Important Information

Horse Blog
Check out the NC Horse Blog with articles on management, nutrition and forages, health care and diseases, reproduction/breeding/foaling, and other topics every week. The blog can be found at http://nchorse.blogspot.com.

Livestock Judging 101 Clinic
There will be a livestock judging clinic taught by Brent Jennings and a variety of experts on May 19 from 8 am to 5:30 pm in Raleigh at the NCSU Beef Educational Unit. This event is for youth interested in participating on a livestock judging team. It is broken up for experienced kids and beginners. The cost is $15 per person. Please contact me if you are interested in attending by May 11.

Livestock Judging Practice
There will be practice livestock judging classes at the NCSU Beef Educational Unit prior to the state contest. Classes will be set up on June 25. If you are interested in participating or have any questions, contact me by June 18.

State Livestock Judging Contest
Youth ages 9-18 can participate in judging livestock at the state level on June 26. If you are interested in participating or have any questions, please contact me by June 18.

State Livestock Skill-A-Thon Contest
Youth ages 9-18 can participate in the Skill-A-Thon contest at the state level on June 27. If you are interested in participating or have any questions, please contact me by June 18.

Junior Beef Round-Up
June 1-3, the Junior Beef Round-Up will be held at the NC State Fairgrounds in Raleigh. This event is open to all youth ages 5-21, and allows them a wide array of opportunities to learn about the Beef Industry and several competitions kids can compete in. We have a poster contest, photography contest, skillathon contest, Backyard Show, Steer Show, Ultimate Heifer Make-Over, and Showmanship. Youth do not have to show cattle to participate in the other events. Please check out the link below for additional information including the theme for the poster contest and the guidelines for poster and photography. http://www.cals.ncsu.edu/an_sci/extension/animal/4h/youth/jbru06.htm

Cumberland County Fair & NC State Fair
Its time to start thinking about getting fair animals! If you are interested in showing an animal at the Cumberland County Fair or the NC State Fair and are not sure where to get one, please contact me for assistance in finding an animal. If you are planning on showing a steer at the NC State Fair, you will need to contact me about filling out a steer nomination form.

Disclaimer - The use of brand names and any mention or listing of commercial products or services in this publication does not imply endorsement by North Carolina State University nor discrimination against similar products or services not mentioned.
### Animal Waste Management

**Initial Animal Waste Certification Training**
There will be a 10 hour initial training class for type A license on **August 1 and 2, 2012** at Mount Olive College at 9am. Call Kim Davis at (919) 731-1520 to preregister. The 2012 exams are June 14th, September 13th, and November 8th.

**Review class to take the exam**
If you have taken the initial animal waste class, but have not taken the exam, there will be a review session on Thursday, June 7th from 3-5pm at the Bladen County Extension Office. We will work through the problems and other information that will be on the test. Please call the office at 862-4591 to sign up for the class by June 6th.

### Poultry Farm Summer Checklist

*By James Parsons, Area Poultry Agent*

As hot weather approaches, poultry farmers can help prepare their farms and houses for extreme heat. Simple management practices may help prevent heat loss on the farm.

- Be sure your emergency generator is operational. Do not wait until it is needed to make sure it is working properly, has fuel, clean filters, etc.
- A good grass cover (kept mowed) will reduce the reflection of sunlight into houses.
- All fans should be routinely maintained. Maintenance should include cleaning the fans and keeping the pulleys and belts in good condition and properly adjusted.
- Keep shutters clean and working properly.
- Make sure waterlines can be flushed to provide cool drinking water. Birds will not drink warm water as readily as cool water.
- Shiny roofs can reflect twice as much solar radiation as a rusty or dark roof.
- Keep the litter in the houses dry.
- Make sure all nozzles and foggers are working properly. This will also help to control litter moisture.
- Be sure to listen to your service person’s recommendations.

### Hay Directories

Hay Directories are below for people selling hay or looking for hay to buy. It is free to list your hay.

1. North Carolina Department of Agriculture’s Hay Alert is at http://www.agr.state.nc.us/hayalert/. Producers can call the Hay Alert at 1-866-506-6222. You can sign up to list your hay on-line.
2. The Southeastern NC Hay Directory is available at http://onslow.ces.ncsu.edu/files/library/67/HayDirectory.pdf. Call your Extension Agent to learn how to include your farm on the list.

### Forage Management Tips

**From Production and Utilization of Pastures and Forages in North Carolina**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>May</strong></th>
<th><strong>June</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>* Plant summer annuals at two-week intervals to stagger the forage availability.</td>
<td>* Soil sample fields to be overseeded or planted in the fall.</td>
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<td>* Fertilize warm-season grasses with nitrogen after each cutting or every four to six weeks on pastures.</td>
<td>* Apply limestone as far in advance of planting as possible.</td>
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<td>* Spray pasture weeds while they are small (3 inches) for most effective control.</td>
<td>* Consider a late planting of summer annuals.</td>
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<td>* Do not apply nitrogen to fescue pastures from April until August.</td>
<td>* Cross fence to help manage feed quality.</td>
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<td>* Graze bermudagrass close (1 to 2 inch stubble) and harvest any growth not grazed every four-six weeks.</td>
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<td>* Control summer weeds before they get too mature.</td>
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Livestock producers in eastern NC rely heavily on pearl millet for summer grazing and hay production. Due to the drought in the southern plains last year, there is a severe shortage of forage seeds, resulting in very high prices for these seed. Pearl millet has more than doubled in price from last year. I have had dozens of calls from producers experiencing sticker shock when they price millet this year, so I wanted to address some things with this article that may help you in your planting decisions this year.

One thing that has come up in several conversations is that quite a few producers have been planting millet at very high rates, some as much as two bags per acre. This is much higher than the recommended seeding rate for pearl millet. The recommended seeding rate is 20-25 pounds per acre if broadcast and 15-20 pounds per acre if drilled. If the ground is properly prepared and seed is correctly planted this should provide adequate ground cover and grazing. Pearl millet should be planted ½” to 1 ½” deep. Topdress with 40-50 pounds of Nitrogen per acre when 6-8” high and again after the first grazing period, or after every hay cutting except the last.

Options for other summer annual grasses are somewhat limited. Sorghum, Sudan and hybrids are commonly mentioned. It should be pointed out first that these grasses are not recommended for horses, at all! These species, as well as Johnsongrass, can cause horses to develop cystitis and urinary disorders and should be avoided for horses. This is not a concern with ruminant animals, but there are other concerns. Sorghums, Sudans and hybrids can develop prussic acid (Hydrocyanic acid) under certain circumstances. This occurs following some stress to the plant. The most common time this occurs is after a frost, but young regrowth following a drought or herbicide application can also trigger prussic acid buildup. Prussic acid causes death by interfering with the blood’s ability to transfer oxygen, so the animal basically suffocates. If these plants are used for pasture, you must be aware when the potential for prussic acid exists. Avoid grazing until the plant reaches 18-24” tall, and also avoid grazing young regrowth shoots, stunted growth, and frosted plants. The good news is that prussic acid will dissipate from hay or silage made from these plants. Once hay is dry enough to bale it is usually safe, silage is safe to feed six to eight weeks after ensiling. Typical seeding rates for forage sorghums and Sudans are 30-40 pounds per acre broadcast and 20-30 pounds per acre drilled. Fertility requirements are similar to pearl millet.

Crabgrass is also mentioned as a possible replacement for pearl millet. Crabgrass is excellent forage, with no anti-quality factors for any species of livestock. In recent years two varieties of crabgrass have been released by the Noble Foundation in Oklahoma; Red River Crabgrass and Quick and Big Crabgrass. Unfortunately, due to the drought, the seed suppliers are not selling crabgrass seed this year, according to local wholesalers. But there exists the possibility of making use of native crabgrass. Annual pastures that have been tilled for establishing annual grasses are likely to have a seedbank of native crabgrass seed. Fields that had a lot of crabgrass last year that was allowed to seed will also likely have a lot of crabgrass seed in the soil. If your supply of other seeds is limited, you may consider scouting these fields to see how much crabgrass is germinating. A strong flush of crabgrass can be fertilized with 70-80 pounds of Nitrogen per acre once the grass is up and beginning to tiller. Grazing can begin as soon as the grass is 4-6” tall, with nitrogen application repeated in late June or early July.

With the high cost of these seeds as well as fuel and fertilizer, it will be more important than ever to make very efficient use of the pasture you have available. Rotational grazing is strongly recommended and is the best tool available to extend the forage supply and make the best use of pasture. Care should be taken to graze at the ideal heights and to avoid overgrazing. Millet and sorghum should not be grazed below 6-8 inches. Crabgrass can be grazed down to 2-3 inches. Use of temporary fencing to strip graze fields and prevent grazing on young fresh regrowth will go a long way to extending the available forage. Your extension agent can help you come up with a plan to manage your grazing and using grazing tools to your advantage.
How to Talk to Your Consumer about Pink Slime

By: Michelle Shooter, Extension Livestock Agent with N.C. Cooperative Extension in Robeson County

The United States is lucky to be a wealthy nation, and the higher a country’s average income, the less of that income is spent on food. Americans pay less for their food than any other country. We are very fortunate to have options and safe food readily available.

With the average American being three generations removed from growing produce and tending livestock, there is plenty of work to be done by current farmers on advocating how they raise and grow the food we eat. If you hear customers repeat something scary or disgusting about our food, encourage them to take the time to talk to producers and research the allegations and see if there is truth behind the myth. There has been a lot of time and research put in to keeping our food safe and sustainable.

Lean, finely textured beef (L.F.T.B.), also known as pink slime, is all over the media right now and is thought to have contributed to a drop in beef sales nationally. L.F.T.B. is NOT made of scraps off the harvest floor; it is not filler; it is not sanitized with household bleach. L.F.T.B. is 100 percent beef from a process that is backed by the U.S.D.A. and F.D.A. and has been used for over 30 years. There has never been a safety issue or any kind of recall associated with L.F.T.B.

L.F.T.B. yields an additional 10-12 pounds of lean beef per animal. Obviously, when a cow is slaughtered, all the beef cannot be cut into steak or roasts. L.F.T.B. is beef that has been removed from fat and/or connective tissues by a research-based F.D.A. and U.S.D.A. approved process. The beef is heated up to 100°F. The beef is then spun to separate the lean meat from the fat/connective tissue. The meat is then treated with a small amount of hydroxide gas to kill pathogens. Ammonium hydroxide is naturally found in beef, other proteins, and the human body. Small amounts can also be found in a variety of other foods, such as baked goods, gelatins, puddings, cheeses. L.F.T.B. is also treated with citric acid to kill microbes. It is estimated that 1.5 million more head of cattle per year would need to be harvested to compensate supply if L.F.T.B. was not used. According to Dr. Edward Mills of Penn State University, “claims made that this product is not safe are blatantly untrue; we live in a culture where emotions consistently trump logic and reason, and this is one of those. L.F.T.B is a low-cost source of very lean ground beef.” Again, remind consumers you know that you are a part of the beef industry, talk to them about how you raise your animals to be healthy and safe for the consumer. Encourage others to do a little research when they hear something that sounds too bad to be true from our media.
Fly Control for Horses
By: Becky Spearman, Extension Livestock Agent with N.C. Cooperative Extension in Bladen County

Flies are the most important insect pests of horses. Flies can spread disease, cause irritation, poor growth, and possible injury. Flies that may cause problems include the house fly, stable fly, face fly, horn fly, horse fly, deer fly, flack fly, mosquitoes, and biting midges. Horses are susceptible to one or more fly pests at almost any time of the year. All flies have the same life stages which includes egg, larva, pupa, and the adult fly. The adult fly is the pest stage of the life cycle for most flies. Two pests that are a main concern are the horse fly and mosquitoes because they can cause serious diseases in horses.

The horse fly is a swift and vicious, bloodsucking fly. Only the females feed and cause considerable pain and possible blood loss. The horse fly feeds during the day and each species of the horse fly has a preferred feeding site on the animal’s body. Deer flies are in the same family as the horse fly. The horse fly can transmit Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA). EIA is infectious and a potentially fatal disease that affects the immune system. The disease is transmitted when a horsefly bites an infected horse and next bites a healthy horse. The virus does not live for very long in the horsefly, usually only fifteen to thirty minutes. To ensure that an animal is not harboring the virus, a Coggins test is performed once a year. There is no treatment or vaccine available for EIA.

Another insect of concern is mosquitoes. They feed on pastured horses and cause annoyance and blood loss to the animal. They actively feed in the first two hours following sunset and only the female feeds every three or four days. Mosquitoes can transmit Western (WEE) and Eastern (EEE) Equine Encephalitis and West Nile Virus if they feed on infected wild birds. These are viral infections that cause severe encephalitis in horses and humans. Symptoms occur in stages which starts with an extremely high body temperature, then nervous signs appear. The horse is depressed, paralysis sets in and death can occur. The death rate for WEE is about 50%, while EEE can be up to 90%. Routine vaccinations are critical to protect horses from these diseases because control alone is not enough. Check with your veterinarian about when and how often to vaccinate your horse.

A successful control program involves using several methods - eliminate fly breeding materials, control moisture, mechanical control and insecticide control. Good sanitation is critical in removing breeding materials to break the flies breeding cycle. Insecticide control is needed to round out a program.

The horse or deer fly are more difficult to control because they only need a single blood meal and therefore spend very little time on the animal. One insecticide recommendation is using a synergized pyrethrin directly on the animal. It is the most practical, but provides limited protection. Other recommendations are to locate pastures away from wooded areas and to stable the horses during peak fly activity.

Controlling mosquitoes is also difficult. Recommendations are to remove breeding sites where there is standing water. Spray or wipe-on insecticides and repellents can help provide protection.

Flies that depend on livestock for their food source are the easiest to control on horses. These pests, such as the horn fly, spend more time on or around horses. There are several different sprays, dusts, baits and pour-ons available.

There are several means of delivering chemicals to horses. Methods of application, area of application and timing are very critical. Some products may be more effective than others for particular pests. Some of the delivery methods include sprays; wound treatment gels and ointments; stabilized sprays; clothing sprays; face lotions; fly collars and leg bands; bot knives; roll-ons (face and head); and wipe-ons and towelettes.

For more information check out these articles or call your Extension Agent for these publications:

Fly Control for Horses - Louisiana State University

Control of Infectious Diseases of Horses - University of Tennessee: https://utextension.tennessee.edu/publications/documents/TNH4001.pdf

Horse Fly
R.C. Axtell, NCSU

Mosquito
NCSU IPM website
Since I’ve had several calls about bloat this year, I wanted to give you some tips about what bloat is, how to prevent it, and how to treat it. It is actually more common in sheep than in goats. The stomach (rumen) of ruminant animals produces a lot of gas during the normal process of digestion. The animals continually belch or pass the gas through the gastrointestinal tract to get rid of it. Occasionally, for various reasons this stops and gas builds up in the rumen to cause bloat. There are two types of bloat. They are frothy and free gas bloat. A frothy type of bloat is more likely to be caused by lush grasses or overeating grain, whereas a free gas type bloat is normally caused by a blockage in the esophagus.

As the gas builds up, the left flank balloons out. The pain from this causes the animal to try to kick at its stomach or it stands with its back legs stiff and wide apart. These animals may stagger around or they may have difficulty breathing due to the rumen putting pressure on their diaphragm and lungs, which can lead to suffocation. The animal may be uncomfortable or in distress for several hours. The skin may become tight and sounds like a drum when tapped. It may also sound like a water balloon when they walk. In bad cases of bloat, the animal will be found lying on its side and death can occur within a few hours.

Many bloat conditions can be prevented by using proper nutrition and sound management. This includes introducing animals to lush pasture gradually and for short periods. You can also avoid moving animals to wet pasture, especially first thing in the morning. It’s also a good idea to not allow really hungry animals to graze a pasture.

One of the most commonly reported causes of bloat is due to overeating such as an animal escaping and getting into the feed room or giving bottle babies too much milk (they normally only need about 16 ounces per day). In young kids and lambs, bloat can occur when milk replacers are given as opposed to actual goat milk. Rapid change in diet can also cause bloating, which means you need to change diets slowly. A sudden decrease in hay such as trying to reduce hay belly in show animals, can cause bloat.

Bloat treatment may include passing a stomach tube in case of free gas bloat. Drenching with around 100-200 cc’s of mineral oil may help. Drenching mineral oil without a stomach tube can be dangerous because it can end up in the lungs. It is difficult to simply release the frothy gas bloat with a stomach tube because there are thousands of tiny bubbles. Bloat in sheep and goats often occurs with enterotoxemia, so it is a good idea to vaccinate against clostridial disease before they go out onto lush pasture or when bloat occurs in the herd/flock.

Making the animal belch is one way of treating bloat. You can do this by massaging or patting the distended rumen, or by walking the animal around for about half an hour. There are bloat treatments and preventative on the market, but most are formulated for cattle and may contain too much copper, which is dangerous for sheep. You will want to work with your veterinarian on any extra label information.

In severe cases, such as a down animal, a veterinarian may need to puncture the left flank with a sharp knife or trocar and cannula to release the gas. The incision is made four fingers width behind the bottom of the ribs on the left side of the goat as it lies. If a veterinarian is not immediately available, you can perform the incision yourself as a last resort. You will need to use a sharp, pointed knife or large gauge needle that has been disinfected. Insert the knife in the area where the largest bulge is until the gas begins to escape, twist slightly and remove. Bandage the wound once the bloat condition has been relieved. If you have questions about bloat, please call your local Livestock Agent for more information.