

The Bovine Nine

What's *UP!* With Beef

Market News and Management Information

From the 9-County Priority Program Team

*Of Benton, Chester, Decatur, Fayette, Hardeman, Hardin,
Henderson, Madison, and McNairy Counties*

By Brian White, Extension Agent

& Jimmy C. Castellaw, Area Specialist

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UT Extension to Organize Steer Feed Out Test for West Tennessee Producers

Ever wanted to know how your cattle fed, graded, yielded, converted feed, or stayed healthy after they were sold or left the farm. This fall you will have the opportunity to find out that information & it takes only a one head to participate. The Extension Service will be organizing a feed out test for producers with less than lot loads to group there cattle together with a similar weaning & health program. The goal is to have about 65 head of steers in the 700lb – 825lb rage to ready to load around late September to early October. Producers will be able to put as few as 1 head or as many as 20 on the load to be able to receive complete feedlot performance & carcass data to help them improve their cattle operation. Contact your county agent or Brian White at 968-5266 for more info.

Marketing Cull Cows

Cull cows generally comprise 15 to 20 percent of the cow/calf enterprise income. Thus, it is beneficial to consider when and how those animals will be marketed. Many areas of the state have more than adequate forage supplies and

other low-cost feed alternatives available, which makes feeding cull cows more attractive.

- Add weight to thin cows before selling, particularly when cows are BCS 3 or lower at culling. High quality forage replenishes muscle mass on cows (as would a high grain diet). Extremely old cows may not gain as efficiently as younger cows. Target a BCS of 5 for light muscled cows and BCS 5 to 6 for heavier muscled cows.

- Cull old cows before they lose their teeth, decline in body condition and fail to breed.

- Sell cows before they become fat (BCS 8 to 9). Fat cows are discounted for low lean yield regardless of their potential to classify as breaking utility.

- Sell cows outside seasonal marketing trends. Cull cow prices are normally lowest in October and November. If possible, consider marketing between February and September when slaughter rates are lower.

- Consider cull cows as a valuable asset and handle them as such. Bruising is a major problem with cull cows. Most bruises are caused by rough handling and hauling.

- Be cautious and concerned about withdrawal times when marketing cows that have been treated with animal

health products. Always read label directions.

Beef Cattle Calendar

The 2005 Beef Integrated Resource Management Calendar is now available for download from the Web. The calendar can be found at <http://animalscience.ag.utk.edu/beef/IRM.htm>. This is a link in the Animal Science Web Page.

Buy/Sell Margins Calculator Software Updated

The Buy/Sell Margins Calculator has been updated to include prices through 2004 for Tennessee and Georgia feeder cattle and Southern Plains finished cattle as well as prices for Tennessee 700-800 lbs. heifers. The Buy/Sell Margins Calculator is a computer software program designed to help producers evaluate the decision to buy and/or sell cattle in a backgrounding or finishing operation. Learn more about the Buy/Sell Margins Calculator and download your free copy at www.tnbeefcattleinitiative.org.

CORN SILAGE VARIETY TEST RESULTS AVAILABLE

The results from the 2004 corn silage variety tests are now available. Twenty-four hybrids were evaluated at 4 locations across the state. Silage yield and quality were measured in these studies. Results can be found on the web at www.utcropl.com under corn, then varieties.

NEW WHITE CLOVER CULTIVARS FOR THE SOUTHEASTERN USA

Ladino white clover cultivars are not dependable inter-planted in perennial grass pastures. Naturalized white clover ecotypes collected in Georgia pastures

were the stolon dense, intermediate leaf types and not ladinos. From these ecotypes, two commercial cultivars, "Durana" (ecotype) and 'Patriot' were developed. In this study, the performance of Durana and Patriot was compared to the ladino cultivar 'Regal' when inter-seeded into endophyte-infected (E+) and endophyte-free (E-) tall fescue pastures. From trials at the University of Georgia, three things were demonstrated. First, the benefit of white clover forage to the total available forage dry matter was shown in increased animal performance. Second, the poor persistence of ladino cultivars when used in perennial grass-based grazing systems was reconfirmed. Third, the ability of the stolon dense, ecotype based white clover cultivars, specifically Durana and Patriot, to provide better animal performance than ladinos due to increased persistence and ability to sustain a higher clover dry matter % was recorded. Durana and Patriot should be valuable additions for livestock producers in the southeastern USA by improving long term animal performance, even on non-toxic tall fescue forage, and at the same time, limiting the use of expensive nitrogen fertilizer.

PRODUCERS NEED TO USE HIGH MAGNESIUM MINERAL SUPPLEMENT

Beef producers need to be sure that they use high magnesium mineral supplements for their cow-calf herds now and into spring. Higher producing cows may have higher requirements, thus a greater susceptibility to grass tetany. In addition to this low level of magnesium the potassium levels in spring produced fescue was 2.72%. This was enough potassium to be antagonistic

to the absorption of the magnesium. Fertilizing with high levels of a potassium fertilizer in the spring just makes the situation worse.

Producers should feed a high magnesium mineral supplement that will provide the equivalent of one ounce of magnesium oxide or .6 ounces of magnesium. Magnesium in the mineral mixtures should be in the form of magnesium oxide or magnesium sulfate. Magnesite and dolomitic limestone are not good sources of magnesium. High magnesium mineral containing either of these materials should be avoided. Producers should monitor consumption to be sure animals are consuming the proper amount of mineral.

Bull Soundness Evaluation

This past December, bull clinics were held in Savannah and Somerville. There were 141 bulls tested for breeding soundness. Sixteen bulls (11%) failed the exam. This represents a potential loss of 400 calves if these bulls had not been replaced in the herds.

It is real easy to stress how important this is to the individual producer in Tennessee with the average herd size of 25 females. This means that every eleventh farm you pass would have a bull that was not capable of servicing the herd. If that were your farm, how much of an impact would that have on you?

A missed calf crop or a very long breeding season might occur. Neither of these is desirable! Have your bulls checked!

Market Trends

LIVESTOCK COMMENTS: EMMIT RAWLS - U.T. EXTENSION (1/14/05) CATTLE:

Fed sold for mostly \$92 live and \$145 dressed this week, about \$4 higher than last week. The sharp increase in cut out values moved the market higher. The reduced level of processing combined with still tight front end and supplies in the feedlot also contributed to the higher market. The announcement of an additional cow with BSE in Canada has made the market nervous. The futures market reacts to uncertainty. The fact that the cow was born after the ban on feeding ruminant based feed to cattle created the expectation that USDA might change its plans to open the border to cattle from Canada. So far, USDA plans to send a team to Canada to evaluate the feed production, inspection and

testing program. If Tyson, National and Swift continue to operate at a reduced level, wholesale values could move higher yet. On several occasions this year reduced processing has moved wholesale values higher for a time before stalling out. That could happen again. For now feeders are happy to sell fed cattle closer to breakeven and maybe above. Buyers of feeder cattle are anxious about what the market will be if and when cattle come from Canada. This is restraining feeder prices a bit, even though they were higher this week. This is a valid concern and reason for price risk management to be considered. Prices on Tennessee auctions were called \$2 to \$4 higher on steers and heifers under 600 lbs. Over 600 lbs. prices were steady. Corn prices declined this week on another increase in the size of the '04 crop. Take advantage of this decline to price feed needs in '05. Though prices should not increase

sharply, the upside risk is greater than the fear of buying feed too high. Technically speaking; based on Thursdays close, the February Live Cattle has support at \$90.78, then \$89.78. Resistance is at \$91.78, then \$92.78. The RSI is \$57.62, moving towards over bought. The June Live Cattle has support at \$81.65, then \$80.70. Resistance is \$83.60, then

\$84.02. The RSI at \$66.15, close to the 70, overbought level. The March feeder Cattle contract has support at \$101.27, then \$100.72. It has resistance at \$102.82, then \$103.87. The RSI is \$62.90. May Feeder Cattle has support at \$99.55, then \$98.55. Resistance is at \$100.55, then \$103.40. RSI is \$63.32

Upcoming events

January 20 ----- UT Sr. Bull Test Sale ---- Spring Hill.
January 24 ----- Livestock Meeting ---- Montezuma Community Center/ Chester Co
February 8 ---- Pasture Weed Control meeting Henderson/ Decatur Co (contact co agent for location)
February 11 --- Beef Advantage Sale --- Savannah
February 25 --- Power Genetics Bull Sale ----- Paris
February 28 --- West Tn Angus Sale ---- Martin
March 18 ---- Four L Hereford/Donnell & Donnell Bull Sale
March 26 ---- Candy Meadow Farms Bull Sale -- Lexington

1st Thursday @ Somerville Livestock monthly Livestock Association in the Evening

February 14 --- Madison County Beef School----- Jackson
February 21 --- Madison County Beef School----- Jackson
February 28 --- Madison County Beef School----- Jackson

January 27 ----- Master Beef Producer ---- Lexington
February 3 ----- Master Beef Producer ---- Lexington
February 10 ---- Master Beef Producer ---- Lexington
February 17 --- Master Beef Producer ---- Lexington
February 24 --- Master Beef Producer ---- Lexington

February 1 --- Master Beef Producer --- Mason
And each Tuesday Night until April 5

For more information, please contact your local Extension office.

901-465-5233

Jimmy C. Castellaw
Area Specialist-Farm Management
jim.castellaw@utk.edu

