

## **General Conditions**

This is the first week all summer long that I can say we are getting dry. We have been getting rains every week it seemed like, and this is the longest dry spell we have had all summer. Irrigation has started down at Lollie Bottoms and I figure more pivots will start up this week. Pastures, hay and soybeans are starting to show the stress from the heat and dry weather and there doesn't seem to be a break in the 10 day forecast. This is not how I wanted to end an already crazy year.

## **Row Crop**

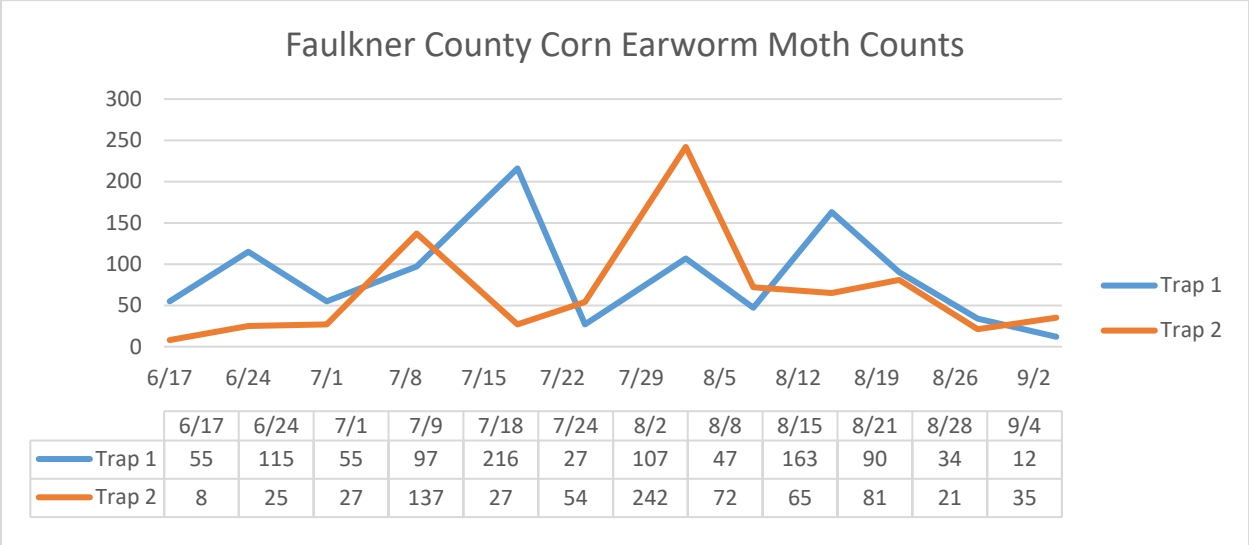
**Rice:** After looking at rice fields this week, I feel like the DD50 prediction was right for drain date. When I scouted fields I noticed that two thirds of the heads were straw colored and the bottom third was starting to turn. We turned the well off on those fields and will start draining sometime early next week. Stinkbug numbers remained low and I think we have passed any potential for more damage. Now we sit and wait for harvest.

**Soybeans:** Soybeans are stuck between a rock and a hard spot. We have had plenty of rain up until this week, but now the dry spell has started. The sandier fields already have irrigation started on them. Fields with loams and clay soils seem to still have some moisture in the ground, but you can see the heat starting to work on them during the hot afternoons. Producers that have pivots are starting to get them ready and will start turning them on next week. The problem is producers that want to row irrigate. Rolling out polypipe for one irrigation is not the ideal situation. So those producers may roll the dice and try to wait out a rain. We are close to being past the need for irrigation, but we still need water for at least the next two weeks if not three.

**Grain Sorghum and Corn:** Corn silage harvest is done and now producers are moving over to silage harvest of sorghum. Sugarcane aphids were treated on grain sorghum and controlled but there is damage. Hopefully we got to them in time to not hurt grain yield.

## **Corn Earworm Moth Traps:**

**Trap 1:** 12      **Trap 2:** 35      Numbers are really low this week.



**Beef & Forage**

**Beef and Forages:** As hay samples have been coming through the office, I have noticed that quality is a little low this year. I kept thinking it would get better as the year went on, but it really hasn't. Here is an article from our Animal Science Department that might help explain our situation.

The intermittent rains that have saturated Arkansas for most of the past year have taken their toll on forage quality, confirming the suspicions of producers and forage quality researchers alike.

Shane Gadberry, professor of ruminant nutrition for the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, said the rains affected every aspect of raising forage, from planting and fertilization to pest management.

“Putting up good quality hay was challenging for Arkansas ranchers in 2019,” Gadberry said. “Rain and water-logged soils kept ranchers from getting fertilizer out, weeds sprayed, and hay harvested in a timely manner. We’re starting to see the consequences in the lab.”

Between May 1 and August 27, 92 cool-season grass hay samples and 368 warm-season grass hay samples were analyzed through the Division of Agriculture’s Diagnostics Laboratory in Fayetteville. Testing results show protein averaging 9 percent in cool-season grasses and 9.8 percent in warm season grasses, with total digestible nutrients (commonly referred to as TDN) averaging 51 percent in-cool season grasses and 56 percent in warm-season grasses.

“We typically see protein above 10 percent and TDN around 54 percent in fescue, our most commonly harvested cool-season grass,” Gadberry said. “Bermudagrass is the predominate warm-season grass harvested for hay, and historically we’ve seen the protein around 12 percent and TDN close to 58 percent.”

A drop of 2 to 4 percentage points in overall quality means cows will need more supplementation through the winter. About 50 percent of available hay is testing too low in protein and energy for non-lactating cows in late gestation, Gadberry said. About 80 percent of the hay is too low in protein and energy for early-lactation cows.

“It’s uncommon to see this many hay samples not meeting the nutrient requirements of non-lactating cows,” Gadberry said.

In the short term, the extra body fat many cows are carrying from this summer’s abundant pasture growth will help them endure the winter. But if they lose too much body conditioning before calving, or are in a negative energy balance during breeding, next year’s calf crop will suffer, Gadberry said.

“The current excess supply of pasture forage is going to start dropping in quality as we move into fall,” he said. “Ranchers should visit with their county Extension agents about testing pasture forages for protein and TDN, like they would hay. If pastures test below 8 percent protein, supplemental protein may help the cows better digest those carryover grasses.”

Supplemental feed costs are likely going to be higher this winter, Gadberry said.

“The best approach to choosing the right type and amount of supplement is testing on-farm hay stocks,” he said. “Hay quality is too variable, from farm to farm and cutting to cutting, to make assumptions about supplemental feeding.”

Arkansas Department of Agriculture Market Report Link:

<https://www.agriculture.arkansas.gov/arkansas-market-reports>

## **Upcoming Events**

**Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) Training:** October 3, 2019 at the Faulkner County Extension Office starting at 6:00. Please contact Mindy Beard at [rbeard@uaex.edu](mailto:rbeard@uaex.edu) or call 501-329-8344 to sign up.

## **Signing up for Text Alerts**

If you would like to sign up for ag text alerts from the Extension Office go to [www.uaex.edu/faulkner](http://www.uaex.edu/faulkner) and click the sign up for text link or text the message **uaex FaulkCrop** or **uaex FaulkBeef** to **313131**



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# BEEF QUALITY ASSURANCE (BQA) TRAINING



## What is BQA?

Beef Quality Assurance is a nationally coordinated, state implemented program that provides systematic information to U.S. beef producers and beef consumers of how common sense husbandry techniques can be coupled with accepted scientific knowledge to raise cattle under optimum management and environmental conditions.

- Required for the Natural State Preconditioned Calf Program (GoGreen)
- Demonstrates commitment to food safety and quality.
- Upholds consumer confidence in valuable beef products
- Enhances herd profitability through better management

**October 3, 2019 6:00 pm**

Faulkner County Extension Office  
844 Faulkner Street  
Conway, Arkansas

Sign up by calling – 501-329-8344 or Email Mindy Beard – [rbeard@uaex.edu](mailto:rbeard@uaex.edu)