

NORTHEAST FLORIDA BEEF & FORAGE GROUP



March 2012

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In this edition of the Northeast Florida Beef and Forage Group Newsletter you'll find timely topics related to your hay and cattle management needs. We've planned several programs this spring related to forage management, business management and invasive plant identification.

Our upcoming Northeast Forage School will take place on April 12th at the Baker County Extension Office. This program will provide beginner hay farmers with information they will need as the hay season kicks off. We look forward to seeing you at our workshops and to help you improve the profitability of your farm.

Tim Wilson

Northeast Florida Beef & Forage Group, Chair



Bahiagrass Pasture Fertilizer Options

Keith Wynn, Agriculture Agent, Hamilton County Extension

Bahiagrass is the forage crop most cattle producers in our area utilize. This grass is widely used probably because of its potential to yield under very low input conditions. Due to the cost of fertilizer and dry weather conditions most Bahiagrass pastures are seldom fertilized on a yearly basis. If you have had a soil sample and are planning to fertilize your pasture this year, the following options may be of interest to you.

The EDIS Publication Fertilizing and Liming Forage Crops list three options for fertilizing Bahia-

grass pastures used for grazing. Choose the option which most closely fits your fertilizer budget, man-

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agement objectives, and land capability.

- **Low-Nitrogen Option:** Do not use this option if you cut hay since nutrient removal by hay is much greater than by grazing animals. This option results in the lowest cost of purchased fertilizer. Apply 50–60 lb N/acre in the early spring. Do not apply K, recognizing that N will be the limiting nutrient in this low-cost option. Apply 25 lb P₂O₅/acre if your soil tests Very Low or Low in P and tissue P concentration is below 0.15%. Do not apply P if tissue P concentration is at or above 0.15%, even if the soil tests Very Low or Low in P. For Medium and High soil P levels, neither P application nor tissue analysis is recommended since there will be no added benefit of P fertilization on Bahiagrass yields.
- **Medium-Nitrogen Option:** Apply 100 lb N/acre in the early spring. Apply 25 lb P₂O₅/acre if your soil tests Very Low or Low in P and tissue P concentration is below 0.15%. Do not apply P if tissue P concentration is at or above 0.15%, even if the soil tests Very Low or Low in P. For Medium and High soil P levels, neither P application nor tissue analysis is recommended since there will be no added benefit of P fertilization on Bahiagrass yields.
- **High-Nitrogen Option:** Apply 160 lb N/acre in two applications of 80 lb N/acre in early spring and early summer. Apply 40 lb P₂O₅/acre if your soil tests Very Low or Low in P and tissue P concentration is below 0.15%. Do not apply P if tissue P concentration is at or above 0.15%, even if the soil tests Very Low or Low in P. For Medium and High soil P levels, neither P application nor tissue analysis is recommended since there will be no added benefit of P fertilization on Bahiagrass yields. Apply 80 lb K₂O/acre if your soil tests Very Low or Low in K and 40 lb K₂O/acre if it tests Medium. No K should be applied if your soil tests High or Very High in K. The fertilization rates suggested in this option are high enough to allow Bahiagrass pasture to achieve well above average production. Management and environmental factors will determine how much of the potential production is achieved and how much of the forage is utilized. A single cutting of hay can be made without need for additional fertilization.

Source:

Fertilizing and Liming Forage Crops Publication #SS-AGR-176, Y.C. Newman, C. Mackowiak, R. Mylavaparu, and M. Silveira

Beef Management: Castration

Tim Wilson, County Extension Director/Livestock and Forages Agent, Bradford County Extension

Improving marketability, preventing breeding, reducing aggression and improving meat quality are just a few of the reasons producers incorporate castration into their operations. Often cattlemen discuss the premium they receive from selling steers rather than bulls at market. However, the truth is that producers who market their calves as steers rather than bulls are

not receiving a premium, but are not being discounted.

Is castration worth it?

A study conducted by Oklahoma State University reports that in an evaluation of over 26,000 head of cattle sold in 18 sale barns, bulls were reduced in price by \$3.56 and \$2.24 per hundred pounds compared to steers during 1997 and 1999 respectively. These reductions could be seen as a 550 pound bull being reduced in price by \$20 and \$12

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2012 Herbicide Pricing

Brad Burbaugh, Agriculture/ Natural Resources Agent, Duval County Extension

Forage production in pastures and hay fields is adversely affected by weeds. Many poisonous weeds start growing in late fall and early spring. Proper identification of weeds and timely herbicide applications are the key to cost effective weed control. The intent of this article is to provide approximate pricing for commonly used pasture herbicides.



Herbicide Trade Name	Herbicide Common Name	Registrant	Approximate Cost/Unit
2,4-D Amine	2,4-D	Several	13/gal
2,4-D Ester	2,4-D	Several	19/gal
Arsenal AC	imazapyr	BASF	165/gal
Cimarron Plus	metsulfuron + chlorsulfuron	DuPont	13/oz
Cleanwave	fluroxypyr + aminopyralid	Dow Agrosciences	70/gal
Crossbow	triclopyr + 2,4-D	Dow AgroSciences	40/gal
Dicamba	dicamba	various	45/gal
Escort	metsulfuron	DuPont	11/oz
Garlon 3A	triclopyr	Dow AgroSciences	70/gal
Garlon 4 Ultra	triclopyr	Dow AgroSciences	95/gal
glyphosate	glyphosate	several	16 to 10/gal
GrazonNext	aminopyralid + 2,4-D	Dow Agrosciences	34/gal
Impose	imazapic	MANA	325/gal
Metsulfuron	metsulfuron	various	6/oz
Milestone	aminopyralid	Dow AgroSciences	90/qt
Outrider	sulfosulfuron	Monsanto	16/oz
Pastora	nicosulfuron+metsulfuron	DuPont	15/oz
Pasturegard	triclopyr + fluroxypyr	Dow AgroSciences	60/gal
Prowl H2O	pendimethalin	BASF	33/gal
Remedy Ultra	triclopyr	Dow AgroSciences	60 - 100/gal
Telar DF	chlorsulfuron	DuPont	21/oz
Velpar L	hexazinone	DuPont	75/gal

This list was compiled using the UF/IFAS Publication, Approximate Herbicide Pricing by Drs. Jay Ferrell and Brent Sellers. The use of trade names in this publication is solely for the purpose of providing specific information. It is not a guarantee or warranty of the product named, and does not signify that they are approved to the exclusion of others of suitable composition. For more information contact your county extension agent.



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when compared to a 550 pound steer. The reduction in price for bulls was presumed lower due to the subsequent decreased performance expected after castration.

Research from Texas A&M University reports that weaned intact bull calves that were shipped in load lots and castrated upon arrival had a 13.5% reduction in daily gain and a 10.3% reduction in season long gain. When the effects of castration were combined with the effects of morbidity, productivity decreased 24.8% compared to steers. Their conclusions from this study indicated that healthy steers were valued at \$22 more than healthy bulls and \$48 more than morbid bulls.

When to castrate

Castrating calves at a younger age (less than two months old) has been proven to be less stressful. If possible, producers are encouraged to castrate during the spring or fall to reduce infection and disease. However, some calves are not born in conjunction with these time frames and must be castrated as soon as possible. The earlier a bull is castrated, the sooner he will overcome the stresses of this process and continue to grow.

Weight Gains

Producers who are concerned with weight gains after castration may consider using growth promoting implants. Research from the Georgia, Colorado, Oklahoma and South Dakota have all reported that calves that are implanted with an implant when castration is done at an early age can achieve similar if not better weight gains compared to calves that are castrated at weaning.

Castration can be a useful management tool that can increase the overall profitability of your calf crop. If you have any questions regarding castration or any other management practice, please feel free to contact me at timwilson@ufl.edu.



Control These Spring Weeds!

David Nistler, Agriculture/ Small Farm/ Natural Resource Agent, Clay County Extension

Goat Weed

Goatweed leaves are light green and approximately 1.5 inches long by 1 inch wide. Stems are usually smooth, but sometimes have soft, fine hairs, and become woody with age. Flowers are white and borne in the leaf axils. Mature plants reach heights of 1 to 2.5 feet.

Goatweed is relatively tolerant to many herbicides. Currently, the best control option is 2,4-D amine (4 pts/ac.). Repeated mowing does not control

Goatweed either, and it is more difficult to control with herbicides if its stem had become woody.

Dogfennel

Dogfennel is an aggressive native that is particularly troublesome in unimproved or overgrazed pastures. The leaves contain low levels of the toxin tremitol, which can cause dehydration when ingested by livestock. Dogfennel growth is frequently from overwintering rosettes, but seeds will also sprout and grow when soil temperatures reach 65°F.

Apply WeedMaster when plants reach a height of 12-18 inches. WeedMaster is most effective approximately 1 month after Dogfennel transitions from win-

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Northeast Florida Beef and Forage Group Presents
Inaugural Northeast Florida Forage School

**THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 2012
 5:00PM—9:00PM**

**BAKER COUNTY EXTENSION SERVICE AUDITORIUM
 1025 W. MACCLENNY AVE., MACCLENNY, FL 32063**

**Registration 4:30pm.
 \$10 per person. Contact your
 local Extension agent to
 register by April 9, 2012.**

Educational Topics:

- Warm & Cool Season Forages
- Improvement of Existing Pastures
- Soil Fertility
- Soil Amendments
- Weed Control
- Equipment Maintenance

Alachua County:	(352) 955-2402
• Cindy Sanders & Barton Wilder	
Baker County:	(904) 259-3520
• Michael Davis	
Bradford County:	(904) 966-6224
• Tim Wilson	
Clay County:	(904) 284-6355
• David Nistler	
Columbia County:	(386) 752-5384
• Derek Barber	
Duval County:	(904) 255-7450
• Mike Sweat & Brad Burbaugh	
Hamilton County:	(386) 792-1276
• Keith Wynn	
Madison County:	(850) 973-4138
• Dan Fenneman	
Nassau County:	(904) 879-1019
• Steve Gaul	
Suwannee County:	(386) 362-2771
• Elena Toro	
Union County:	(386) 496-2321
• Basil Bactawar	



face. Small white flowers that form a cluster at the ends of stems are characteristic of this weed. GrazonNext alone, or used in combination with Pasturegard, has been shown to provide excellent control of Florida Pusley. GrazonNext is quite slow acting, but the addition of Pasturegard greatly hastens control.



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ter dormancy. For control of larger plants, apply Pasturegard to Dogfennel that has reached 40 inches or taller in height at 3 pts/ac.

Florida Pusley

Florida Pusley is a common and troublesome weed. Plants grow creeping along the ground and have hairy stems that grow up to 30 inches. Leaves are thick and fleshy and often have a rough upper and lower sur-

FROM AROUND THE WEB



<http://agronomy.ifas.ufl.edu/foragesofflorida/>

 **AgroClimate** <http://www.agroclimate.org/>

UF/ IFAS Beef Management Calendar

MARCH

- Prepare land for summer crops.
- Begin grazing warm season permanent pastures.
- Check and fill mineral feeder.
- Observe bulls for condition and success. Rotate and rest if needed.
- Deworm cows as needed.
- Make sure calves are healthy and making good weight gains.



- Hang forced-use dust bags by April 1st for external parasite control or use insecticide impregnated ear tags.
- Identify, vaccinate, implant and work late calves.
- Put bulls out March 1st for calving season to start December 9.
- Remove bulls March 22nd to end calving season January 1.



APRIL

- Plant warm season annual pastures.
- Plant corn for silage.
- Check and fill mineral feeder.
- Check dust bags or apply treated ear tags.
- Check for external parasites and treat if necessary.
- Observe cows for repeat breeders.
- Deworm cows as needed if not done in March.
- Vaccinate against blackleg and brucellosis after 3 months of age and before 12 months of age.
- Market cull cows and bulls.
- Update market information and refine market strategy for calves

MAY

- Remove bulls.
- Harvest hay from cool season crops.
- Plant warm season perennial pastures.
- Fertilize warm season pastures.
- Check mineral feeder.
- Check for spittlebugs and treat if necessary.
- Apply spot-on agents for grub and louse control.
- Check dust bags.
- Vaccinate and implant with growth stimulant at 90-120 days, when you have herd penned.
- Dispose of dead animals properly.
- Update market information and refine marketing plans.
- Remove bulls May 21 to end calving season March 1

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