	44	34.0	13.0	2089	1265	1265	48	48	77	78	24			0.1	
Field Information		Applied Lime				Recommendations																
Sample No.	Last Crop	Mo	Yr	T/A	Crop or Year	Lime	N	P2O5	K2O	Mg	Cu	Zn	B	Mn	See Note							
W2	Budgrass				1st Crop: Berm Hay/Pas,E	1.27	60-80	0	0-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	12						
					2nd Crop: Alfalfa, E	0	10-30	0	50-70	0	0	0	0	3	0	12						
Test Results																						
Soil Class	HM%	W/V	CEC	BS%	Ac	pH	P-F	K-F	Ca%	Mg%	Mn-Al (1)	Mn-Al (2)	Zn-1	Zn-Al	Cu-1	S-1	SS-1	Nb-N	Nb-N	Nu		
MN	0.56	0.82	3.8	66.0	1.5	4.9	87.0	71	44.0	13.0	2355	1421	1421	68.5	68.5	149.0	60	17			0.1	



Cattlemen's Meeting August 27, 2015. Double J Farm Traphill, NC. Details to follow.

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