

Marion County Agricultural News

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Bermudagrass Management Meeting

There are some definite advantages to having at least one well managed field of bermudagrass on your farm. If you are interested in learning more about establishing and managing bermudagrass on your farm, you will want to attend this meeting on April 10, 2008 in Yellville. See the enclosed flyer for more details. We ask that you call ahead to the Marion County Extension Service to preregister at 870-449-6349.

University Study On Mineral

A University of Tennessee study was conducted to evaluate EndoFighter mineral (ADM Animal Nutrition) for use when beef cattle are grazing toxic endophyte fescue. This study was conducted April through Sept. 2006 using 125 beef steers (604 lbs) in a 126 day grazing period. Treatment 1 was the control - Master Gain mineral and Treatment 2 was Master Gain mineral with EndoFighter mineral. Maximum daily temperature reached at least 85 degrees on 72 days of the trial.

Results were 1). Treatment 2 steers had a significantly higher average daily gain than control steers (1.76 vs. 1.52 lb/day). 2). More treatment 2 cattle were observed grazing than controls 3). More of the control cattle spent more time in the shade than treatment 2 cattle.

These researchers concluded that offering a mineral product containing EndoFighter resulted in greater gains and improved grazing behavior by cattle grazing tall fescue during spring and summer months.

Store Vaccines at the Proper Temperature

Unless you want to be just vaccinating with colored water, be sure and store and administer your vaccines properly. Your best defense is to read and follow directions on storage and proper administration of vaccines.

For many vaccines, storage temperatures should range between 35 to 45 degrees F. Most producers are very good about storing their vaccines in a refrigerator. However, many of these refrigerators are older models, have weak seals around doors, and sometime have improperly working compressors. Also sometime these refrigerators are located in harsh environments like in the barn or tack room where there is dust and wide temperature ranges. We have found that some refrigerators in the house are at a setting too cold for proper vaccine storage.

Last year, 123 Arkansas livestock producers participated in a Extension Service study that documented the temperatures in refrigerators that stored livestock vaccines on the farm. This was done with refrigerator data logger that

recorded the temperature every 10 minutes for a 7 week period. This study was conducted by County Agents over the state in thirty-two Arkansas counties. It was interesting to note, that 12 % of the refrigerators were over 45 degrees and 35 % of the refrigerators were below 35 degrees. This means that almost half (47%) of these refrigerators were not within an acceptable temperature range. Also be aware keeping vaccines too cold can be more damaging than keeping vaccines too warm.

Maybe you should check the temperature of your refrigerator?

Pelleted Lime vs. Standard Agri. Lime

Pelleted lime is being marketed aggressively across the state as an alternative to conventional or standard ag lime. Some marketing claims are being made to imply that a rate of 200 to 400 pounds per acre of pelleted lime is equal to one ton of ag lime per acre. The table below shows actual comparisons of price and the liming value

(Effective Calcium Carbonate Equivalent or ECCE) of two pelleted lime products with standard quality ag lime. Pelleted lime #1 was high quality, but the cost per pound of ECCE was still 3 times that of standard ag lime. About 1235 pounds of the Pelleted Lime #1 is required to equal the ECCE value in one ton of ag lime. Due to the lower quality of Pelleted lime #2, its cost per pound of ECCE was over four times that of ag lime, and 1714 pounds would be needed to equal one ton of ag lime.

When you compare costs based upon the effective calcium carbonate equivalent, standard agricultural limestone is still the best value.

Lime Source	Lbs ECCE/ton	Cost/ton	Cost/lb of ECCE	Lbs needed to equal ECCE in 1 ton of ag lime
Ag lime	1053	\$20 /\$30	2.9 cents	----
Pelleted Lime #1	1705	\$150	8.8 cents	1235
Pelleted Lime #2	1228	\$150	12.2 cents	1714

Managing your Fertilizer Costs

Fertilizer prices have reached an all time high due to high natural gas and oil costs, production of ethanol, as well as foreign market competition. Steeper fertilizer costs are a real concern, but realize cutting fertilizer applications can lead to less forage production. This could lead to a need to purchase more hay and feed, or reducing livestock numbers. Plans for fertilizing should be based

on sound research and experience to improve the odds of getting a good return on the fertilizer dollar.

Comparing fertilizer sources solely on the price per ton will not give an accurate assessment of the true cost. If you know the percent actual nutrient in the fertilizer, you can figure the cost of a unit of nutrient or actual nutrient in the fertilizer. This will give you a better means of comparing. For example, of the N sources listed, ammonium sulfate has the lowest cost per ton but has the highest cost per pound of actual nitrogen.

Fertilizer Source	N-P-K %	Actual nutrient/ton pounds	Price/Ton \$	Price/lb of Actual nutrient
Ammonium Nitrate	34-0-0	680 lbs N	\$450	\$0.66/lb N
Urea	46-0-0	920 lbs N	\$525	\$0.57/lb N
Ammonium Sulfate	21-0-0	420 lbs N	\$334	\$0.80/lb N
Calcium Ammonium Nitrate (CAN)	26-0-0	520 lbs N	\$365	\$0.70/lb N

These are December 2007 prices. Prices are likely different today. The point is, you need to compare prices, but price per ton may not be the best way to decide which nitrogen source to choose.

Characteristics of Some Nitrogen Fertilizer Sources

Ammonium Nitrate (34-0-0) Presently the most common nitrogen source used for pastures and hay fields. Does not volatilize. Declining availability primarily due to increased regulations. Bulk storage can be a problem when humidity is high.

Urea (46-0-0) has a high percentage of nitrogen. Does not volatilize in cool temperatures; however it can volatilize into the atmosphere in warm temperatures. Addition of Agrotain reduces N loss for up to 15 days after application. Urea is generally one of the lower priced nitrogen fertilizers if you base the price on cost of actual unit of nitrogen.

Ammonium Sulphate (21-0-0) Good source of nitrogen especially if sulfur is also needed. However, can acidify your soil 2 to 3 times faster than ammonium nitrate.

Calcium Ammonium Nitrate (CAN) 26-0-0 Good source of nitrogen. Good handling properties. Does not acidify the soil.

Calcium Nitrate (15-0-0) Low nitrogen content fertilizer. Often used in vegetable or fruit production.

LiquidNitrogenSolutions (UAN) 32-0-0 . Usually 32 percent nitrogen but this can vary. There is usually 3.54 pounds of actual nitrogen per gallon. UAN is normally a liquid mixture of ammonium nitrate and urea. Interest in liquid nitrogen materials is increasing in some parts of the state. Potential loss from volatilization of N is possible because part of the N is supplied from urea.

Beef Exports Expected Growth

Expanded export access to overseas beef markets in South Korea and Japan is expected to boost U.S. beef exports in 2008 by more than 40% compared to 2007. Also beef exports to Canada and Mexico continue to grow. A weak U.S. dollar stimulates US exports and discourages imports from foreign countries. The weak US dollar makes other countries' beef more expensive to import into the US.

Signing Off...

I am pleased to provide Marion County Agricultural Producers with educational information to assist you in your efforts. All of our meetings and activities are open to all interested persons without regard to race, color national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status. We are an Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Employer. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (large print, audiotapes, etc.) should notify the county Extension Office as soon as possible prior to the activity;

Sincerely,

Terry Davis, County Extension Agent – Staff Chair
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