JOPLIN REGIONAL STOCKYARDS

CATTLEMENS NEWS

How can you be a good steward?

Warm season grasses fill the gap

Tackle BRD before it sacks your calves

JUNE 2014
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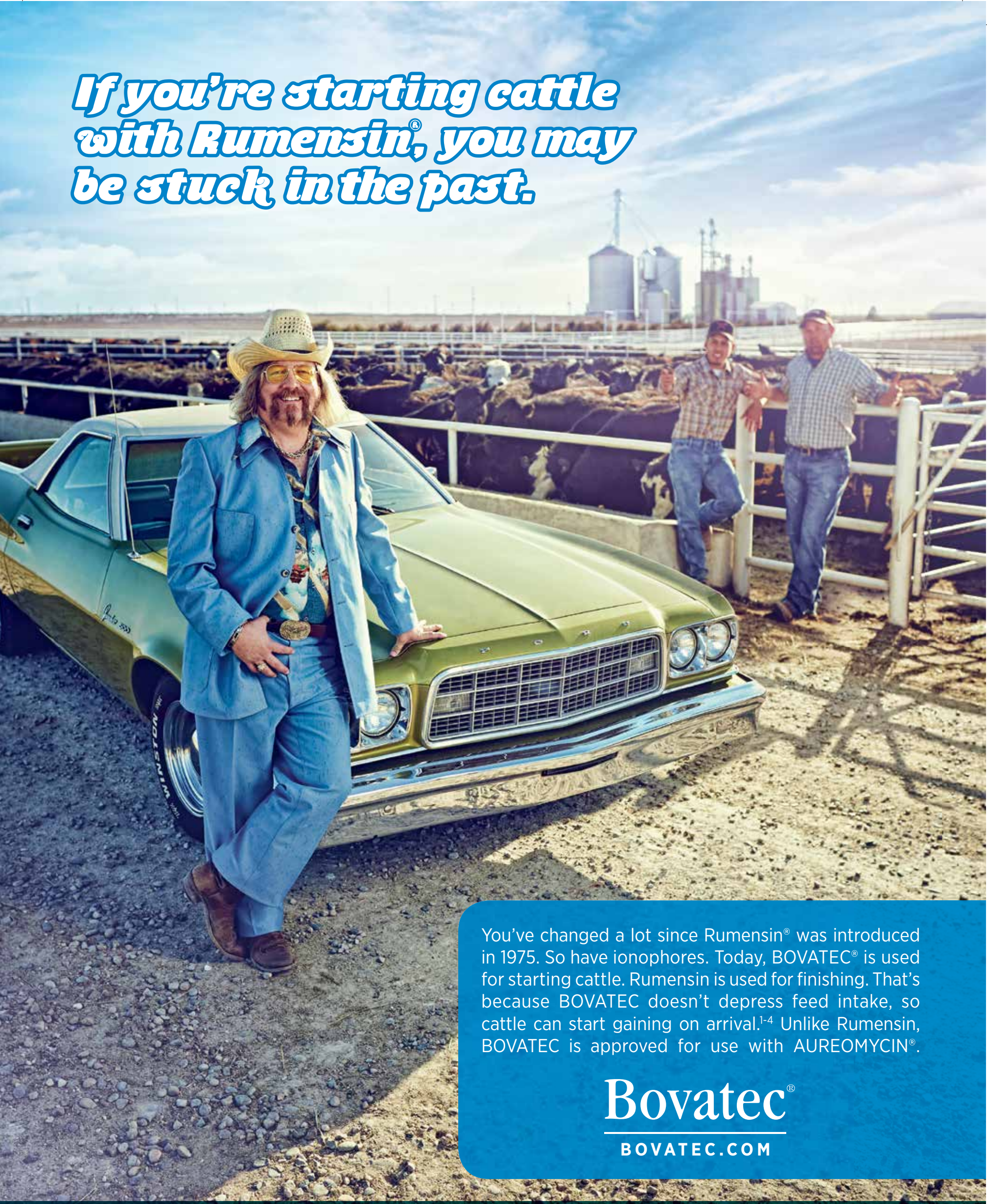

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VIEW FROM THE BLOCK

I hope everyone had a great time at our Best of the Best Calf Roping on Memorial Day. Ryan Jarrett was the big winner, taking home $31,500. We're already looking forward to next year's event.

Prices continue to roll right on, getting higher all the time. We did have a little break in the futures market the latter part of May, so we'll see how that plays out with cash prices now that the Memorial Day holiday is behind us. Prices look high today, but the way its been going, they'll still be high tomorrow.

As we move on into summer, I really think there is more under the market than there is above it. I don't see much happening though to change it right now. The rain was slow to get here, but we have had some showers in recent weeks. Also, corn has come down about 30 to 40 cents. Talk around is that we are seeing perfect growing weather in the Corn Belt this year. I'm still pretty bullish on the market, but it is higher than I ever imagined it would go.

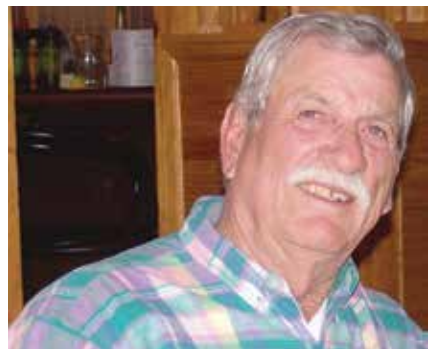
We hosted a good Show-Me-Select Replacement Heifer Sale in May with prices averaging $2,444. We could see replacement cows trend a little lower this summer just from the fact that folks are busy with summertime activities. It's still a heck of a market, though.

Our value added sale is coming up on June 26 and we're anticipating another great sale. These cattle will have more value than ever before. Video specials are scheduled, too, for July 1 and August 7. We're expecting big offerings in both sales. Replacement cows and bulls will be selling in our monthly special on Fri., June 13, so there is a lot going on in the next few weeks.

My father-in-law, Dale Blevins passed away the end of May. With his passing, I've lost one of my biggest fans and supporters in life. He did a lot of good things for the community and will sure be missed.

Good luck and God bless.

Jackie



Dale Blevins
1934-2014

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(in conjunction with regular Monday sale)

Value Added Feeder Sale • Thurs., June 26

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

About the Cover

Eldon Cole *celebrates 50 years with University of Missouri Extension. Cattlemen's News salutes Eldon for his years of service to area cattlemen. See story on page 12.*

—Cover photo by Joann Pipkin

Features

In Every Issue

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BEEF IN BRIEF

New record set by Show-Me-Select heifers

Bred heifers sold for an average of $2,444—a new record for the May 16 Show-Me-Select sale at Joplin Regional Stockyards.

"Heifers sold for $300 more per head than a year ago," says Eldon Cole, University of Missouri Extension livestock specialist, Mount Vernon.

Consignments were up, Cole says, with 228 heifers qualifying for the sale that caps a yearlong educational program for producers.

Top price was $3,050 for Angus-Hereford-cross heifers bred to Angus sires. John Wheeler, Marionville, a regular consignor, sold that top lot of four head. In all, he sold 32 head as the largest consignor.

Artificial insemination (AI) is used on an increasing number of Show-Me-Select heifers. In Tier One (basic level) heifers, 96 were bred AI while 130 were bred by bulls. Buyers paid a $179 premium for AI-bred heifers. This bonus moved up as well.

Judy Burton, secretary of the Show-Me-Select Replacement Heifer Program, says enrollments for the fall-calving program surged with rising beef prices.

Fall sales have not been set; however, more auctions may be added with rising enrollments. Once set, the sites and dates will be listed on the MU Agricultural Electronic Bulletin Board (AgEBB) at agebb.missouri.edu/select.

—Source: University of Missouri Cooperative Media Group

Meat prices continue to rise for producers, consumers

"Bargains in the meat case might be hard to find," said University of Missouri Extension economist Ron Plain at the recent Ag Marketing Outlook Conference.

Bringing home the bacon this year requires more cash. Short supplies of cattle and hogs are pushing prices upward at the sale barn and the supermarket.

Porcine epidemic diarrhea virus (PEDV) caused the largest-ever drop in pigs per litter (PPL) from December to February. PPL plummeted by 5.5 percent. The second biggest drop was June to August 1988, when PPL dropped 1.68 percent. "We haven't seen this magnitude of loss before," Plain said.

The spread of PEDV slows during warm weather and appears to have peaked in February and March.

Pork inventories declined 3.2 percent in March. Plain said hog prices are expected to remain well above $100 per hundredweight this summer and decline to the $90s by the end of the year.

This translates to higher prices for consumers and producers. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that a pound of bacon averaged $5.55 in March, 21 percent more than last year. Ham increased by 12.5 percent to $4.20 per pound. Prices in the Midwest remain lower than national prices, except for eggs, which saw a 15 percent increase.

"Where's the beef?" might be the next question. The drought of 2012 reduced forage supplies for cattle and contributed to the lowest number of cattle since 1951, Plain said. Future cattle prices are predicted to be around $1.40 per pound. Cow-calf profit margins should remain about $350 per cow, he said.

Plain said USDA forecasts less beef on the market throughout 2014. Beef producers should expect strong prices all year. He said cattle slaughter through mid-April was down 4.8 percent.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics showed an 11 percent increase in the price of ground beef to $3.69 per pound in March.

—Source: University of Missouri Cooperative Media Group

NUTRITION KNOW-HOW

Check Your Checklist for Summer

Management opportunities for June are plentiful

Story By Justin Sexten for Cattlemen's News

With the onset of summer, there are some specific management opportunities to focus on to ensure your cattle stay in tip-top shape. Here is a look at some that climb to the top of the list.

Fly and Parasite Control

As the weather warms up, horn flies are quickly approaching economic thresholds for grazing cattle. These small flies feed upside down on cattle backs in the morning, moving to the belly in the afternoon and complete their lifecycle by laying eggs in fresh manure. Once populations exceed 200 flies per animal, the pesky insects reduce profitability by decreasing gain by 10-20 pounds during the grazing season.

Stable flies are another blood-feeding cattle pest, generally feeding on legs, and cause cattle to bunch up or stand in the water. Three to four stable flies per leg are the economic threshold. Stable flies complete their life cycle in decaying organic matter such as hay feeding areas.

Face flies are not blood-feeding pests,; they congregate around the eyes and nose where they feed on tears and other secretions. Face fly populations are considered low, moderate and high at 5, 12-13 or greater than 20 per animal. Moderate to heavy populations can reduce grazing activity while causing eye irritation.

Fly control can be achieved using a variety of methods such as farm sanitation, pour-on dewormers, fly control sprays, fly tags, dust bags or insect growth regulators in mineral and feed. Consider using multiple methods to increase control success while preventing resistance development.

Disease transfer is the most common reason fly control is implemented. Producers attempt to reduce face-fly-induced pinkeye by implementing fly control. Remember, pinkeye is a complex disease caused by a number of factors all related to eye irritation. Controlling face flies removes one of many potential sources of eye irritation. Anaplasmosis can also be transmitted by blood-feeding flies, while foot rot may be caused by flies forcing animals to congregate in ponds and streams to avoid fly bites.

Finding an opportune time to implement fly control can be a challenge as many producers prefer to not gather cattle just to implement fly control. Since June coincides not only with fly control timing, but also the time when cattle have been grazing pastures long enough to accumulate significant internal parasites, consider deworming nursing calves and stocker cattle in June. Cows will tend to build some internal parasite immunity but young, growing stock will benefit from mid-season de-worming. Use of a pour-on dewormer with label claim for horn fly control serves a dual purpose.

Reproductive Management

For "spring" calving cow herds that started the breeding season in April or May, cows may be pregnancy checked to evaluate AI and early bull success. Early pregnancy diagnosis provides producers the opportunity to address potential bull problems caused by poor AI conception rates or bull injury or failure. Late June or early July processing for internal and external parasite control also permits timely bull removal for controlled calving season.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

How Do You Use Your Land?

State's conservation partnership one to envy

Story From Missouri Natural Resources Conservation Service

With 28 years of consistently collected land-use data at its fingertips, the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a clear picture of how Missourians utilize the 44.6 million acres within their state's borders, and how their decisions impact natural resources. After Congress directed USDA to track land-use and erosion trends, NRCS developed the National Resources Inventory (NRI), which was expanded to its current size in 1982.

Terry Barney, Missouri's resources inventory coordinator, says 8,700 tracts of land, averaging 160 acres, are inventoried every five years, using an annual rotation of 1,800 tracts. In addition to land use, the NRI tracks erosion rates for both cropland and pastureland acres.

"Unlike many other inventories, NRI tracks the same sample points year after year. This lets us not only determine current land use but also how land use is changing over time across the state and the nation," Barney says. "Change includes knowing where all the acreage gains and losses for a particular land-use category came from and went to over the last 28 years."

In terms of land use, Barney says the large "cropland" category has seen little change in total acres over the years. It has remained steady at about 14.8 million acres. However, there have been shifts within that category. For example, after USDA unveiled its Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) in 1985, cultivated cropland acres declined while grassland acres increased. That's because CRP pays farmers to convert highly erodible land from crop production to permanent vegetation.

CRP and other conservation programs and policies included in the 1985 Farm Bill and subsequent farm bills, have had a dramatic effect on soil erosion. Because of those programs and passage of a one-tenth-cent sales tax in Missouri to fund state parks and to help farmers afford soil conservation activities, the state's soil erosion rate decreased more than any other state over a 25-year period. Missouri's sheet and rill erosion rate on cultivated cropland declined 51 percent -- from 10.8 tons per acre in 1982 to 5.2 tons per acre in 2007.

The past few years have provided an indication of how quickly trends can change, however. For example, with high grain prices coinciding with the expiration of many CRP contracts, some farmers chose to put their CRP ground back into crops instead of renewing their CRP contracts.

Barney says cultivated cropland acreage increased by 126,000 acres between 2007 and 2010, and 108,000 of those acres (65 percent) came from land that had been enrolled in CRP. During that same time period, Missouri's soil erosion rate increased from 5.2 tons per acre per year to 5.5 tons per acre per year. That represents the first increase in the state's soil erosion rate after more than 25 years of steady decline.

"CRP acres decreased, and the number of cultivated cropland acres and the soil erosion rate increased. That's probably not a coincidence," Barney says.

Barney says Missouri is one of 13 states that have maintained a cropland base of more than 10 million acres over the past 28 years. With the state's diverse topography and erosive soils, that has presented a natural resources dilemma.

"We've been maintaining a large cropland base on very erosive soils for many decades," he says.

Missouri State Conservationist J.R. Flores says working with Missouri farmers to keep soil erosion at a low enough level to maintain long-term productivity is a massive effort that requires teamwork and the sharing of resources at the local, state and federal levels.

HEALTH WATCH

Pinkeye: Finding a Cure for Common Problem

Develop prevention strategies for best control

Story By Dr. Dave Rethorst for Cattlemen's News

Pinkeye is one of the more common problems that we face in the beef cattle business. It ranks second only to calf scours in the number of calves affected prior to weaning. Surveys indicate that the disease costs producers $150 million dollars per year. These surveys are several years old so if they were to be done today the cost would be much higher given the market price of cattle we are currently enjoying. Costs are reflected not only in treatment, but also in decreased weight gain and milk production.

In the cattle industry, common belief is that the bacteria Moraxella bovis causes pinkeye. Other bacteria believed to cause pinkeye include Moraxella bovoculi and Mycoplasma bovis. While these bacteria certainly play a role in the disease process, it is my belief that this role is secondary. The primary cause of pinkeye is irritation of the eye whether it is caused by flies, dust, sunlight, viral infection, or grass and weeds. This irritation allows the bacteria, a normal inhabitant of the eye, to multiply and cause the eye damage we associated with pinkeye. This means that the cause of pinkeye is multifactorial and control of the disease must be multifactorial.

First and foremost on the list to manage pinkeye is fly control. The primary concern should be the face fly. Several methods to control this pest exist: insecticide tags, pour-ons, sprays, back rubs, dust bags and using a larvacide such as IGR. Two things to keep in mind when using the insecticide tags are timing of the tag application and rotation of the class of chemical contained in the tag. Immediately prior to pasture turnout is the proper time to apply the tags. If the tags are applied several weeks prior to turnout, for convenience purposes, a good portion of the chemical will be gone when the peak of fly season arrives. Chemical rotation is necessary in order to minimize the buildup of resistance to the chemicals in the fly population. This is true not only for the tags, but also for the pour-ons and chemicals used in backrubs and sprays. IGR works in the manure to kill the fly larvae. To get good control, this product must be fed from 30 days prior to fly season until 30 days following the first killing frost. Elimination of places where flies reproduce such as mud holes and weed patches also can be very beneficial. Often-overlooked breeding grounds for flies include manure and old hay that accumulated as a result of winter-feeding.

Other practices to reduce eye irritation include mowing of pastures to eliminate tall grass with mature seed heads and providing shade so that cattle can avoid bright sunlight.

Vaccination is another tool that can be utilized in controlling pinkeye. A review of published literature on pinkeye vaccine indicates that the net effect of its use is neutral. In other words, the vaccine does no harm, but it is doubtful that its use is beneficial. Use of the vaccine is seldom adequate when it is used as the only method of control but it can be at least somewhat effective when used in conjunction with other practices. Numerous strains of M. bovis exist, and each vaccine has its own strain or strains. That is why some vaccines will work in a given herd, and others will not. No commercial vaccine contains M. bovoculi, so if a producer feels he or she needs a vaccine

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

PINKEYE
FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

for the bacteria this can only be accomplished through the use of an autogenous vaccine, which requires some time and paperwork to accomplish. Use of a viral vaccine containing the IBR virus might aid in the control of pinkeye by reducing irritation of the eye.

Early treatment is of utmost importance when dealing with pinkeye as the earlier in the disease process that treatment occurs, the better the final outcome. Treatment of pinkeye should utilize a two pronged approach. First, control the bacterial infection using a systemic antibiotic such as one of the long-acting oxytetracyclines. Secondly, protect the eye. This can be accomplished either by using an eye patch or suturing the eyelids. I do not recommend use of antibiotic powder in the eye. I feel these powders are irritating to the eye and delay healing. More importantly, the antibiotic in the NFZ puffer is no longer legal to use in food producing animals. Period.

In closing, remember, prevention works! Develop a plan and spend your money wisely. I encourage you to get your veterinarian involved early in the planning process. He or she will know what is working in your area for prevention as well as treatment.

—Dr. Dave Rethorst is director of outreach for the Beef Cattle Institute at Kansas State University.

NUTRITION KNOW-HOW
FROM PAGE 6

Heat Stress

June cattle processing is often hampered by heat stress. Cattle accumulate heat in several ways including high temperature, sun exposure and metabolic heat production. In pasture settings two of these factors can be addressed to minimize the heat stress effects. Environmental temperature cannot be reduced in a natural setting; however, providing shade will reduce heat stress by minimizing sun exposure.

Shade can be detrimental if cattle do not have adequate space for air movement, similar to bunching due to flies. Shade requirements are not well documented; however, recommendations for stocker cattle range from 15 to 30 ft^2 per head, while mature cow requirements range from 30 to 40 ft^2 of shade per head.

To address reduced feed intake and increased energy requirements due to heat and parasite stress, pasture managers should maintain vegetative pastures. Grazing vegetative grass-legume pastures during summer stress periods offers increased energy density and minimizes metabolic heat production from mature forage digestion. Stocker operators can provide supplemental feed during heat stress periods to increase diet energy density and should feed pasture supplements as late in the day as possible to minimize metabolic production during daylight hours.

Process cattle early in the day to minimize heat stress. Late-day processing increases stress since cattle will accumulate heat during the day and processing increases the metabolic stress due to movement. Low-stress handling is always important, but most critical when temperatures increase.

To remove or dissipate heat, cattle sweat and pant. Sweating and panting is not as effective when relative humidity is high due to reduced evaporation. As a result, periods of high humidity and low wind tend to increase heat stress more than high temperature periods with low humidity and a brisk wind. Take advantage of shaded pastures; however, do not neglect the benefits of wind. Avoid pastures where vegetation blocks the wind without providing shade.

June management practices are flexible in their timing so long as producers consider the potential for heat stress. Knowing which cows are pregnant and minimizing parasite losses now increases late summer management opportunities should forage become limiting.

—Source: Justin Sexten is University of Missouri state extension specialist, beef nutrition. Contact Justin at sextenj@missouri.edu.

NEXT GENERATION

Build Skills with the Farm's Next Leaders

What does the next generation have to offer?

Story By Darren Frye for Cattlemen's News

As the farm grows and with all the changes that have happened in ag, there's more at stake in every decision. The numbers are bigger. Decisions often have to be made quickly. Understanding the finances of the farm and making decisions accordingly will be a key skill for future farm leaders.

We've talked with some families who don't yet have a succession plan for their operation. Many families know they need to take action but are unsure of the best way to start getting the next generation involved in farm finances.

The first step might be realizing that a plan for how to do this is needed. In one family, the father was a very business-savvy farmer. Because he was so effective, he had been calling all the shots and single-handedly making financial decisions as he expanded the operation.

His sons had been working in the operation, but he wasn't involving them in any financial decisions. The father wasn't interested in discussing or showing them how he was making decisions. And, the more that the sons asked to be involved in that part of the farm, the more he closed them out.

The closer he got to the time he was hoping to retire from farming, the more the dad became aware of the anxiety his sons were feeling. He began to realize he needed to get his sons up to speed on the financial part of running the operation and let them in on his thinking. He began intentionally including them in meetings with the farm's lender. He had them sit down with him to review the operation's financial position each quarter.

Imagine what might have happened if the older generation hadn't decided to make this training a priority. What if something tragic happened to the farm leader? What if he had retired before transferring his knowledge? The next generation would have been forced to scramble to pick up the pieces.

The father was excited to work on this but felt there was so much 'catching up' to do before he would be able to transfer the operation. The family decided to work with an advisor to build the financial and operational skills of the farm's next leaders.

Together, they worked to get a plan in place that incorporates training for the next leaders in the knowledge and decision-making skills they will need as they transition to farm leadership. Most importantly, both generations are on board and willing to invest the time and attention that's needed for a plan like this to be effective.

A succession plan that includes training for the next generation ensures that the knowledge the older generation has worked over a lifetime doesn't disappear. It lives on through the next generation of farm leaders.

Is a member of the next generation coming back to farm with you? It can be great to bring in a family member who is passionate and excited about the future of ag and your family farm. He or she can bring a lot of energy and new ideas to the operation.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

FARM LEADERS FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

In working with farm families, our legacy advisors get a unique perspective on the expectations that are set up (or neglected) when a family member comes back to work on the farm. When bringing in a family member, it's important to think about where the farm is headed, and what types of skills the next generation is going to need in the future.

Key things to consider are: What does the new employee bring? What are they most interested in and passionate about in the operation? Do they bring new skills or ones that complement those of other family members or employees already on the farm?

Families need to be clear about expectations with members of the next generation who want to work on the farm. There needs to be a match between the farm's needs and the skills brought by the family member. Otherwise, confusion reigns. Also, new employees need to know what their role will be. They will ask: 'where do I fit in?'

Using clearly defined role descriptions can help both generations determine the best 'fit' for both the farm and the job seeker. As more members of the next generation are interested in coming back to the farm, it may help to create these descriptions for your operation.

Think about what the next generation has to offer, and most importantly, how it fits with the future of your farm. When there's a match, you have a great candidate on your hands.

—Darren Frye is President and CEO of Water Street Solutions, a farm consulting firm that helps farmers with the challenges they face in growing and improving their farms – including the challenge of transitioning the farming operation to the next generation. Contact Darren at waterstreet@waterstreet.org or call (866) 249-2528.

MANAGEMENT MATTERS

Stewardship 101

How can you be a good steward of the land?

Story By Drexel Atkisson for Cattlemen's News

When we hear the word stewardship, we may wonder what it really means. Simply put, it's all about taking care of something. What do we think of when we talk about being a good steward of the land? Many people say ensuring the land's condition is as good or better for the next generation is good stewardship. As users of the land, we have a duty to make this happen. We have the opportunity to enjoy the fruits of the land, but not to abuse it.

Stewardship begins with an understanding of how our agricultural operation affects the natural resources around us. Operations can vary vastly — from grass-based livestock to row crop production. Organizations like University of Missouri's Outreach and Extension Service, Missouri Department of Natural Resources' Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) and United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) are the first stop for free technical information about stewardship.

Once resource concerns are identified, these same organizations offer many programs to assist producers with the implementation of improvements to the land. SWCD and NRCS have financial assistance programs such as the State Cost-share Program and the federally funded Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) that can help

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TRENDING NOW

"Keep On, Keepin' On"

Eldon Cole celebrates 50 years with Extension

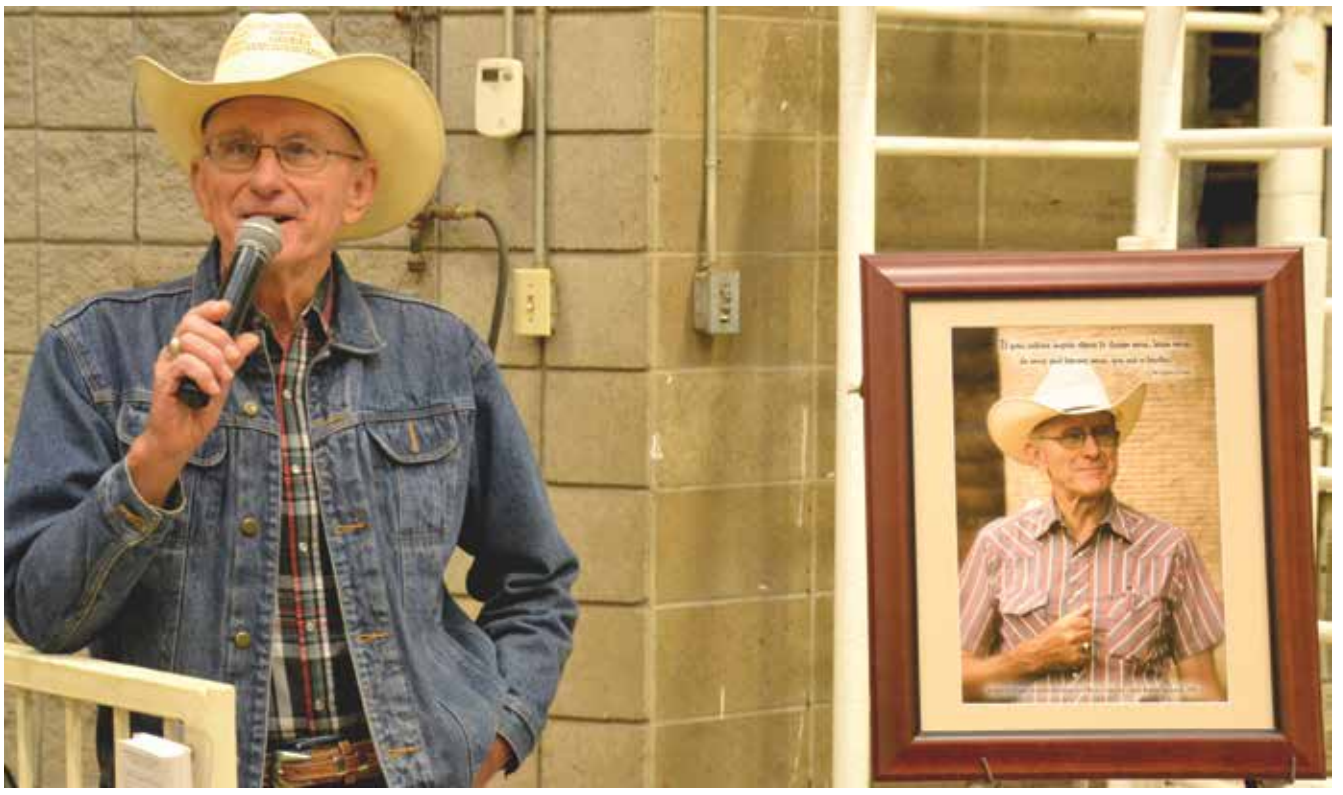
Story By Joann Pipkin, Editor

He came to southwest Missouri with a vision to help improve the quality of cattle produced here. Fifty years under his belt as an extension educator with the University of Missouri, Eldon Cole says producers here have come a long way in changing the industry.

"(In 1968) we were in a transition era from dairy to beef," Cole recalls. "We had a lot of crossbred beef/dairy cattle that were not well received by the industry. In the back of my mind, I always hoped we could get folks in the industry to recognize southwest Missouri as a great area to raise quality feeder cattle much like they do in the Flint Hills of Kansas and Sand Hills of Nebraska."

Today, he says, southwest Missouri is definitely on the map.

Cole was recognized at the May 16 Show-Me-Select Replacement Heifer Sale by Joplin Regional Stockyards for his 50 years of service with MU Extension.



Eldon Cole addresses attendees at the May 16 Show-Me-Select Replacement Heifer sale at Joplin Regional Stockyards. JRS presented Cole with a framed photograph to commemorate his 50 years with University of Missouri Extension. —*Photo by Joann Pipkin*

Eldon Cole was raised the son of a cattle trader in the eastern Missouri Ozarks of Washington County. As a college student at MU, he came to appreciate genetics and cow/calf operations as they came to the forefront of the beef industry during that time.

As performance testing surfaced in the industry, weighing and measuring cattle became the "big thing to do," Cole says. Crossbreeding was also getting popular.

"The crossbreeding work being done at the MU Spickard Experiment Station fascinated me," Cole notes.

As he completed his graduate degree, his advisor, Dr. G.B. Thompson, suggested he consider a job with Extension.

In November 1963, Cole interviewed with Extension, coincidentally on the same day as the very first all breed performance tested bull sale in Columbia.

About a month later, he discovered there were a couple of openings in agriculture extension. His first assignment sent him to Saline County. Agriculture was different there than what Cole had experienced.

"I was in awe all through college of the guys from Saline County because they were from farming country," he recalls.

From hogs to terrace construction, Cole says he learned a lot and really enjoyed his four-year tenure there.

All the while, he had his eyes on the south. "I was a southern Missouri person at heart," he says.

Cole interviewed for the Lawrence County vacancy after longtime livestock specialist John Rea transferred to Columbia. He's been in the same position ever since.

Up until about 1980, Cole worked a lot with feeder pigs in the area. "We've always tried to focus on getting carcass work integrated into any livestock species we were working with," he says, whether cattle, hogs or sheep.

During his tenure with MU Extension, Cole has seen a lot of tools introduced to the industry, but he says the measuring stick helped the focus be more on objective data rather than subjective data. "We can quantify the information," he says. Expected Progeny Differences (EPDs) evolved from that.

Yet, Cole does not think that EPDs had the greatest impact on the beef industry. The veteran educator slides open his desk drawer and pulls out an antiquated ear tag.

"In Saline County, when I started with Extension, ear tags were unheard of," Cole clarifies. Cattle, then, were primarily identified with neck chains.

"I carried that tag in my pocket for a number of years after moving to Lawrence County," he says to help get producers familiar with this identification system.

The ear tag, measuring stick and scale all helped revolutionize the beef industry in the last 50 years, Cole says.

Among the most exciting times in the industry for Cole were during the 1970s as new breeds of beef cattle were introduced. Chianina was one example.

"The new breeds brought something to the table, but they weren't the end-all," Cole notes. "We've sorted through the breeds and have some that are pretty main-line that will stick around and be pretty useful to people."

Topping Cole's list of challenges in his 50-year career is none other than fescue and how to manage it. "There is a need to find cattle through genetics that can better cope with fescue," he explains.

Another hurdle he's faced has been getting producers to understand and use EPDs. Cole explains that the SMS heifer program and its emphasis on calving ease likely opened the door for a better acceptance and understanding of EPDs more than any other program Extension had developed up until that time.

Looking to the future, Cole says he's excited about the beef industry's work with genomics and DNA. "I think that will be a revolutionary part of our industry in the future," he says. "It's already here; it's just going to take a long time for this technology to evolve and be widely accepted."

Even with 50 years on his resume as an Extension educator, don't think Cole is on his way out the door. He won't discuss retirement.

"I enjoy what I'm doing and will keep on, keepin' on for awhile."

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MANAGEMENT MATTERS

Fly Frenzy

Don't let economic losses leave you in fear of flies

Story By Samantha Warner for Cattlemen's News

How many times did you hear, "Shut the door, you're letting flies in the house!" as a child? Or, how often do you now repeat that same phrase to your own children or grandchildren during the summer months? Flies are a constant annoyance to humans and animals alike during hot, humid Midwest summers. However, without proper fly management strategies, flies can move from simply annoying to the cause of serious problems for cattle and producers.

According to Justin Talley, Oklahoma State University Extension livestock entomologist, horn, stable and horse flies are blood-sucking parasites that cause problems for producers. However, horn flies are considered the most problematic external parasite for cattle.

Horn flies are an external parasite of cattle that cause over $1 billion in economic losses each year, as noted by eXtension, America's research-based learning network. Cattle serve as hosts for horn flies by providing blood meals and fecal pats that are used for laying eggs and overwintering pupa.

Talley said, "Economic infestations range from 200 to 300 or more flies per animal and usually develop in late May or June and then persist into the fall. Horn flies are a greater problem in pastured cattle because they require a fresh, intact manure pad to complete their life cycle."

The reduction in horn flies, as stated by extension, results in a reduction of stress annoyance behaviors such as twitching, head throwing and swishing of the tail and ultimately an increase in grazing time.

"The main physiological stress that horn flies cause is an increase in overall body temperature when horn fly numbers are as few as 100 per animal" Talley said. "This slight increase can be compensated under normal conditions but with the added heat stress, this slight increase can be the difference between a productive animal and one that is drinking away valuable water just to become open due to stress. Water consumption went from 4.4 gallons per day with no horn flies to 6.6 gallons per day with 500 horn flies and this was under laboratory conditions not heat stress conditions."

Talley explained that a correlation between the density of horn flies and forage quality also exists. When horn flies are controlled, cattle gain an extra pound and a half per week.

Although not blood-sucking parasites, face flies are also a problem and are connected to pinkeye problems. "Face flies are only on the animal for a small percentage of the time. Therefore, addressing the egg and larval stages of the fly as well as the adults is most effective. A moderate to heavy fly infestation is when there are "10 to 20 flies per animal during the middle of the day," Talley said.

Control Strategies

Producers should begin horn fly control in the spring when cattle average approximately 200 horn flies, Talley noted.

"Because the horn fly spends all of its adult life on cattle, control with insecticides can be highly effective," Talley said. However, he added, "Just as the habits of the horn fly make the pest vulnerable to insecticide treatments, this same behavior can create problems with insecticide resistance. Continuous use of the same insecticide or class of insecticides will eventually result in fly populations that cannot be controlled."

If ear tag insecticides are used, they must be rotated. "Do not use a pyrethroid ear tag more

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PASTURE PLANNING

Warm Season Grasses Give Cows a Break from Fescue

Pearl millet, sorghum-sudangrass, switchgrass add gain to grazing livestock

Story by Samantha Warner for Cattlemen's News

The blazing, hot days of summer are upon us. The hot weather can make you grumpy and it can be uncomfortable for cattle as well. To relieve some of the stress of summer days, it is important to make sure your animals have the best quality forage. As cool season forages die off or become toxic, warm season grasses make a great forage replacement for the summer months.

According to Paul Beck, professor of animal science at the University of Arkansas, "Warm-season grasses provide a non-toxic forage during the summer and allow cows and calves a break from tall fescue when it is most toxic and lowest in nutritive quality."

Robert Kallenbach, University Missouri state forage extension specialist, added, "With adequate moisture and fertility, they (warm-season grasses) rapidly produce high-quality forage during late spring and summer when cool-season forages are dormant. In addition, warm-season annual grasses work well in rotation with row crops or as emergency pastures."

Beck noted some good warm-season grasses are bermudagrass, bahiagrass and the native warm-season grasses gamagrass, big bluestem, little bluestem and switchgrass. They provide good yields in hay fields and pastures and help grazing livestock gain.

"A good cold-tolerant bermudagrass variety such as Greenfield, Midland 99, or Wrangler can be easily established and managed for hay or grazing. Crabgrass is a warm-season annual grass that is high in quality and provides good animal performance but is hard to cure for hay," Beck said. "The native warm-season grasses are harder to establish, grazing management is more difficult and hay quality can be lower, but also provide high yields and have low fertilizer requirements."

Kallenbach also recommends pearl millet and sorghum-sudangrass as good warm-season grass options.

"Hay-feeding trials at the University of Missouri Southwest Center in Mount Vernon indicate that properly supplemented animals could gain 1.6 to 1.8 pounds per day on sorghum-sudangrass and pearl millet. Similar data have been reported for crabgrass," Kallenbach said.

Managing Warm-Season Grasses

To manage your warm-season grasses, Beck said, "Start with a soil test and fertilize to meet

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WARM SEASON • FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

requirements for phosphorus and potassium. Fertilize with nitrogen to meet production goals."

However, with nitrogen fertilizers, it is also important to be conscious of nitrate toxicity.

"Heavy nitrogen fertilization followed by drought is the most common situation that causes nitrate accumulation in forage. If plants contain more than 1.5 percent nitrate (15,000 parts per million), they should be considered toxic to livestock," Kallenbach said. "Nitrates will persist in harvested hay since they do not break down during the curing process. If nitrate accumulation is suspected, forage should be tested before feeding."

To further manage warm season grasses, Beck said, "Spray weeds that will interfere with growth of the warm-season grasses (compete for sunlight, moisture, and shade out desired grasses). Manage grazing with adequate rest, and do not overgraze."

Harvest hay at the proper interval (28 days for bermudagrass, 2 to 3 cuttings per year for native warm-season grasses) to get adequate yields and nutritive quality, he said.

"Hay curing is difficult with either pearl millet or sorghum-sudangrass because of large stem size. It is imperative that a mower-conditioner be used to crush the stems to speed drying," Kallenbach said. "Sorghum-sudangrass can produce four to eight tons of forage per acre when harvested to a six to 10-inch stubble. It should be harvested each time the accumulated growth reaches a height of 24 to 36 inches."

He went on to say maximum yield of sorghum-sudangrass is obtained if stubble height is maintained at 10 inches to allow for regrowth to originate from terminal buds rather than from buds at the base of the plant. "Sorghum sudangrass taller than 36 inches produces stemmy, low-quality forage," Kallenbach noted.

Establishing Warm-Season Grasses

"If you are replacing tall fescue, select the best site that will not erode when renovating the pasture and has a good level of native fertility," Beck said. "Kill competing forages and weeds using herbicides or tillage (the combination is best). Apply lime to get pH to desired level and apply phosphorus and potassium to meet soil test requirements."

Beck also said it is important to use high quality seed from a known source that is a variety that fits your environment, and control weeds that will compete with the seedlings.

"New stands of introduced warm-season grasses (such as bermudagrass) take about a year to be fully productive, while new stands of native warm season grasses take two to three years to be fully productive," Beck said.

Prussic Acid Concerns

Although sorghum-sudangrass is good warm-season grass forage, producers must manage it carefully to avoid prussic acid, or cyanide poisoning.

"When sorghum-sudangrass plants are injured or under stress, enzymes that convert glycosides to sugar and prussic acid are released," Kallenbach said. "The environmental conditions that favor toxic levels of prussic acid are drought stress and frost damage. If sorghum-sudangrass is under drought stress, avoid grazing until the plants have recovered and exhibit at least 24 inches of regrowth."

Kallenbach said following a severe frost, avoid grazing sorghum-sudangrass for 14 days or until the leaves turn brown, whichever is longer. "Prussic acid can be detected through the use of picrate strips," he noted.

With proper management practices warm-season grasses are a good forage option to help your cattle thrive through the summer months. Adequate forages for cattle will also help keep your stress level down through the hot summer.

MANAGEMENT MATTERS

Don't Let BRD Rob You of Calf Performance

Respiratory disease protection from birth to weaning

Story By Rebecca Mettler for Cattlemen's News

A calf that has experienced Bovine Respiratory Disease (BRD) at a young age is, on average, 17 pounds lighter at weaning according to Peggy Thompson, professional services veterinarian-cattle division, Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica, Inc.

With today's feeder calf prices, the lost performance can easily add up to $30 to $40 per head, Thompson explained at a recent meeting at Joplin Regional Stockyards.

Thompson also pointed out that 30 percent of calves entering the feedlot that have never been treated for respiratory disease have lung lesions. Those lung lesions are evidence of respiratory disease not detected or treated at the cow/calf level.

Commonly, respiratory disease in cattle is most discussed for calves entering the feedlot. However, now vaccination can be used as an important management tool to control respiratory disease in calves 60- to 90-days old.

"What we haven't focused on is respiratory disease prior to weaning," Thompson said.

Of the research done on preweaning cattle, the prevalence of respiratory disease can be anywhere from three to 25 percent. The study published in 2005 spanned 20 years of data, according to Thompson.

Respiratory disease in calves three weeks of age and older is the most common contributor to death loss. Research says that the average age when young calves will experience respiratory disease is at 100 days of age, but again that depends on the operation, Thompson said.

Thompson explained that it's a tough situation for producers to have calves survive birth during a cold winter, make it through the three-week period in which calves are most susceptible to scours and then end up losing the calf to respiratory disease.

Even if a producer loses just one calf to respiratory disease, it affects the cow/calf producer's bottom line, said Thompson.

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CALF PERFORMANCE FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Can young calves be vaccinated?

Is a calf able to respond to vaccination in the presence of maternal antibodies? Historically, producers have been told that a young calf will not respond to vaccination at that young of age because maternal antibodies are still present.

However, new research has shown that vaccination with Pyramid, a 5-way modified live vaccine can in fact be successful at protecting a young calf from respiratory disease.

The study took 22 dairy calves at 4.5 weeks of age and split them into three groups. The first group received only milk replacer and a vaccination of saline solution. The second group received colostrum with antibody to Bovine Viral Diarrhea (BVD) and was immunized with the 5-way modified live vaccine, Pyramid. Finally, the last group was given colostrum with the antibody but didn't get vaccinated.

Seven months after the vaccination, once the maternal antibodies were not detected in the blood, the calves were challenged with the BVD virus. The entire group that received Pyramid and the colostrum survived, actually gained weight and showed few clinical signs of sickness said Thompson.

Of the group that received maternal antibody but not vaccination, 50 percent of the calves died. Only a few of the calves that didn't receive maternal antibodies or vaccination survived. Bottom line, vaccination can be effective in the face of maternal antibodies.

The presence of maternal antibodies can last up to four to eight months of age. If calves are weaned at six to seven months of age and maternal antibodies are gone by four months, Thompson questioned what was protecting the calf from four to seven months. Maternal antibodies had faded but the respiratory vaccination is traditionally administered three weeks prior to weaning.

"That's where I believe a vaccine at turnout, 60- to 90-days

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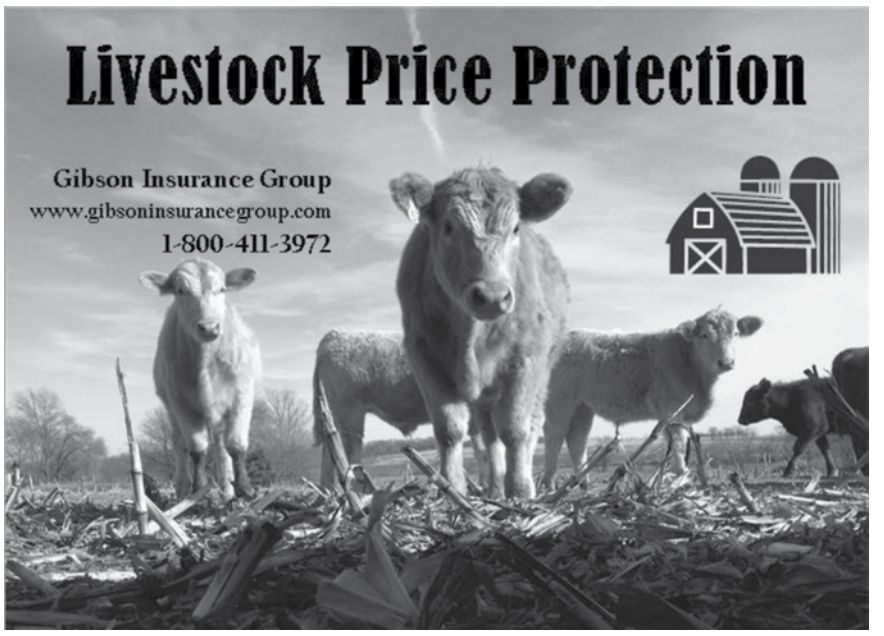

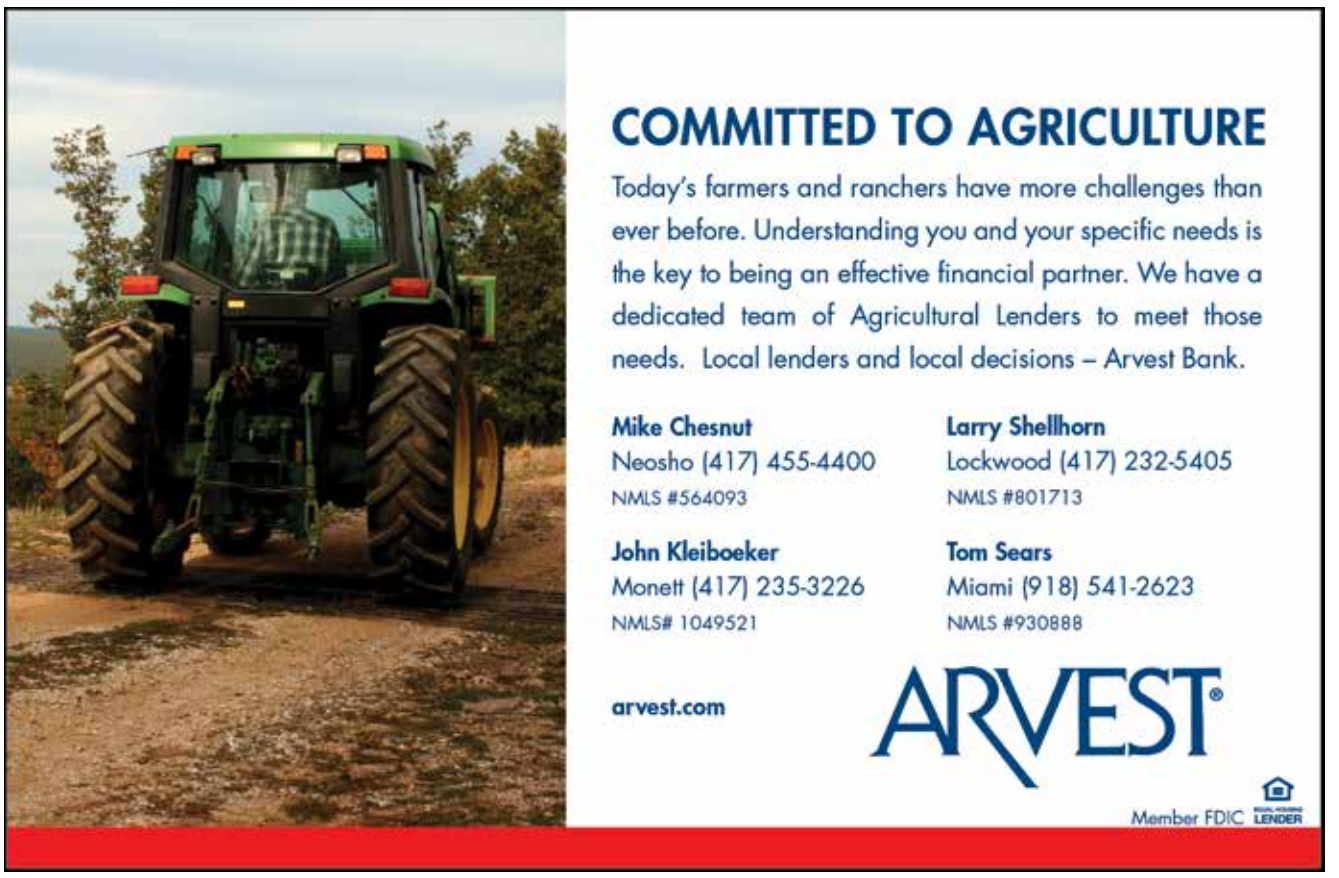

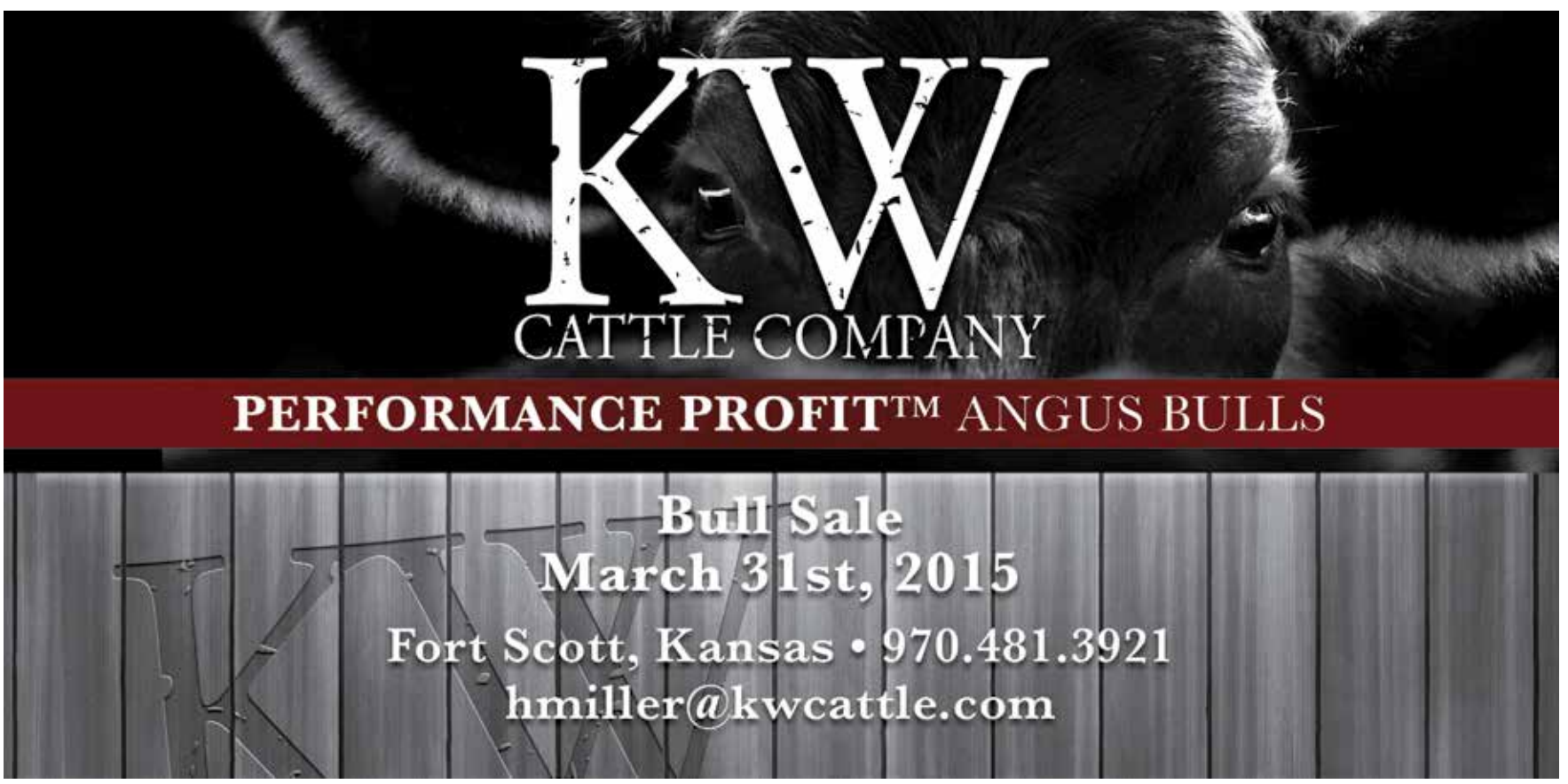

MANAGEMENT MATTERS

Effects of Grazing Management on Calf Scours

Overcrowded pastures can mean increased sickness

Story By Beth Walker for Cattlemen's News

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, calf scours accounts for about 14 percent of all deaths in calves less than three weeks old. In some beef herds, death rates of five to 10 percent or greater are due to scours.

Scours or "enteritis," inflammation of the intestinal tract, usually affects calves between three and 16 days old. We typically notice scours when an animal is born with limited immunity, and/or is introduced into an environment conducive to microbial infection. Viruses, such as rotavirus, coronavirus and bovine virus diarrhea (BVD) or bacteria such as Escherichia coli, Salmonella and Clostridium perfringens can cause calf scours. Internal parasites such as Cryptosporidium and coccidia, or in older calves Ostertagia ostertagi, the brown stomach worm, can also cause gastrointestinal upset leading to scours. Unfortunately, these agents can be shed by animals not showing signs of ill-thrift, and can infect those animals with lowered immunity. Sometimes scours can be non-pathogenic and caused by excessive milk consumption, ingestion of foreign objects, or ingestion of molasses or table sugar, which the calf is unable to digest. Economically, calf scours will decrease overall performance of the inflicted calves, decrease overall weaning rates and calf weights, and elevate costs due to increased veterinary bills and labor to treat sick calves.

Overcrowding of pastures or other animal holding facilities is the major contributing factor to calf scours. Microbes and parasites causing scours in young calves are often shed by the cows and will increase as the pregnant cow approaches calving. Shedding is typically heaviest in heifers and will likely increase if the animal is stressed. Older calves can become infected with these agents, not appear sick, and shed billions of microbes into the environment. These microbes are then picked up by animals as they graze or nurse on a teat that was exposed to the agents when the cow was lying down.

While not all research is conclusive, enough evidence exists to suggest that rotational grazing is a good management practice to assist in decreasing calf scours. Work done in Nebraska led to what has been deemed "The Sandhills Calving System." The premise behind the Sandhills calving method was to decrease the contact between disease pathogens and newborn calves and was completed in two ways: first, segregating calves by age and, second, moving pregnant cows to a new calving pasture. Both methods reduced either the contact with the pathogens or the time of contact with the pathogens and both methods used rotational grazing as their tool to manage disease.

On one ranch, home to 800-900 cows, mortality rates due to scours went from between 14 and 6.5 percent to less than one percent and with a 24-fold reduction in veterinary expenses. In this case, pregnant cows were turned out into the first pasture as soon as the first calf was born and remained there for two weeks. After two weeks, pregnant cows were moved to a clean pasture. After one week, pregnant cows were again moved, and this procedure was repeated. Pairs were left in the pastures they

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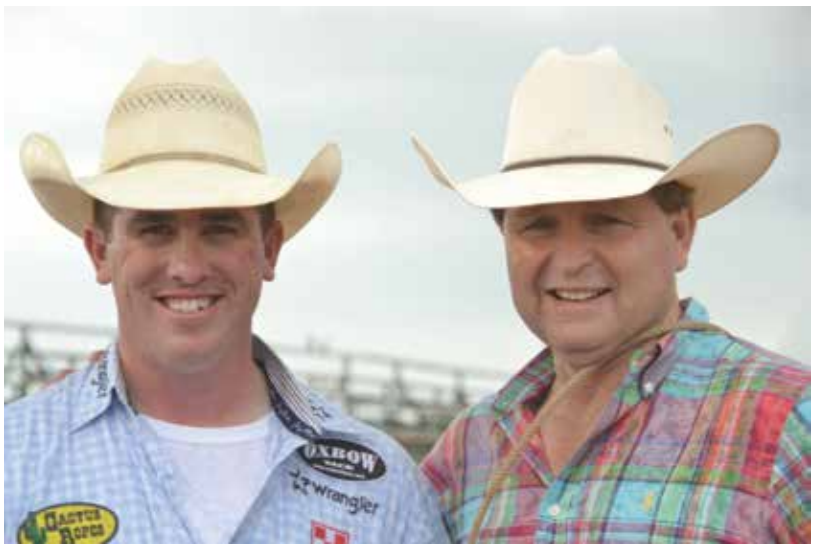
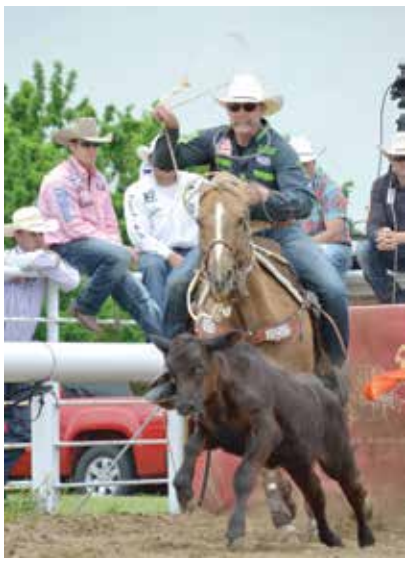
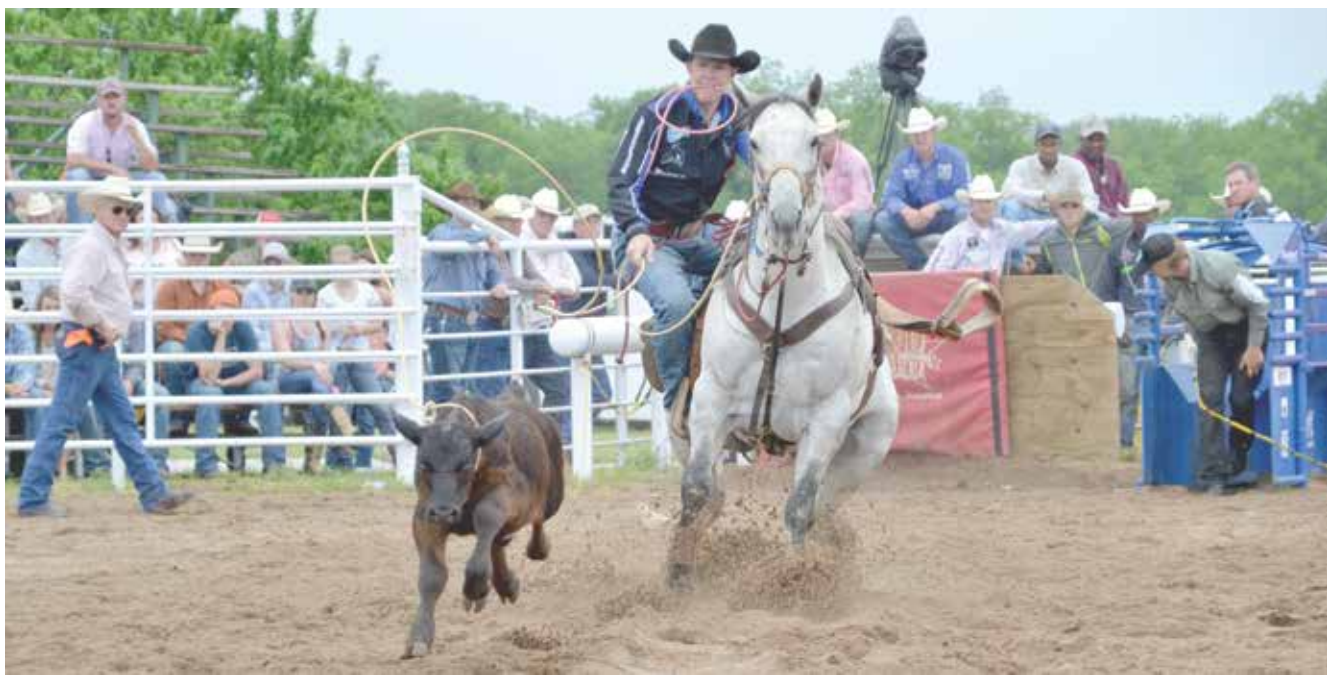
AT CLOSING

Ryan Jarrett Wins Best of the Best Calf Roping

World champion cowboy Ryan Jarrett, Comanche, Okla., (below left with Jackie Moore) was the big winner in the 2014 Best of the Best Calf Roping held May 26 at Risen Ranch Cowboy Church Arena near Carthage, Mo. Jarrett earned the $31,500 payout in the annual event hosted by JRS, Pinegar Chevrolet and Risen Ranch Cowboy Church. Look for complete event results on the web at *www.joplinstockyards.com*. *—Photos by Joann Pipkin*







GRAZING MANAGEMENT FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

calved in, which resulted in all calves being similar in ages. After four weeks, calves were commingled.

On the second ranch, 400 cows were already used in a rotational grazing system, and moved every two to four days. This ranch experienced between 11.9 and 6.5 percent mortality due to calf scours. In this system, every 10 or so days, the herd was divided by sorting cows that had not calved from those that had. This method kept pasture groups at about 100 head, and all calves within each group were born within about 10 days of each other. Recall that prior to parturition, shedding of infectious pathogens increases. Thus, this system removed those cows that were likely shedding the most pathogens. In this new grazing system, death losses never went above 2.3 percent.

Changing calving season from colder and wetter to a warmer and dryer time of year can decrease the number of calves succumbing to scours. Excessive heat or cold and moisture stress the calf and can impair the calf's natural ability to resist disease. Increased stocking rates or crowded conditions increase the number of times an animal is exposed to the pathogens. In addition, favorable environmental conditions such as wet, cool weather can increase the survivability of the pathogens. By rotating animals into a clean pasture and removing pregnant animals or older calves, you are essentially lowering stocking rate and decreasing young calves' exposure to disease.

What causes disease in animals is never easy to diagnose and why some animals get sick while others remain healthy is puzzling. I am always a fan of holistic animal management, and my big red toolbox is usually close at hand. While I believe vaccines are certainly tools to be kept close at hand and used as directed by your veterinarian, pasture management is just as important. Keeping pregnant animals separate from new calves, calving heifers in separate pastures from more mature cows, using your most nutritionally complete pastures during calving, providing needed vitamins and minerals to your animals, and eliminating the access of your animals to ponds or streams can have significant effects on animal health and your wallet. Perhaps, reconsidering winter calving for a warmer time of year and reducing stress of animals should be tools worth considering.

—Beth Walker is associate professor of agriculture at Missouri State University.

CALF PERFORMANCE FROM PAGE 17

old, will protect you against respiratory disease," Thompson said.

Thompson finds vaccination of 60- to 90-day old calves to be a management option if producers are having respiratory issues in their young calves or if traditional vaccination schedules are difficult for a producer to follow.

When Thompson practiced in Idaho, vaccinating the branding-age (60- to 90-day old) calf was the only protocol used because of management situations. She pointed out that those calves preformed well in both the backgrounding stage and in the feedlot.

Early research has suggested that vaccinating with Pyramid5+Presponse at 60 to 90 days of age and again at weaning verses vaccinating three weeks prior to weaning and again at weaning offer basically the same respiratory protection.

"There was absolutely no difference in growth or performance, morbidity or mortality," Thompson said.

Thompson did point out that the early vaccination group had a better response to BVD.

Thompson's goal is to get cattlemen thinking about how respiratory disease could be affecting their calf crop at a young age and changing the way they think about respiratory vaccinations in order to protect the herd in the timeframe between birth and weaning.

MARKET WATCH

Feeder Cattle & Calf Auction

May Receipts 11,677 • Last Month 17,740 • Last Year 15,050

JRS Sale Day Market Phone: (417) 548-2012
Mondays (Rick Huffman) | Wednesdays (Don Kleiboeker)
Market Information Provided By Tony Hancock
Mo. Department of Agriculture Market News Service
Market News Hotline (573) 522-9244
Sale Day Market Reporter (417) 548-2012

May Video Sales

Video Sales from 5/5, 5/12 & 5/19 • Total Video Receipts: 5,848

Date:	South Central States	Texas, Okla.,	New Mexico, Kansas, Mo.	Offering: 3109						
5/12/14										
	FEEDER STEERS		MED & LG 1				FEEDER HEIFERS		MED & LG 1		
HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY	HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY
60	875	875	$176.50	$176.50	Current	139	725	725	$180.25-$181.50	$180.86	October
58	850	850	$181.75	$181.75	July		Eastern States	All states	east of the Miss.,	La., & Ark.	
180	800	800	$185.00	$185.00	Jul-Aug		FEEDER STEERS		MED & LG 1		
160	625	625	$216.00	$216.00	August	HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY
120	825	825	$185.50-$187.75	$186.62	August	62	800	800	$185.10	$185.10	August
60	825	825	$183.00	$183.00	Aug-Sep	62	800	800	$184.35	$184.35	October
62	800	800	$184.25	$184.25	October	62	800	800	$184.60	$184.60	November
	FEEDER STEERS		MED & LG 1-2				FEEDER STEERS		MED & LG 1-2		
HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY	HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY
58	850	850	$176.50	$176.50	June	171	875	875	$177.00	$177.00	August
67	730	730	$190.00	$190.00	July		FEEDER HEIFERS		MED & LG 1		
168	875	875	$175.75	$175.75	July	HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY
280	900	900	$177.50	$177.50	July	46	760	760	$180.00	$180.00	Current
58	850	850	$181.00	$181.00	Jul-Aug	195	750	750	$182.50	$182.50	July
60	825	825	$181.50	$181.50	August		FEEDER HEIFERS		MED & LG 1-2		
56	900	900	$174.75	$174.75	September	HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY
65	800	800	$182.75	$182.75	October	70	700	700	$176.00	$176.00	November
	FEEDER STEERS		MED & LG 2				FEEDER HEIFERS		MED & LG 2		
HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY	HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY
580	850	850	$175.25	$175.25	July	210	725	725	$175.00	$175.00	October

Date:	South Central States	Texas, Okla.,	New Mexico, Kansas, Mo.	Offering: 2000						
5/19/14										
	FEEDER STEERS		MED & LG 1				Eastern States	All states	east of the Miss.,	La., & Ark.	
HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY		FEEDER STEERS		MED & LG 1-2		
112	925	925	$167.75	$167.75	Current	HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY
	FEEDER STEERS		MED & LG 1-2			62	800	800	$187.00	$187.00	October
HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY		FEEDER HEIFERS		MED & LG 1-2		
80	590	590	$223.00	$223.00	August	HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY
60	775	775	$189.50	$189.50	August	210	725	725	$180.00	$180.00	October
	FEEDER HEIFERS		MED & LG 1			212	700	700	$180.00-$182.00	$180.66	November
HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY						
68	725	725	$185.00	$185.00	October						
66	750	750	$177.00	$177.00	October						
	FEEDER HEIFERS		MED & LG 1-2								
HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY						
130	750	750	$182.00	$182.00	July						
180	570	570	$210.00	$210.00	August						
134	750	750	$174.00	$174.00	August						
345	725	725	$184.00	$184.00	September						
134	750	750	$174.00	$174.00	October						
207	725	725	$182.75	$182.75	November						

FLY FRENZY
FROM PAGE 14

than once every three years. Do not use an organophosphate ear tag more than two years in succession," Talley said.

According to Talley, other ear tag suggestions to remember are:

- The ideal insecticide rotation is Abamectin >>> Organophosphate >>> Pyrethroid.
- Remove ear tags when they lose their effectiveness or at the end of fly season.
- Do not tag cattle more than once per fly season with any insecticide class.
- If additional control is needed during fly season use sprays, pour-ons, dusts or backrubbers. Alternate insecticide class when switching methods, if possible, as well.

Fire Management

Another type of fly management practice outlined by eXtension involves burning parts of a pasture to control flies. Pasture burning is believed to work because cattle spend more time in the recently burned patch than unburned patches as they are attracted to the highly palatable and nutritious plant regrowth after fire. In addition, fire in the dormant season (late winter and early spring) alters cow manure when pupa are overwintering in or below them.

Not only does fire management help avoid resistance to chemical treatments, but also it allows for grass regrowth needed for high quality forages.

Talley said every producer has different amounts of horn fly infestation. It is up to each individual producer to determine when to implement fly control strategies and which strategies will work for their herd.

SCAN this and get the latest information on the web from JRS

STEWARDSHIP 101
FROM PAGE 11

install a wide range of conservation practices on pastureland, cropland, forest land and wildlife areas. Many people see conservation as costly and just another expense they do not want to endure. However, just like maintenance on an automobile will make it last longer and be more reliable at performing its duty, conservation will most often make our land more productive for a longer time. Practices like fertility management and grazing management through the use of a properly-installed grazing system will not only provide for a more sound resource, but also a more stable cattle operation less dependent on expensive outside inputs. Cropping systems that focus on stewardship protect the land from erosion and nutrient runoff and this again keeps our land productive and more dependable at producing a crop from year to year.

I challenge all land users to evaluate your level of stewardship and identify areas that need improvement. If you need help with this task, contact one of the organizations mentioned above. You can document these findings in your own conservation plan and work toward implementing changes that you will find rewarding in more ways than one.

—Drexel Atkisson is district conservationist with Natural Resources Conservation Service in Dade County, Missouri.

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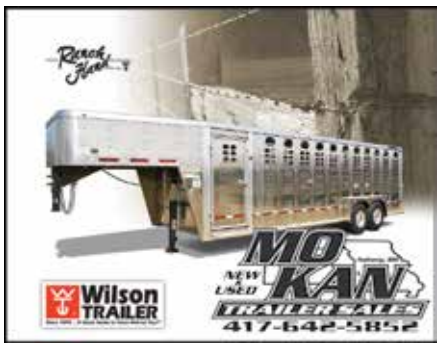

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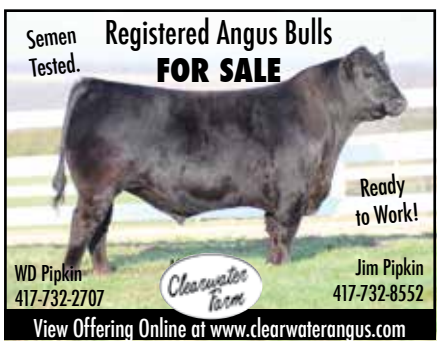

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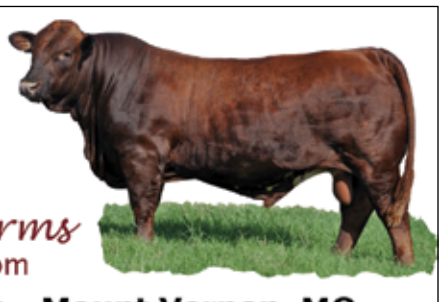

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16 Yearling Special • Joplin Regional Stockyards, Carthage, Mo. • PH: 417-548-2333
26 Value Added Feeder Calf Sale • Joplin Regional Stockyards, Carthage, Mo. • PH: 417-548-2333
30 Yearling Special • Joplin Regional Stockyards, Carthage, Mo. • PH: 417-548-2333

July
1 Special Video Sale • Joplin Regional Stockayrds, Carthage, Mo. • PH: 417-548-2333
18-20 Four State Farm Show • Pittsburg, Kan. PH: 800-356-8255

August
4-7 Hickory County, Mo. Cattlemen's Bus Tour • Iowa & Illinois • PH: 417-745-6767 (reservations by June 20)
7 Special Video Sale • Joplin Regional Stockayrds, Carthage, Mo. • PH: 417-548-2333
7-17 Missouri State Fair • Sedalia, Mo. • PH: 800-422-FAIR

September
23-25 Management Intensive Grazing School • Forsyth, Mo. • PH: 417-581-2719, ext.3

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Having grown up on a crop and cow-calf operation in south-central Nebraska, Jason Bargen, Full Value Beef Analytics Expert, has a love of agriculture and the outdoors — but also of math and science.

After taking a statistics course in college, his professor cornered him, asked about his plans after graduation and encouraged him to earn his master's degree in statistics.

"I had no idea what opportunities a graduate degree in statistics could open up. But my professor asked me what industry I loved, and taught me that you can always apply analytics to that industry," said Jason. "As I look back at why am I here, working at Elanco with this degree, it just seems like it's the perfect fit for where I grew up, but also for my passion around math and data."

Jason joined the team as a statistician in 2008 to help support Benchmark® database services. Now, as the leader of the analytics team, he helps create more opportunities for U.S. customers across all species within Elanco. He also helps evaluate business opportunities for beef producers globally.

Data ≠ analytics

"A lot of people think data is information," said Jason. "But, collecting data is not valuable unless you're actually using it to make decisions to your advantage."

Jason distinguishes data from analytics by explaining that analytics is a method, whether it's finding an average or using a prediction-model, and applying that method to data to extract insights that can be used as a valuable asset. One simple way to use analytics is to track an average over time.

"People are sometimes afraid of the word analytics, but analytics can be simple," said Jason. "The important thing is figuring out how you create insight from your data. That is the information that is valuable."

Leveraging analytics

Jason recommends that producers looking for new opportunities start by identifying their goals and asking how data can help reach those goals. The next step is to determine what data is needed and begin collecting it. He also advises starting small, because even small initiatives can really help out in the long run and translate to profit.

"When you're in a business that fluctuates from highs to lows, it's important to do the small things right, and analytics lead to better decisions. A few dollars here and there add up to a lot," said Jason. "For example, when feed costs were $350/ton dry-matter, an improvement in feed conversion of only 0.10 lbs can be worth $10.50/hd. In a margin business, $10/hd is certainly worth honing in on."*

Jason also notices that people seem to really want to dig into data and understand it when markets are challenging. Those small dollars and cents don't seem to be as big of an issue when people are making money versus losing it.

"When you see high cattle prices today, as an analytics professional, I think insights are just as important," said Jason. "You might be making good money now, but you could be making more if you leverage that data to your advantage."

Why Jason does what he does

Understanding what drives people forges more powerful partnerships. For Jason, family and values are extremely important. Whether it's the people that depend on him at home, or his second family at Elanco, making meaningful contributions to the things that matter most is what drives him to do what he does every day.

"I'm passionate about analytics, I'm passionate about my family, and I'm passionate about this industry," said Jason. "As I talk with customers, one of the things driving the conversation is understanding where the need is. What can we be doing that would bring value to their organization?"

As the first statistician supporting the Beef Business Unit at Elanco, Jason is sharing his passion for analytics throughout the organization.

"Seeing how I've been able to start out as a statistician and grow this into an analytics team that's taking these initiatives across the company has really inspired me," said Jason. "It just goes to show you that when you start having success, you can always continue to build on that success."

*Example assumes 600 lbs of feeding period gain and $350/t DM ration cost.

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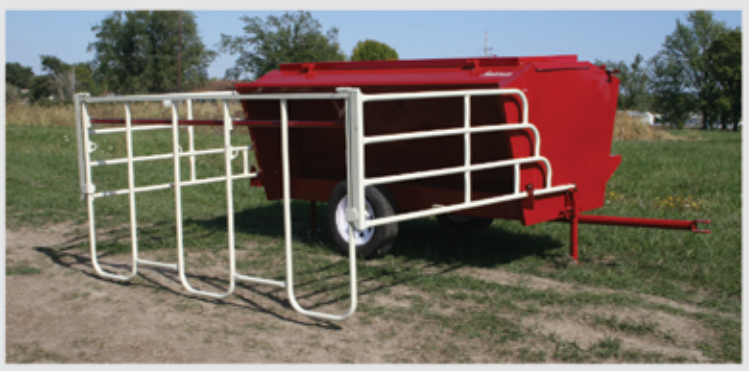

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