Pasture Weed Day
2008

Are you battling soft rush or blackberry? How do you remove sedges from forages while ensuring forage safety? What herbicides are available for pasture weed control? Is that weed poisonous? How can we fertilize economically? How good is Mulato as a forage?

These are all questions that are asked by producers, large and small. Every year producers are challenged with new questions, problems, and sometimes new weeds. It is our goal to help you find an economical approach to weed control in pastures.

This field day will address the optimum weed control methods for particular weeds based on species, the environment, weed age and size, as well as time of year.

Information will be shared on these topics and more during the field day. This event is open to anyone wishing to learn more about weed control in pastures.

To register for this event you will need to contact Toni Wood at 863-735-1314. A $20 registration fee made payable to The South Florida Beef Forage Program can be sent directly to Toni at 3401 Experiment Station, Ona, FL 33865. On-Site registration is $50 for those not pre-registered.
This school is sponsored by the Florida Cooperative Extension Service and is conducted with the assistance of area large animal veterinary practitioners. It is part of a continuing multi-county effort to help South Florida beef producers market more pounds of beef per cow profitably.

The purpose of the school is to strengthen managerial capabilities of owners and operators of beef cattle ranches. This is an intense school in reproductive management of the cow herd. Although the topic of pregnancy diagnosis is given extensive treatment in the program, participants should not expect this training to make them proficient in that skill. Rather it is hoped that an improved understanding of the broad subject of breeding herd management will be achieved. Individuals enrolled in the school will be better equipped to work with their veterinarians in accomplishing breeding program objectives.

The school will be held October 21—23, 2008 at the Turner Agri-Civic Center in Arcadia. October 21 and 22nd the hours will be 8:00am—6:00pm and on October 21 the hours will be 8:00am—12:00 noon. The cost of the course is a total of $350. A $100 deposit is due by October 3rd and is not refundable. The balance, $250 is due October 21st.

The agenda for the course can be found on page 3.

If you are interested in attending the class you can find the forms at http://manatee.ifas.ufl.edu/agriculture/livestock/index.shtml or by calling Christa, 941-722-4524.

South Florida Beef Forage Program will be offering two Fall Wildlife Field Day Tours. Registration at each site will begin at 2:00pm with the tour beginning at 2:30pm. The tour will return for the evening meal at 5:30pm.

Thursday, September 18th will be a tour of Longino Ranch in Sarasota County. This tour site will be a follow up to last years Quail & Dove Shortcourse. We will tour the same approximate route to highlight changes to the habitat that have occurred since last year. Highlights to this tour will include areas that were burned and chopped last year as well as food plots and native plant ID for wildlife. The wildlife focus at Longino Ranch is Quail, Turkey and Deer.

The tour on Friday, September 19th will take place at Quail Creek Plantation in Okeechobee. This tour site will look at the hunting operations of this plantation, with a focus on their quail release program, the habitat at the plantation and native plant ID. The plantation utilizes burning and chopping in their habitat management program. The wildlife focus at Quail Creek Plantation is Quail, Turkey, Deer and Pheasant.

Cost for each tour is $15.00 or $20.00 if attending both Tours. An evening meal will be included in the registration cost for the Tour(s). Make checks payable to: The South Florida Beef-Forage Program, c/o Christa L. Carlson-Kirby, 1303 17th St W., Palmetto, FL 34221; 941-722-4524.
Reproductive Management School Agenda

Tuesday, October 21, 2008

8:00  Introductions
8:30  Pregnancy Testing
10:00 Break
10:10 Quiet Handling of Beef Cattle
11:00 Pregnancy Testing Video
11:30 Lunch (provided)
12:15 Intact Tracts Lab
1:00  Lab—Hands On Pregnancy Testing
3:30  Heifer Development and Management of Young Cows
4:15 Bull Breeding Soundness Evaluation
5:30 Bull Breeding Soundness Evaluation—Live Animal Demo

Wednesday, October 22, 2008

8:00  Genetic Management for Efficient Reproduction
8:30  Coping with Calving Problems
9:15  Breeding Season Management
9:45  Break
10:00 Health Management—Vaccination Program For Reproduction
10:30 Nutrition for Reproduction
11:15 Reproductive Implications of Body Condition and Nutritional Management
12:00 Lunch (Provided)
12:30 Lab—Hands on Pregnancy Testing
3:30 Utilizing Performance Records

Thursday, October 23, 2008

8:00  The Role of Artificial Insemination in Beef Cattle
8:30  Herd Bull Selection
9:00  Estrus Synchronization and Heat Detection
9:30  Break
9:45 Nutrition for Reproduction—Forage Quality
10:15 The role of Ultra Sound in a Beef Cattle Herd
10:45 Program Summary and Evaluation
11:00 Hands On Lab—End of School
Livestock Producer Compliance with the COOL Interim Final Rule
By: USDA Agricultural Marketing Service
http://www.ams.usda.gov

Livestock producers are not directly regulated by the COOL interim final rule as livestock are not considered covered commodities. However, only producers have first-hand knowledge concerning the origin of their animals. Definitive origin information must be provided to slaughter facilities so that meat covered commodities can be accurately labeled at retail. Presumption of origin by packers and other entities in the marketing chain is not permitted. For example, it is not acceptable to assume that if an animal has no ear tag and/or brands identifying that the animal was born and/or raised in Canada or Mexico, the animal is of U.S. origin.

The COOL law provides for the use of producer affidavits to provide origin information to packers. Thus, under the interim final rule, USDA will consider a producer affidavit as acceptable evidence. A packer may rely upon to initiate an origin claim, as long as the affidavit is made by someone having first-hand knowledge of the origin of the animal(s) and identifies the animal(s) unique to the transaction. Evidence that identifies the animal(s) unique to a transaction can include a tag ID system along with other information such as the type and sex of the animals, number of head involved in the transaction, the date of the transaction, and the name of the buyer.

With regard to what is considered first-hand knowledge, a subsequent producer-buyer (e.g., backgrounder, feeder) that commingles animals from several sources is authorized to rely on previous producer affidavits as a basis for formulating their own affidavit for the origin of the new lot. Such affidavits must also identify the animals unique to the transaction. In contrast, first-hand knowledge would not include an affidavit made by someone such as a truck driver whose knowledge would be limited to where he picked up the load. The driver would not have sufficient information about the chain of custody and other information needed to provide the origin declaration. The responsible party (e.g., buyer) for commingling the animals would be the attester to the origin of the newly formed group of animals and would retain the original affidavits or other appropriate records, to substantiate claims made about the newly formed group.

Other records that may be used to assist in a COOL verification audit include birth records, receiving records, purchase records, animal health papers, sales receipts, animal inventory documents, feeding records, APHIS VS forms, segregation plans, State Brand requirements, breeding stock information, and other similar documents. In addition, participation in USDA Quality System Verification Programs (QSV), such as the USDA Process Verified Program (PVP) and the Quality Systems Assessment (QSA) Program that contain a source verification component is also considered as acceptable evidence to substantiate COOL claims. These examples are not inclusive of all documents and records that may be useful to verify compliance with COOL, but they should provide a strong basis to substantiate a claim during a supply chain audit.

Ultimately, the packer, as the first handler of the covered commodity (meat), may require from their suppliers records or access to records in order to substantiate COOL claims made by the packer. However, if the producer participates in the National Animal Identification System (NAIS), that is considered sufficient documentation of an animal’s origin. Participation in the NAIS program is voluntary, but does provide a livestock producer “safe harbor” for COOL compliance. The rule specifies that packers that slaughter animals that are part of a NAIS compliant system or other recognized official identification system (e.g., Canadian official system, Mexico official system) may rely on the presence of an official ear tag and/or the presence of any accompanying animal markings (i.e., “Can”, “M”) on which to base their origin claims. This provision also applies to such animals officially identified as a group lot.
Beef Management Calendar

September

• Cut hay.
  • Heavily graze pastures to be interplanted to cool season pastures.
  • Check mineral feeder.
  • Check for mole crickets, spittlebugs, and grasshoppers, and treat if necessary.
  • Check dust bags.
• Wean calves and cull cow herd if not already done. Remove open, unsound, or poor producing cows.
  • Train cowboys to observe normal and abnormal behavior and signs of disease.
• Be sure any replacement purchases are healthy and have been calf hood vaccinated for brucellosis.
  • September or October is a good time to deworm the cow herd if internal parasites are a problem.
• When replacement heifers are weaned, give them required vaccinations and teach them to eat from a bunk – then put them on a good nutrition program.
• Determine bull replacement needs, develop selection criteria, and start checking availability of quality animals.
• Review winter feed supply and feeding plans so that needed adjustments can be made before supplies tighten and prices rise.

October

• Plant cool season legumes.
• Plant small grain pastures.
  • Check mineral feeder.
• Check for external parasites, especially lice, and treat if needed.
  • Check for spittlebugs and grasshoppers and treat, if needed.
• Watch condition of cow herd; maintain adequate nutrition.
• Isolate any additions to the herd for 30 to 60 days and observe for signs of disease; retest for brucellosis and leptospirosis.
  • Be sure you have adequate handling facilities, and they are in good working order.
• If you are raising bulls for the commercial market, October thru December is the main bull-buying season for cattlemen in south Florida and now is the time to have your promotion program fully activated.

November

• Have soils tested.
  • Observe cows daily to detect calving difficulty.
  • Use mineral with high level of magnesium if grass tetany has been a problem in the past.
  • Check for external parasites and treat if needed.
• Maintain adequate nutrient level for cow herd.
  • Calve in well-drained pastures.
  • Survey pastures for poisonous plants.
• Start summarizing your annual records, both production and financial-then you will have time to make adjustments for tax purposes.
  • Re-evaluate winter feeding program and feed supplies.
• Get breeding soundness exams on bull battery so you have time to find replacements if some fail.
  • Implement bull conditioning program.
• Review plans and arrangements for the upcoming breeding season.
• Check progress of developing replacement heifers - are they going to meet your target weight by the start of the breeding season?
Florida Equine Institute & Allied Trade Show

The Central Florida Livestock Agents Group will be hosting the Florida Equine Institute and Allied Trade Show on September 18, 2008. The program will be held at the Southeastern Livestock Pavilion in Ocala. The topic for the institute will be “Managing Florida Horses for Competition and Pleasure”. The program begins with registration at 8:00am and concludes at approximately 4:00pm. Registration fees for the program are $50. For more information please contact Christa, 941-722-4524.

Christa L. Carlson-Kirby
Extension Agent II, Livestock