

Okeechobee Livestock Letter

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February / March - 2004

Dear Producers,

It's interesting that I started the last edition of the Okeechobee Livestock Newsletter with how good things seemed to be going for the cattle industry, and behold BSE came to America and we have been on somewhat of a roller-coaster for the last couple of months. We can be thankful that the market was not affected as dramatically as I would have expected, and as many were predicting. I think it is a testament to the faith the consuming public has in our food safety and inspection system, USDA's quick action and constant and open updates, and the cooperation of the producers, government agencies and Canadian Government that kept us in the posture of avoiding what could have been a market disaster. I applaud the work and control USDA and FSIS maintained on this situation and in bringing it to a quick conclusion, although we need to stay vigilante for future such problems arising.

In light of what we have just gone through the past couple of months, I hope you find some of this months topics of benefit to you and your operation. Included in this issue:

1. 53rd Annual Beef Cattle Short Course - May 5-7, 2004
2. Understanding the National Animal Identification Program
3. Small Farms Livestock Production Conference
4. Dairy Reproduction Road Show - March 2-5, 2004
5. Business Cow College - May 2004

Sincerely,

O. Patrick Miller, County Extension Director & Patrick J. Hogue, Extension Agent III - Livestock

53rd Annual Beef Cattle Short Course

The 53rd Annual Beef Cattle Short Course will be held in a new locations this year, but the program has numerous timely topics that should be beneficial to hear this year. This year the Short Course will be held at the Hilton University of Florida Conference Center. Please find included with this mailing a copy of the program brochure for this years Short Course that includes registrations information and costs including hotel room rates. Please note that you must have your registration in or postmarked by April 23, to take advantage of the \$ 85.00 early registration fee.

In looking at this years program, you should see that the first day starts with presentations on all the hot topics of our time including presentations on COOL, National Animal ID and BSE. The first day will be highlighted by Randy Blach, Executive Director of Cattle-Fax discussing the market outlook for 2004 and beyond, and later a discussion on market potentials as a result of BSE.

The second day will feature presentations and demonstrations in the afternoon on some new, emerging and updated technologies in genetics, breeds and breeding programs, followed on Friday by breakout sessions on supplementation tailored for the different areas of the state.

"What we anticipate seldom occurs; what we least expected generally happens." -- Benjamin Disraeli

Understanding the National Animal Identification Program

The recent events in the United States with BSE highlighted the necessity for, and the assistance that would be provided to the animal industries of the United States, a National Animal Identification Program. Many will say that it is just another burden to producers both managerially and financially, but we should all be thankful that it was a dairy cow, an industry that keeps extensive records on animals, and it originated from Canada, a country that has a national id program. It was ultimately for these two reasons that USDA, FSIS and the other agencies involved were able to bring this situation to a quick conclusion and determine she had originated in Canada and were able to track her and most of her herd peers to their ultimate destinations. Although the merits and shortcomings of implementing a National ID program could be debated for eternity, it is important we all try to reach an understanding of how such an effort came about, how it is planned to be implemented and why it is important to all of us in the animal industries and ultimately the consuming public to have such a system in place.

To understand the why's, we must first know the goal of the United States Animal Identification Plan (USAIP) as identified by a request from the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and ultimately formulated by them, USDA and a consortium of industry representatives, state and federal officials. The goals as outlined in the USAIP is to "Achieve a traceback system that can identify all animals and premises potentially exposed to an animal with Foreign Animal Disease within 48 hours of discovery."

The need for such a program is outlined in the introduction section of the USAIP and states the case fairly well especially in light of the times we live in with the possibility of our nation coming under biological attack as well as the possibility of any of the animal disease world wide that have devastated other countries industries. Maintaining the health and economic viability of US animal agriculture is critical to the industry and to the safety of the U.S. food supply, and therefore, is the focus of the National Identification Plan. I believe this statement is telling for each of us and something we all could agree is imperative for not only our continued way of life, but also to insure we continue to always have the safest food supply in the world.

The need section of the introduction goes on to further state, "Establishing the requirements for animal identification that provide the necessary infrastructure to monitor animal diseases, to support their control or eradication, and establish an adequate emergency management response system provides the foundation of the "system" fro a national program.

Maintaining the health of the U.S. animal herd is the most urgent issue for the industry and the focus of the plan. The benefits of a national animal identification system include:

- Enhanced disease control and eradication capabilities for rapid containment of foreign animal disease outbreaks and enhanced ability to respond to biosecurity threats.

- Enables the industry to meet the demands of domestic and international consumers for source-verified products. This ability enables producers to maintain and build market access.
- Mitigation of threats to biosecurity of the food supply, either intentional or unintentional.

To achieve the 48 hour traceback objective of the plan, the movement of individual animals or units of animals must be recorded, with recording of this information to a central database or creating a seamless linked local database infrastructure, and a uniform standard of data. The key elements of data that will require standards to make the system work effectively include:

- A uniform premises identification system
- A uniform, nationally recognizable numbering system for individual animal identification
- A uniform, nationally recognizable numbering system for a group or lot of animals
- A uniform numbering system for Non-producer Participants

Additionally, standards will be required for identification devices to ensure uniformity and integration of automated data collection and minimum performance standards are achieved: Such standards include:

- Visual identification methods and devices for official use in livestock
- Electronic identification methods and devices for official use in livestock

The USAID is to be implemented in a three phase program over a three year period. Phase I will be for Premises ID. All premises that manage and/or hold cattle, for our purposes, are to be identified through the state premises system to achieve a national premises system. Premises identification is a prerequisite to individual animal identification and the target is to have the premises id program in place by July 2004. So this is the first target date that producers need to be keeping in mind for the near future.

Since the environments and locations in which we manage livestock is so diverse, the definition of premises is quite complex and the plan contains acknowledgments to benefit or not overly burden producers. For the purposes of the USAIP, premises is defined as:

"A premise is an identifiable physical location that, in the judgement of the State Animal Health Official or Area Veterinarian in Charge, and when appropriate in consultation with affected producer, represents a unique and describable geographic entity (where activity affecting the health and/or traceability of food producing animals may occur) or represents the producer contact location when extensive grazing operations exist."

* A grazing location is a geographic area defined by the producer where his stock resides at some time during their life and where minimal or no facilities or physical structures exist. This area is not easily definable and turnover of stock may occur frequently. If in the judgement of State and Federal animal health officials it does not meet the premises definition it will not be required to have a premises ID assigned. Animal movements will be recorded and maintained at a central location identified with a premises ID number and all movements into commerce will be reported from that premises.

* Consultation with the State or Federal Animal Health Officials is on an as needed basis when localities of the entity warrant additional consideration to ensure the producer's needs are addressed. Decisions on whether multiple premises identification numbers are needed should be based on epidemiological links and/or the likelihood of disease transmission between premises. For instance, if

an owner has multiple premises, and animals are frequently moved among those premises, then one premises number can be used, and all locations should be associated with that number. However, if a location has animals owned by others moving in and out, a separate premises number should be considered.

The administration and management of the premises system is the responsibility of each State Department of Agriculture, or as established by the appropriate governing body within the state. They may operate their own system or one developed by a private company, the USDA, or those established through regional alliances. Uniquely assigned premises numbers to all locations in the livestock and poultry production chain, including animal production operations, markets, assembly points, exhibitions, processing plants, etc., will increase the accuracy and efficiency of the identification system. The ability to link the information to a premises is achieved by a unique premises identification number.

Phase II of the plan is to have individual animal identification, and as you read this part of the plan it is important to remember that animals need only to be identified when they leave their housed premise location to enter commerce or in other words to be sold. There are two timetables included in this phase.

1. All cattle that enter interstate commerce are to be officially identified and their movement is to be reported to the National Animal Identification Database through the electronic Interstate Certificate of Veterinarian Inspection (ICVI) with a target implementation date of July 2005.
2. All cattle that enter commerce (intrastate and interstate) must be identified with an official RFID tag prior to leaving their current premises and such movements are reported to the National Animal Identification Database with a target implementation date of July 2006.

An RFID tag is a radio frequency identification tag more commonly known as electronic ID, but you can see from the phase in plan that it will be over two years that producers will actually have to prepare for electronic id of there cattle being sold, and this fits with phase III of the plan which is to have RFID technology, the readers of the tags implemented and in place at both slaughter plants and markets by July 2005.

This is a much shortened and simplified version of the USAIP and I haven't even covered the numbering systems for premises and individual animal identification. A discussion of the entire plan would be far more than either I would be willing to undertake and certainly than you would want to try and read and digest in one sitting, but hopefully many of the questions I have heard about the program have been answered. I would suggest that those of you who want to gain more knowledge about the USAIP website that has the latest information about the national id program at www.usaip.info.

I think it important to remember that it was such a program in place in Canada that allowed USDA officials to quickly determine from the Canadian national id program tag in the BSE positive cow in Washington, that she originated in that country and were able to trace forward and backward her movement along with her herd mates, that helped bring what could have been a market disaster for us to a quick conclusion and help reinforce the public's faith in our system. One additional benefit that should be realized when this program is implemented in the US, the currently on hold Country of Origin Labeling program will be easily and hopefully painlessly implemented. These two programs are not a matter of if for us, but when, and when for national animal id starts with premise id slated to be implemented in July of this year. With a better understanding of the whys and how's, hopefully the United States Animal Identification Plan will be less painful for us all also.

Small Farms Livestock Production Conference

Many of our newer livestock producers in the area are those that have a few animals on a few acres, either cattle, horses or goats. In response to potential needs of these frequently new to livestock production producers, the South Florida beef-Forage Program Agents are pleased to announce our 2nd Annual Small Farms Livestock Production Conference to be held again this year in two locations to help serve these producers in the South Florida area.

This conference is designed to give small producers a better understanding of nutrition, pastures and forages, reproductive management, herd health, facilities and equipment needs and marketing prospects for production on a small scale.

This years Conference's are to be held Saturday, March 6, 2004 at the Polk County Extension Service on Hwy 17 in Bartow, and again on Saturday, March 27, 2004 at the Agri-Civic Center in Sebring. Both programs will begin with registration at 9:00 AM and will run until approximately 4:00 PM both days with lunch included in the cost of registration.

Three concurrent sessions dedicated to the three species areas, cattle, horse and goat, will be running after the initial welcome and opening remarks in separate room locations with the same topical information specific for the species presented. Program agendas with registration forms are available in the County Extension office and registration including \$ 10.00 registration fee is due to Pat Hogue by close of business February 27 to insure adequate program materials and lunch plans are made for each location.

If you are interested in attending this conference, or would like further information, contact the County Extension office, (863) 763-6469 or call Pat at that number to register. Further information including, the program agenda, can also be obtained by going to the South Florida Beef-Forage webpage, <http://SFBFP.ifas.ufl.edu/>. Go to this website and go down to the Calendar of Events and click on the Small Farms Livestock Production Conference.

Dairy Reproduction Road Show

All dairymen are invited to attend a Dairy Reproductive Road Show coming to a location near you. This is a series of 4 meetings around Florida designed to assist you with improving reproductive performance with new technologies. Please find below the program agenda including locations of the program locations and local contacts. If you plan to attend locally in Okeechobee, contact Pat Miller.

DAIRY REPRODUCTION ROAD SHOW

Reproduction Extension Meetings Coming Near You!

You are invited to attend the Reproduction Road Show. This is a series of 4 meetings around Florida, March 2, 3, 4, and 5, 2004, to bring you up to date on practical state-of-the-art methods to improve reproductive performance in dairy cattle.

Program

10:00 am - Trends in reproductive performance in dairy cows: what do the numbers tell us? - Brent Broaddus
UF/IFAS Dairy Extension
10:15 am - Managing the postpartum cow to maximize pregnancy rate - Carlos Risco, UF/IFAS College of
Veterinary Medicine

- 10:45 am - Successful timed AI programs - Milo Wiltbank, U of Wisconsin Dept. of Dairy Science
 11:25 am - Economic importance of improved reproductive performance - Albert de Vries, UF/IFAS Dept. of Animal Sciences
 11:45 am - Strategies for healthy herds - Steve Coop, Pfizer Animal Health
- 11.45 pm - Lunch (sponsored by Pfizer).
- 1:00 pm - Reproductive data management with PC-DART - Dan Webb, UF/IFAS Dept. of Animal Sciences
 1:20 pm - Embryo transfer that works - Pete Hansen, UF/IFAS Dept. of Animal Sciences
 1:45 pm - Getting anestrous cows pregnant – Milo Wiltbank, U of Wisconsin Dept. of Dairy Science
 2:30 pm - Speaker Panel (Wiltbank discussion leader)
 3:00 pm - PC-DART reproduction workshop (Webb leader).

Meeting Places and Times

Tuesday, March 2, 10 am
 Okeechobee County Extension Office, 458 Highway 98 N, Okeechobee, FL
 Local Contact Person: Pat Miller (863) 763-6469

Wednesday, March 3, 10 am
 Hardee County Extension Office, 507 Civic Center Drive, Wauchula, FL
 Local Contact Person: Brent Broaddus (813) 744-5519 ext 132

Thursday, March 4, 10 am
 Marion County Extension Office, 2232 NE Jacksonville Road, Ocala, FL
 Local Contact Person: Russ Giesy (952) 793-2728

Friday, March 5, 10 am
 Washington County Extension Office, 1424 Jackson Avenue, Chipley, FL
 Local Contact Person: Andy Anderson (850) 638-6180

Registration

Registration received on or before March 1 is \$10 and provides the program, a copy of the proceedings, and a CD with the videotaped presentations once released. Lunch is free (kindly sponsored by Pfizer). Registration after March 1 is \$20. Registration at the door is possible. To register and indicate your preferred location, please contact:

Brent Broaddus (UF/IFAS Dairy Extension)
 5339 County Road 579, Seffner, FL 33584
 Phone: (813) 744-5519 ext 132, Fax: (813) 744-5776
 Email: broaddus@ufl.edu

More Information

Brent Broaddus (UF/IFAS Dairy Extension)
 Phone: (813) 744-5519 ext 132 – Email: broaddus@ufl.edu

Albert de Vries (UF/IFAS Department of Animal Sciences)
Phone: (352) 392-7563 – Email: devries@animal.ufl.edu

Pete Hansen (UF/IFAS Department of Animal Sciences)
Phone: (352) 392-5590 – Email: hansen@animal.ufl.edu

Business Cow College

Russ Giesy and Albert de Vries in the Dairy Science Department have a planned and proposed program titled Dairy Business College that they are going to be offering in various locations throughout the state in May. Locations will be dependent on interest in a particular area of the state. Please find below the proposed plan and topics of discussion. If you would be interested in attending this program and would like to see us bring it locally, please contact Pat Miller in the County Extension office, (863) 763-6469.

BUSINESS COW COLLEGE

We often find that the people on our most successful dairies have great cow sense. But it is also clear that they use business principles to make the most profitable decisions. Maybe you feel your dairy business analysis knowledge and skills could use a boost. We are offering an applied course in the fundamentals of dairy business analysis.

Topics covered include:

- Balance sheet, income statement, equity statement (bankers like these)
- Investment decisions (buying cows, facilities, etc)
- Economics of maintaining the herd
- Capital and partial budgets
- Marginal costs and returns
- Use of spreadsheets
- Business plan
- Buy or lease
- Risk

We will be using plenty of real world examples. We'll also use case studies of profitable dairies.

Let us know if you or anybody you know would be interested in a course on these topics. There is enough material for a three day, full-time, course. Let us know as well if you are interested in just a few topics and would like a one day course only. We try to tailor to your needs.

Who should attend: anybody who would like to know more about the fundamentals of dairy business analysis and decision making. No prerequisites required. Participation will be limited. First come-first served.

Why attend: Participants will become more familiar with business concepts and understand how dairies can improve business performance.

Where and when: in Gainesville or locations around the state in May 2004, depending on interest.

For questions or comments regarding this publication contact



[Pat Hogue](#) or [Pat Miller](#)



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