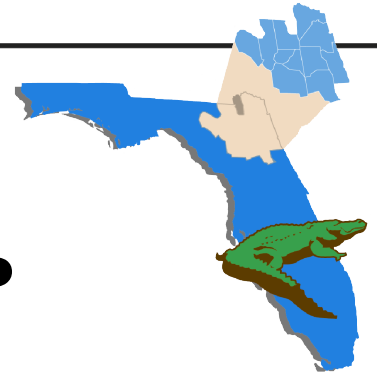


NORTHEAST FLORIDA BEEF & FORAGE GROUP



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October 31, 2008

Dear Producers,

The time to plan for winter feeding is now. In this newsletter, we are providing you with the most up-to-date information on a variety of subjects that will help you make the best decisions for managing your herd during the coming months. If you have any questions about your pastures or livestock, please feel free to contact your local extension agent.

As a result of excessive rain in Duval County, we had to cancel the Hay Field Day planned for September 26. We regret any inconvenience this change may have caused. We will have the Hay Field Day in early summer 2009. On the last page of this newsletter, you will also find program announcements for the "Making Every Dollar Count" Program in Bradford County that will focus on highlighting the different programs and re-

sources available to livestock producers in the area. There will also be another program in Goat Production in Alachua County.

Mark your calendars and plan to join us!

Sincerely,

Elena M. Toro

Elena M. Toro
Chairman, North Florida
Beef & Forage Group

Small Ruminants in Mixed Grazing Systems

Feeding behavior among cattle, sheep, and goats allows producers to utilize different forages available on the farm. Particular consideration in determining the best animal to utilize given forage is one of the first steps in mixed grazing systems. This feeding behavior is important in determining whether single or

multi-species will best utilize available forage. Most studies indicate greater production and better pasture utilization are achieved when sheep and cattle or sheep, cattle, and goats are grazed together as opposed to grazing single species. This is especially true when mixed forage is available.

Under a mixed grazing system when forage supply is low and the nutritive value is high

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ATTENTION GOAT PRODUCERS !

BRONSON ANNOUNCES NEW RULE REGULATING IDENTIFICATION AND MOVEMENT OF SHEEP AND GOATS

TALLAHASSEE -- Florida Agriculture and Consumer Services Commissioner Charles H. Bronson today announced the upcoming implementation of a new rule regulating the identification and intra-state movement of sheep and goats. The rule, effective October 10, is designed to prevent the spread of scrapie, a fatal, degenerative disease of the nervous system in these animals.

The rule requires that all sheep and goats moved intrastate for any reason, or when there is a change of ownership, must be identified by their flock/herd of birth, or if that information is unknown, by the flock/herd from which they originated. Only identification methods approved by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) can be used. These include official USDA ear tags, identification tattoos, or implanted electronic microchips.

The new rule is being done in conjunction with the USDA's Scrapie Eradication Program, which provides standards for state and federal governments and the industry to monitor, control and eradicate the disease from domestic flocks and herds in the United States. The USDA regulates interstate movement of sheep and goats but the state rule was necessary to ensure the same standards are followed for animals moved within the state's borders.



"It is imperative that the federal government and all the states work together on this eradication program," Bronson said. "In today's marketplace, animals are often moved to many locations. It's important to be able to quickly determine where they are from if they are diagnosed with scrapie."

Information about the flock or herd of origin is necessary because an infected animal may not show clinical symptoms for up to five years, making it more difficult to diagnose and trace back to the original herd to look for a source or other infected animals.

The department's Division of Animal Industry is launching an education effort to get word of the new rule out to producers, dealers, auction markets, petting zoos, 4-H clubs, and any other entities that deal with goats and sheep.

For more information about Administrative Code Rule 5C-29, the scrapie rule, contact the Department's Division of Animal Industry at (850) 410-0900 or visit <http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/ai>.

Feeding Livestock During the Cool Season

Skyrocketing production costs compounded by little or no hay in the barn means our local livestock producers will face many challenges this winter. Florida's inclement summer and a continuing drought in the Southeast means hay prices will rise and hay availability will be limited. Now is the time when producers need to start making decisions about how they will survive through the cool-season. In this article, I will briefly provide an overview of some of the factors that need to be considered when designing a winter feeding program for livestock.

The key concept to remember in feeding livestock whether these are cows, bulls or goats is that your feeding program needs to meet their nutrient requirements. Animal require-

ments are based mainly on age, body weight and stage of production. Animals do not have requirements for specific feeds; they have requirements for energy, protein, fiber and other nutrients. Hay alone is usually not enough to meet the daily nutrient requirements of most livestock. Therefore, hay should be tested to know exactly the amount of crude protein and total digestible nutrients that are available to the animal. A hay test from the newly opened UF Forage Testing Laboratory only costs \$5.00 per sample. Results can be used to help balance rations and guarantee our livestock's body condition score is the same or higher than it was coming into the winter. When buying feeds and/or supplements whether these are bulk

or bagged, producers need to know the cost of the protein and TDN per pound of feed.

In our area, cool season forages like rye, oats, ryegrass and wheat can supply excellent grazing for livestock during winter months. They are usually higher in quality than summer perennial grasses like bahiagrass and Bermudagrass. Animals will consume less hay and need fewer supplements when grazing cool season forages. However, producers need to understand that planting and growing these forage crops can involve considerable expense and is somewhat risky business because rainfall is often unpredictable during fall and winter months. This year we may have adequate soil moisture as a result of a rainy summer.

Blends of certain forages will extend winter grazing. For example, a blend of rye and ryegrass has the potential to extend the grazing period by as much as 30 days, which is desirable until adequate summer forage is available. Winter forage production depends on a number of environmental conditions like rainfall and temperature. I was once told that the perfect time to plant would be the day before a significant cold front brought on by an inch of rainfall, but in the agriculture industry it just isn't that easy. A general rule of thumb for planting cool-season forages are constant temperatures in 60's during the evening and 70's



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goats and sheep may be at a disadvantage. These situations dictate that the animal with the largest mouth (cattle) has an advantage because it is able to consume more material per unit of time. In addition, forage intake by goats is greatly reduced and may all together stop if the forage is soiled or trampled, even with an ample

amount of forage remaining. Typically one cow eats about the same amount of forage as 6-8 goats or 5-6 sheep. Because of the complimentary grazing behaviors, the differential preferences and the wide variation in vegetation within most pastures, one to two goats could be grazed with every cow without adversely affecting the feed supply of the cow herd. Because goats have

selective grazing habits, their combination with cattle would eventually produce pastures which would be more productive, of higher quality, and with little weed problems as a result of mixed grazing.

David Nistler
Clay County Extension
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Getting Ready for Winter

Now is the time to purchase seed and start selecting and preparing ground for planting cool-season forages. The IFAS publication, "Fall Forage Update 2008" has listings and discussion of recommended varieties and planting practices for our area. This publication is available through our office or on the web at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AA266>.

If you are planting rye (the small grain), don't get in too big of a hurry if the temperature stays high. Wait until the weather changes and we get several cool nights before planting. This usually occurs after Oct. 15 in northern Florida and after Nov. 01 in southern Florida. Rye is susceptible to certain seedling diseases when planted in hot weather. Oats

can be planted earlier than other small grains and ryegrass, since it is less susceptible to seedling diseases. See attached table for planting dates, seeding rates, and depth.

Cindy Sanders
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Seed Propagated Crops ¹	Planting Dates ² (lb/A Broadcast)	Seeding Rates (inches)	Seeding Depth
Alfalfa	Oct. 1 - Nov. 15	12 - 20	¼ - ½
Clover, Arrowleaf	Oct. 1 - Nov. 15	8 - 10	0 - ½
Clover, Berseem	Oct. 1 - Nov. 15	16 - 20	¼ - ½
Clover, Crimson	Oct. 1 - Nov. 15	20 - 26	¼ - ½
Clover, Red	Oct. 1 - Nov. 15	6 - 12	¼ - ½
Clover, Subterranean	Oct. 1 - Nov. 15	18 - 22	¼ - ½
Clover, White	Oct. 1 - Nov. 15	3 - 4	0 - ¼
Fescue, Tall	Nov. 1 - Dec. 15	16 - 20	¼ - ½
Oats for forage	Sept. 15 - Nov. 15	96 - 128 (3-4 bu.)	1 - 2
Pea, Austrian Winter	Oct. 1 - Nov. 15	45 - 60	½ - 1
Rye for forage	Oct. 15 - Nov. 15	84 - 112 (1.5-2 bu.)	1 - 2

Ryegrass, Italian (annual)	Oct. 1 - Nov. 15	20 - 30	0 - ½
Sweet Clover	Oct. 1 - Nov. 15	12 - 15	¼ - ½
Turnips	Oct. 1 - Nov. 15	5 - 6	¼ - ½
Vetch, Hairy	Oct. 1 - Nov. 15	20 - 30	1 - 2
Wheat for forage	Oct. 15 - Nov. 15	90 -120 (1.5-2 bu.)	1 - 2

¹ Always check seed quality. Seed germination should be 80% or higher for best results. ² Planting date range: in general, cool-season forage crops in northern Florida can be planted in the early part of the planting date range and in southern Florida, in the latter part of the planting date range.

(Continued from page 3)

during the day. The method of planting i.e. prepared seedbed or over-seeding an established pasture will also greatly influence when the forage will be able to be grazed and the amount available for grazing. Species of winter annual forages to plant depend on soil type and moisture holding capacity. Rye is best for sandy soils. The other small grains will do well on heavier soils. Ryegrass and crimson clover grow

best on moderately well-drained soils, but not on deep sands. If irrigation systems are available for watering, all small grains, clovers, and ryegrass will do well and yes...all cool season forages need to be fertilized if forage production is expected. Please note that seed availability this year is limited due to drought in seed production areas.

A list of recommended varieties for our area and management considerations (seeding rates, fertilization and

grazing considerations) can be found in the 2008 Fall Forage Update published by the UF Department of Agronomy. For a copy of this publication and further information on winter supplementation and grazing please call our office at 362-2771 and for hay test submission forms go to: <http://rcrec-ona.ifas.ufl.edu/felgform.pdf>

Elena Toro
Suwannee County Extension
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Beef Cattle Management: Breeding Soundness Exams

Many producers cull cows and heifers based on their inability to produce and wean quality calves. There are many conditions that must be met in order for females to become pregnant, maintain pregnancy, have a live calf, and wean it successfully. If a percentage of females are cycling properly, are in good body condition, yet still do not conceive, what could be wrong? Too many times we contribute reproductive failure solely to the female.

The problem may not be the female, but rather the bull used in the breeding program.

A breeding soundness exam is a procedure that is performed by a veterinarian and includes an evaluation of physical soundness (eyes, feet, legs, body condition, health), reproductive anatomy (internal and external), and semen. This exam

has undergone scoring changes over the years from a

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numerical system to the current classification system of satisfactory, classification deferred, and unsatisfactory.

Structural soundness is necessary to maximize the reproductive ability of a bull. Bulls must be able to see and pursue females in heat. Poor eyesight and unsound legs and feet hinder the bull's ability to perform this task efficiently. Once the bull has identified a female in heat, he must be able to support his weight on his hind two legs. Failure to perform these functions will result in an unsatisfactory classification. Bulls should be in excellent body condition (BCS of 6 – 7; on a 1 – 9 scale) prior to the breeding season. A considerable amount of weight will be lost as the breeding season progresses. Conditioning herd sires prior to the breeding season will prevent bulls from becoming too thin to maintain breeding goals. All bulls should be vaccinated and free of any diseases or infections

prior to the breeding soundness exam.

The internal and external reproductive anatomy is palpated to ensure structural soundness. Rectal palpation of the prostate, seminal vesicles, and ampullae is performed to determine if any abnormalities are present. The testis should feel firm but not hard, and the epididymis should feel soft and free of any lumps. Scrotal circumference is directly related to the onset of puberty in the bull and is highly correlated to puberty in his daughters. It is measured in centimeters around the widest part of the testis and should meet minimum requirements by age (Table 1). The penis must be able to extend fully, and be free of any breaks or warts. Structurally correct reproductive anatomy is crucial for a bull to receive a satisfactory classification.

A semen exam must be performed and evaluated for morphology and motility. A bull must have 70% motility in order to receive a satisfactory classification.

Sperm cells should be able to move in a forward direction and the sperm tail should move vigorously. These criteria are critical in order for sperm to reach the oviduct and fertilize the egg.

Breeding soundness exam should be conducted 30 – 60 days prior to the breeding season. If a herd sire is used in two herds (fall and spring breeding), this exam should be conducted before each breeding season begins. If an unsatisfactory or deferred classification is awarded, this window of time allows the producer to either re-test a preferred bull or purchase a replacement.

Young bulls may not pass a breeding soundness exam, but rather receive a deferred classification. As they mature, they should be retested. Retesting herd sires after the breeding season is completed will be useful in identifying the source if pregnancy rates are lower than desired.

Tim Wilson
Bradford County Extension
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Table 1. Comparison by age of average scrotal circumference (cm) of beef breeds.

Breed	Months							
	<14	14–17	18–20	21–23	24–26	27–30	31–36	>36
Angus	34.8	35.9	36.6	36.9	36.7	36.3	36.6	38.2
Charolais	32.6	35.4	34.5	34.9	34.6	36.2	37.1	38.1
P Hereford	34.8	34.2	34.9	34.9	34.8	35.0	35.6	36.4
Simmental	33.4	36.5	-	-	36.0	-	-	37.2
Brahman	21.9	27.4	29.4	31.4	31.7	33.5	34.7	36.7

(Adapted from Sprott, et al., Texas Agriculture Extension Service (L-5051 9-98))

NORTHEAST FLORIDA BEEF AND FORAGE GROUP

Making Every Dollar Count:
Government Programs Available to Agricultural Producers



November 13, 2008, 6:00 p.m.
Bradford County Extension Office,
2266 N. Temple Avenue Starke, FL 32091

- 6:00 Overview of Cost Share Opportunities with the USDA/NRCS, Jill Epley, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service - Lake City, FL
6:25 Overview of Livestock Disaster Assistance with the FSA Brandy Osteen, USDA Farm Service Agency - Gainesville, FL
6:50 Agricultural Exemptions, Tim Wilson Bradford County Extension Director
7:15 Evaluations and Adjourn

Light refreshments will be served.

To register, contact Tim Wilson at the Bradford County Extension Office at 904-966-6224 before November 10, 2008



For individuals with disabilities requiring special accommodations, please contact the Bradford County Extension Office at least 5 working days prior to the program in order for proper consideration to be given to the request.

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We're on the web:
<http://nfbfg.ifas.ufl.edu>

MARK YOUR CALENDERS !

November 13, 2008, "Making Every Dollar Count :
Government Programs Available to Agricultural Producers",
Bradford County Extension office.

- See Inside for Details

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FLORIDA
IFAS Extension



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