

Hardee Rancher Beef and Forage Newsletter



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January 2008

Calendar Of Events

January

11	17 - Florida Cattlemen's Institute and Allied Trade Show - Kissimmee
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February

18	Hardee County Fair Dairy Show - 6:30 PM - Cattlemen's Arena
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19	Hardee County Fair Swine Show - 7:00 PM - Cattlemen's Arena
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20	Hardee County Fair Beef Breeding and Heifer Show - 6:00 PM; Steer Show - 7:00 PM - Cattlemen's Arena
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21	Hardee County Fair Livestock Sale - 7:00 PM - Cattlemen's Arena
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22	Hardee County Fair - Rodeo - 7:00 PM - Cattlemen's
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- UF/IFAS to Launch Survey of South Florida Beef Producers -

Bridget Carlisle

This January, the University of Florida/IFAS South Florida Beef Forage Group will begin distributing surveys to about one thousand randomly selected South Florida Beef Producers. Since its inception in 1982, the group of UF/IFAS Extension Agents and Specialists that make up the South Florida Beef Forage Program has realized the importance of understanding the unique characteristics of the South Florida beef industry. Every five or six years, the group conducts this survey to determine the current practices and production levels of beef producers. The information gathered is used to measure changes in the industry, identify beef cattle trends, and to help identify areas of focus for research and Extension programming. Individual beef producers can also use the collected information to access their own production practices and make changes relevant to the current industry. The goal of the South Florida Beef Forage Program is to help South Florida beef producers increase production, profitability and sustainability. Members of the South Florida Beef Forage Group ask South Florida beef producers that receive the survey to please take the time to complete and return the survey. The information gathered is critical to ensuring that Extension research and programming matches the needs of our beef producers. If you have any questions about the South Florida Beef Forage Program or the survey, please contact your County Extension Agent.

- Presidential Candidates Stay Mum on Ag -

According to a recent piece in Congressional Quarterly, many of the presidential candidates have distanced themselves from agricultural issues. Part of the reason is the regional nature of the industry. And it also opens up potentially treacherous discussions on immigration, trade, farm subsidies and the like.

- USDA Proposes Standards for Natural-Meat Labels -

Demand for "natural" meats has grown significantly in recent years, but a common complaint among food companies and consumers is there is no uniform standard for the natural designation. In response, USDA this week proposed voluntary standards for naturally raised marketing claims for livestock and meat. The agency is seeking comments on the proposed standards between now and January 28, 2008. Drivers Alert, Thursday, November 29, 2007 Vol. 9, Issue 48.

- Survey Reveals Animal-Welfare Attitudes -

The American Farm Bureau Federation and Oklahoma State University recently surveyed more than 1,000 individuals across the United States to measure their opinions about farm-animal welfare. OSU economist F. Bailey Norwood notes several key lessons from the survey results. First, the public cares more about human welfare and farmers than they do farm animals. Respondents rated the financial well-being of U.S. farmers as twice as important as the well-being of farm animals, and poverty, health care and food safety as five times more important. In addition, consumers understand animal welfare is a result of their shopping decisions in addition to farmer decisions. They realize they have a choice of purchasing meat from traditional production or, if they prefer, paying for meat from alternative production systems. According to Farm Bureau release, analysis of the survey results indicates respondents consider the suffering of one human to be equivalent to the suffering of 11,500 farm animals, and a majority of respondents believe producers should be compensated

if forced to comply with higher farm-animal welfare standards. Results like these show that while activist groups make headlines, most mainstream consumers still understand and appreciate the role of animal agriculture in food production. John Maday, Drivers associate editor - Drivers Alert, Thursday, November 29, 2007

Hardee County 2007 Annual Precipitation as measured at the Ona Research and Education Center

Jan. - 1.88"
Feb. - 2.47"
Mar. - 0.68"
Apr. - 1.93"
May - 0.50"
Jun. - 8.60"
Jul. - 6.01"
Aug. - 8.36"
Sep. - 6.88"
Oct. - 2.15"
Nov. - 0.36"
Dec. - 2.12"
TOTAL - 41.94"

Wishing you a healthy and prosperous 2008.

Lockie Gary
Hardee County Extension Director

For questions or comments regarding this publication contact



[Lockie Gary](#)



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