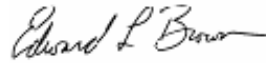


Perry County Livestock

Edward L. Brown—CEA Staff Chair



January 2008

Making Money at the Sale Barn— Ed Brown

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As I sat at the Cattlemen's meeting last month, I was reminded once again about how important it is to follow some basic guidelines associated with beef quality assurance (BQA). Not only is it important because of ensuring a quality product, but also because it puts money in our wallets. Beef backgrounding involves providing cattle the necessary immunizations for them to thrive once they go to the feedlot. Last month, I started a column about good chute side management of cattle vaccinations. This deals directly with what is

necessary to ensure a quality product. Vaccinating cattle does not just mean sticking the needle in the cow and calling it done. If you haven't done it correctly or haven't mixed and stored the vaccines correctly, then you are just wasting your time and money. The real test will come when your cattle go to the feedlot. If they perform consistently well, the buyer will be willing to come back to the sale barn and buy your cattle.

The other key to the puzzle is good record keeping. You should be able to produce a

vaccination record for any cattle that you sell. If you already have a system, that's great. If you don't, then stop by the office. I have both individual record forms and herd health forms for groups of cattle. Combine good vaccination practices with good record keeping, and you have a winning combination.

Next month, I will share how you can go through the BQA program and become a certified producer.

Risk Management for Women

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Carrie Hirmer from Arkansas Women in Agriculture is bringing the "Annie's Project," risk management education for farm women, to SW Arkansas. This entails three Saturday classes: April 5, April 19 and May 3. Each will be from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the SWREC. The classes are targeting women and will cost \$50

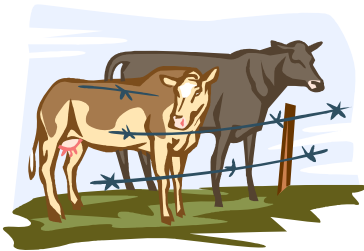
per person. Participants will receive business plan software, FinPak software and a leather attaché, and meals are provided.

The topics include: risk assessment, management, business plans, women and money, livestock cost management, estate planning, retirement, financial documents, risk

management strategy, livestock marketing, insurance, livestock insurance, interpretation of financial statements, animal ID and Farm Bill.

For more information about Annie's Project, you can visit www.arkansaswomeninag.com and follow the link or contact the Perry County Extension Office.

Squeezing Every Penny Out of a High Feed Market – Dr. Gadberry



“The more information used in cattle management, the fewer surprises.”

Cost of gain, whether on pasture or in a dry lot, is expensive these days. Currently, high wheat seed, off-road diesel and nitrogen are adding about \$0.10 in additional cost per pound of gain compared to just a couple of years ago. Stocker producers putting gain on cattle in dry lots are reporting common commodity feedstuffs arriving at the farm \$20 to \$40 per ton higher, with freight adding up to \$40 per ton to the feed bill. In addition, growing diets for confined cattle developed in Arkansas are often reported to contain 30% to 40% hay. Although Arkansas had some drought relief this year, the demand for hay in-state and out-of-state, plus the additional cost of producing a bale of hay, is resulting in late fall prices reported as high as \$40 per bale. Whether on pasture or in a dry lot, feed conversion is important. The more gain achieved on less feed, the lower the break-even on

selling price. Several practices that help improve rate of gain, thus improving feed conversion, include evaluating dietary energy density, intake and gain, implanting cattle and feeding ionophores.

As energy content of the diet increases, intake is expected to increase; however, this is not linear at greater levels of energy intake. As a result, increasing diet energy density by reducing roughage consumption could enhance growth rates and reduce feed conversion. For example, a group of steers consuming 2.5% body weight of a 57% concentrate mixed ration could be expected to convert about 7.5 pounds of feed to a pound of gain. A feed cost of \$125/t puts the feed cost of gain at \$0.47.

Hypothetically, if we increased the concentrate portion to 67% by replacing hay with a more energy-dense ingredient, we increase the diet cost to \$130/t, yet the additional

energy and predicted increase in weight gain reduces feed conversion to 6.8 and a \$0.44 feed cost per pound of gain. Don't take this approach without formulation guidelines. In some instances, feed cost can outweigh the benefit of a reduced conversion. Whether putting gain on pasture or in a dry lot, two proven management tools that enhance calf performance are implants and ionophores. Implants cost around \$1.50 per head and will generally provide 20 pounds of additional body weight, returning at least \$20 per head return above cattle that have not been implanted. Likewise, ionophores can increase feed efficiency by 10%. Using the Oklahoma State Stocker Planner, implanted calves fed an ionophore are expected to return an extra \$16 per head at today's market value.

Chute-Side Answers (see last month's issue for questions)



1. False – Never clean syringes, transfer needles or any other instruments used to administer vaccine or any other product with a disinfectant. The residue from a chemical disinfectant can harm vaccine and compromise vaccine efficacy. Instead, disinfect with boiling water and allow plenty of time for

instruments to cool before use.

2. True – Just like chemical disinfectants, residues from antibiotics, injectable dewormers and even some killed vaccines can harm modified-live (MLV) vaccine. Always have one syringe that is used exclusively for modified-live vaccines, one

for killed vaccines and another for antibiotics. Mark each syringe with colored tape or write out “MLV only” so you don't get the syringes mixed up.

3. C – The answer is C. Only rehydrate one bottle at a time or enough to last about 30 minutes.

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Perry County Livestock

Online Horse School – Steve Jones

EAST LANSING, Mich.- Horse enthusiasts are just a click away from learning from nationally recognized equine experts. My Horse University's exciting and innovative curriculum provides access to experts, in-depth learning and hands-on activities. Plus you can access the information whenever it is convenient to you. No matter whether you are at home, in a café, or anywhere that has Internet connectivity you can learn more about breeding and selecting horses.

Michigan State University's My Horse University and EQUISEARCH.com are excited to offer horse enthusiasts a science-based fun series of courses on Horse Breeding and Selection. The series consists of four online

short-courses coupled with four live Web presentations with nationally recognized experts.

* Breeding a Champion by Dr. John Shelle, Michigan State University

* Your Next Competition Horse by Dr. Mark Russell, Purdue University

* Preparing and Breeding Your Mare by Dr. Kathy Anderson, University of Nebraska

* Post-Natal Care by Dr. Jason Turner, New Mexico State University

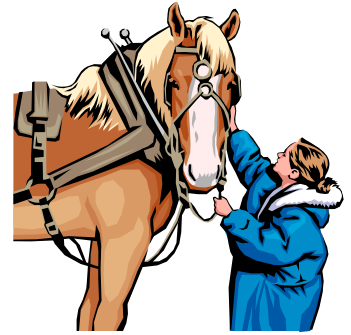
"We are excited to offer this innovative online course series with an impressive list of equine scientist from across the United States. Imagine getting to take a course by professors from some of the best equine science programs in the

country in the comfort of your own home!" says Christine Skelly, director and founder of My Horse University.

Horse enthusiasts have the option to purchase a course for \$25 or the entire series for \$50. To register or learn more, please visit the website: www.myhorseuniversity.com

We would also like to take the opportunity to thank our sponsors for the Horse Breeding and Selection Series - Purina Mills, HorseTech, and Iron Spring Farm.

If you have any questions, please contact the Perry County Extension Office.



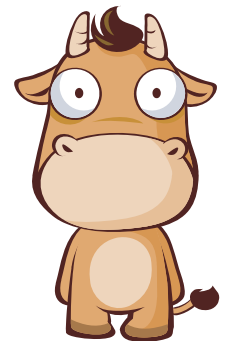
"We are excited to offer this innovative online course series with an impressive list of equine scientist from across the United States"

Chute Side Answers - continued

Many times producers will make the mistake of mixing all of their MLV vaccine to be used for the entire day first thing in the morning so it doesn't have to be done while working cattle. From the moment a MLV vaccine is rehydrated, it begins to break down and becomes less effective. Keeping vaccine cool and out of direct sunlight will help it stay effective longer. Never

attempt to store rehydrated MLV vaccine to use at a later date. After that day, it is virtually useless, as all of the active vaccine is broken down after a few hours. You can reuse killed vaccines within a few weeks; just make sure that a dirty needle never enters the bottle. NEVER combine different vaccines or other products together.

4. B – Amber bottles are intended to keep harmful UV light from penetrating the bottle. Some products are very sensitive to light and will break down, if exposed. If a product comes in an amber-colored bottle, it's a pretty good indication that it is light-sensitive, so use that as a reminder to keep it out of artificial light or sunlight.



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“This conference is one of the top-notch cattle programs held in the United States”

River Valley Stocker Conference – Van Banks

Arkansas River Valley beef cattle producers can learn the latest in cattle management trends by attending the upcoming River Valley Beef Cattle Conference.

This year’s program is scheduled for February 13 at the Dardanelle Community Center.

The River Valley Beef Cattle Conference is a joint educational effort by the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service and Farm Credit Services of Western Arkansas.

The conference is designed to provide river valley beef cattle producers with the latest information on market outlook, weed control, marketing options and nutrition. The conference

will address a variety of topics including beef cattle market trends, new chemicals for weed control and commodity feeding.

“This conference is one of the top-notch cattle programs held in the United States,” according to Banks. “Cattle producers shouldn’t pass up this opportunity.”

The beef cattle conference will feature four industry leaders. They are Mike Murphy, market analyst for Cattle-Fax; Dr. John Boyd, professor and UA extension weed scientist; Dr. Derrell Peel, professor from Oklahoma State University; and Dr. Shane Gadberry, UA assistant professor/Extension livestock specialist.

Murphy, an analyst for the Nebraska feed

yards, will address the market outlook for stocker cattle, including short- through long-term forecasts and projections of cattle inventories, beef production, cattle prices, competitive meats and feed grains.

Derrell works in the area of international livestock and meat trade. He’ll address marketing options for cattle producers.

Gadberry will discuss the feeding of commodity feeds.

A registration fee of \$20 will be collected at the door. Conference is from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Please call the Perry County Extension Office, if you have any questions.

Chute Side Answers - continued

5. False – Vaccine that has been frozen is less effective because the virus tends to separate from the adjuvant, or “carrier,” contained in the vaccine. Never store vaccine in the freezer. Make sure the thermostat is set so that it is cold, but not so cold that frost develops on items in the refrigerator. It is best to have a thermometer placed in the refrigerator to be certain

vaccine is being stored according to the recommended temperature range.

Bonus - Changing needles often will reduce contamination that can spread disease or cause injection-site reactions. If a needle becomes dull, change it. If you need to fill a repeater syringe with vaccine, change the needle first. Regardless, change

needles every 10 to 15 injections.

Bonus – Some antibiotics and growth implants are labeled for storage in a refrigerator, but most are supposed to be stored at room temperature. Always read the label of each type of antibiotic to learn the recommended storage conditions. Never leave an antibiotic or any other product in the seat or dash of the pickup.

All programs announced in this newsletter are open to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status. Persons requiring alternative means for communication of program information (large print, audio, etc.) should notify the Extension office as soon as possible prior to the program.