

# Okeechobee Livestock Letter

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## UP COMING EVENTS

| <b>June</b>      |  |              |
|------------------|--|--------------|
| 1                | Okeechobee County Dairy Seminar                        | Okeechobee   |
| 8-10             | 1999 Forage and Pasture Management School: Session I   | Sebring      |
| 16-18            | FCA Annual Convention and Trade Show                   | Marco Island |
| <b>July</b>      |  |              |
| 13-15            | 1999 Forage and Pasture Management School: Session II  | Sebring      |
| 20               | Beef Cattle Health Management Program                  | Wauchula     |
| <b>August</b>    |  |              |
| 10-12            | 1999 Forage and Pasture Management School: Session III | Sebring      |
| 26               | Stocking Rate Program                                  | Wauchula     |
| <b>September</b> |  |              |
| 2-3              | FCA Fall Quarterly Meeting                             | Ft. Myers    |
| 16               | Winter Supplementation Program                         | Sarasota     |
| 25               | Florida Santa Gertrudis Assoc. Cattleman's Kind Sale   | Bartow       |
| <b>October</b>   |  |              |
| 1                | 1999 Florida Cattlemen's Assoc. Heifer Sale            | Wauchula     |
| 14               | Bull Selection Program                                 | Wauchula     |

## - Kistler Moving On -

Some of you may already be aware that I am resigning as County Extension Director effective June 11 to go back to graduate school. I have been accepted at Texas A & M University where I will be pursuing a doctorate degree in agricultural education.

I want to thank all of you for your support and friendship over the past five years. You have made my experience in Okeechobee challenging, rewarding, and enjoyable. I am very proud of where the county Extension program has been and where it is going. We are fortunate to have a dedicated and talented staff and an invaluable group of volunteers to help make our programs a success.

Please give my successor the same support that you have given me. I know that with your support, the Extension program will continue to grow and be responsive to the educational needs of the community.

Sincerely,

Mark J. Kistler

## - Okeechobee County Dairy Seminar -

Tuesday, June 1 at the Extension Office will be the time and location of the 1999 **Okeechobee County Dairy Seminar**. This year's program will cover a variety of subject matter. Topics will include: *Rethinking Rumen Acidosis - What you see and what it means, Laminitis and Claw Disorders, feeding Strategies for Heifers...Birth to Calving, and Coccidiosis Control for Dairy Heifers.*

As with our previous programs this year, we are attempting to target and concentrate on specific problem areas as opposed to general topics. Presenters will include: Drs. Hall, Van Horn and Shearer from IFAS and we are especially glad to include David Wagner from Elanco to bring us up-to-date on Coccidiosis in heifers.

We'll begin at 10 am and conclude by 3 pm. Lunch will be sponsored but of course we will need a head count. Please contact the office at 763-6469 to let us know of your intentions to participate.

## - Florida Forage Handbook is Now Available -

The Florida Forage Handbook is the definitive guide to all aspects of planting, managing, and harvesting forage crops whether for pasture hay, or silage. Written by leading agronomists, soil scientists and cattle specialists at the University of Florida, this handbook is an essential reference for cattle producers and forage managers.

With specific recommendations for forages adapted to Florida and additional guidelines for horse and dairy-cattle managers, the *Florida Forage Handbook* is a comprehensive, all-in-one manual for growing forage in Florida's unique environment.

The Handbook includes:

- 33 chapters covering all aspects of forage production
- Specific recommendations for more than 20 warm-season crops, 10 cool-season crops, and all the basics for managing native-range pastures
- additional sections for-horse and dairy-cattle managers
- 30 color plates for easy forage identification

To order the Handbook, call or stop by the office for an order form, or call 1-800-226-1764 and have your Visa or MasterCard ready, and ask for SP253.

## - How Low Can We Get Our Costs of Dairying In 1999? -

R.Giesy, M. Hoekema, P. Miller, M. Sowerby, B. Tervola, D. Solger, P. Joyce, T. Seawright, C. Vann, A. Andreasen and M. Delorenzo

Dairy managers are justifiably concerned about low projected milk prices. Let's look at DBAP historical data to predict the future. The last difficult year was 1995. How did the managers respond to the average milk price of \$15.16? Below is a table of the expenses per cwt. of dairies participating in DBAP in 1995. The sort was by profit per cwt. and compares the top 25% to the average and the lower 25%.

### Expenses per cwt. in 1995 of DBAP participating dairies sort by profitability per cwt.

|                | Upper<br>25% | Average | Lower<br>25% |
|----------------|--------------|---------|--------------|
| Personnel      | 2.49         | 2.74    | 2.76         |
| Purchased feed | 6.86         | 7.49    | 7.81         |
| Crops          | .22          | .25     | .44          |
| Machinery      | .74          | .78     | 1.01         |

|             |       |       |       |
|-------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Livestock   | 1.05  | 1.93  | 2.13  |
| Marketing   | 1.13  | 1.19  | 1.32  |
| Real Estate | .36   | .48   | .74   |
| Other*      | 1.75  | 1.64  | 1.82  |
| Total**     | 14.60 | 16.51 | 18.03 |

### Major Points:

- 25% of dairies were able to produce milk for an average cost of \$14.60.
- Purchased feed may be cheaper in 1999 than 1995. The most profitable dairies were able to get greater feed efficiency, \$.94 per cwt., than the least profitable dairies. This is a time to analyze rations and response closely.
- There was a \$1.08 difference in livestock costs. Short term thriftiness in purchasing supplies, semen and even replacements seemed to have paid off for the most profitable dairies.
- The \$.27 difference in personnel costs suggests that labor inputs can be used more effectively on some dairies. Is volume per worker at least 750,000 Ibs?
- As always, there is a wide variation in total costs among dairies. If you are unsure how to proceed in your planning, perhaps DBAP will provide you some answers.

## - Forage and Pasture Management School -

The South Florida Beef-Forage Program is again sponsoring another Forage and Pasture Management School. This school is scheduled in three continuing sessions in June, July and August at the Highlands County Agri-Civic Center in Sebring. The three sessions and dates are as follows: Session I - Soil and Nutrient Management, June 8-10, 1999; Session II- South Florida Forages, July 13-15, 1999, Session III - Forages and the Cow/Calf System, August 10-12, 1999.

The purpose of this course is to strengthen managerial capabilities of owners and operators. This is an intense course that deals with practical topics in forage and pasture management including explanations of some basic concepts to support practical applications. Each session includes both formal classroom lectures along with field trips to reinforce the focus of each session. Registration for this school is \$175.00 for all three sessions or \$65.00 for any of the three separate sessions. Additionally, three hours of college credit is available if you register with the University of Florida registrar's office. Enrollment is limited and acceptance is not finalized until receipt of your registration forms and a \$50.00 non-refundable deposit.

Contact the Extension office, 763-6469 or Pat Hogue, School Chairman, at (941) 386-6540 for more information. You can also find out more about this school and other upcoming events by accessing the South Florida Beef-Forage Program web page on the Internet ([www.ifas.ufl.edu/~sfbfp/beef.html](http://www.ifas.ufl.edu/~sfbfp/beef.html)).

## - South Florida Herd Health Program -

What are the diseases and parasites the South Florida ranchers need to prevent and control? What is the cost/benefit for a total herd health program? When is the best time to control parasites and vaccinate for disease prevention? These are the questions many ranchers are asking during these difficult economic times. The answers to these and other questions will be the focus of the South Florida Herd Health Program to be held on Thursday, July 20 at the Hardee County Agri-Civic Center in Wauchula from 4:00 - 7:00 PM.

Anthony Weirather, DVM Polk City, will lead a discussion with a practical presentation on beef cattle herd health requirements. He will be sharing his experience with controlling the most critical diseases affecting reproduction and calf performance. Dr. Mark Davis, DVM, Arcadia, will follow with a discussion on the venereal disease trichomoniasis and its hidden dollar loss. Lockie Gary, Hardee County Extension Director, will lead the final discussion which will focus on whether or not fly control is cost effective. A dinner will follow to allow plenty of opportunity for you to interact with the veterinarians and Extension agents on these issues. For more information and to RSVP for dinner, please contact the Extension office, 763-6469, or Lockie Gary, Program Chairman, (941) 773-2164. Please call by July 15 so that we can prepare for the meal.

## - University of Florida Beef Teaching Unit Fund Raiser -

Enclosed you will find a flyer explaining the scope of the UF Beef Teaching Unit. They are trying to raise funds to complete the renovation of this innovative teaching facility and are asking for your help. Most of you have been directly or indirectly affected by these facilities and the animal science program at UF either as a student, parent of a student, and/or attending an educational activity sponsored by the Animal Science Department (i.e., Beef Cattle Short Course). Please read the enclosed brochure and, if you are inclined, please make a tax deductible donation to this very worthwhile teaching/learning facility. If you attended this year's Beef Cattle Short Course, you had the opportunity to see these facilities first-hand during the Thursday morning session. Remember; these students will one day be our leaders in the beef industry. If you have any questions, please call Dr. Tim Marshall, 352- 392-1911.

## - 4-H Happenings -

The 4-Hers of Okeechobee County would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to some very special people. Thank you to ***Fran Syfrett*** for donating our first 4-H Foundation fund raiser steer calf, donating feed for the steer and on top of all of that purchasing the steer in the Okeechobee Youth Livestock sale AND donating the steer back to be sold a second time with both proceeds benefitting the Okeechobee 4-H. Thank you to ***Linda Syfrett*** for "spear heading" and organizing the entire fund raiser, securing donations of feed mineral, hay and labor. We appreciate ***Jimmy Howell*** and ***Cindy Howell, Colby Fralix and Gary and Susan Adams*** feeding, training and showing the steer you did a wonderful job. Thank you to Nano Corona County Feed, Chuck Syfrett, Syfrett Feed, and Jay Saunders for supplying feed and hay.

As a result of the generosity of these people our youth are able to continue to make their best better.

The Okeechobee Youth Livestock Show and Sale is the culmination of the 4-H year in many livestock project areas. Our youth did an outstanding job exhibiting their projects and themselves. Congratulations to the following Grand Champion kids and Grand Champion animals.

|                   |                                     |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Wendy Prevatt     | Grand Champion Steer                |
| Desiree Davis     | Grand Champion Swine                |
| Kimberly Roth     | Grand Champion Brahmas Female       |
| Connie Lowery     | Grand Champion Limousin Bull        |
| Johnny West       | Grand Champion Limousin Female      |
| Robert Hancock    | Grand Champion Polled Hereford Bull |
| Ben Noonan        | Grand Champion Pinzgauer Bull       |
| Aaron Wright      | Grand Champion Pinzgauer Female     |
| Ashley Varnadore  | Grand Champion Crossbreed           |
| Jamie Burnham     | Grand Champion Ayrshire             |
| Jacob Larson      | Grand Champion Brown Swiss          |
| Kristin Larson    | Grand Champion Guernsey             |
| Charles Gagliardi | Grand Champion Holstein             |
| Hamilton Bishop   | Grand Champion Jersey               |

**WAY TO GO!!**

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## **STAFF CONTRIBUTORS**

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Debbie Clements  
Extension Agent - 4-H/FCS

Sharon Wright  
Secretary/Receptionist

MENTION OF PRODUCT NAMES DOES NOT CONSTITUTE ENDORSEMENT BY THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA/IFAS, FLORIDA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE, OR THE OKEECHOBEE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS.

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For questions or comments regarding this publication contact



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