

Faulkner County Agriculture Update

March 13, 2020

Covid-19

With rapid spread of COVID-19 and the more than 30,000 flu cases reported in Arkansas since September 2019, we are taking precautions until further notice to ensure safe and healthy work environments for our clients and our co-workers.

With that in mind we have chosen to cancel or postpone many of our upcoming meetings.

- **Pesticide Applicator Training:** The training that was scheduled for April 2 at the Extension Office has been cancelled.

If you are getting recertified, you can go online and take the online course just like you went through the class. The website is: <https://www.uaex.edu/farm-ranch/pest-management/pesticide-licensing/private-applicator-licensing.aspx>

If you are getting certified for the first time, the Plant Board is looking at options of maybe using the same online course. I will have more information next week on this option.

- **Complete Beekeeping Short Course:** The remaining two beekeeping courses have been cancelled. Please call the Extension Office to work out refunds for the course.
- **BQA Training:** The BQA Training scheduled for March 17 at Morrilton Vet Clinic has been cancelled and will be rescheduled sometime later in the year.
- **Arkansas Cattleman's Association Area 7 Conference:** The Area 7 Conference scheduled for March 24 has been cancelled.

We recognize that this may be an inconvenience. However, this decision is being made out of concern for everyone's health and well-being.

Thank you for your understanding.

General Conditions

We received around 0.60 inches of rain this past week around the Conway area. Highs were in the high 60's to mid 70's and night time temperatures were around 50. Next week looks like more rain and similar temperatures. The Arkansas River fell down to 251, but has moved back up to 258 and may rise to above 260 next week depending on rain.

Row Crop

Wheat: Wheat is taking up the fertilizer that was applied a couple weeks ago and starting to look good. We should be looking at the second application soon. Rains are going to make timing this second application as hard as the first. Hopefully we can get it out soon.

Rice: Dr Jarrod Hardke does a great job of putting out timely updates throughout the year. The 1st Arkansas Rice Update of 2020 is available via the link below. It includes information on acreage projections, seed treatment combinations, and rice markets.

<https://www.uaex.edu/farm-ranch/crops-commercial-horticulture/rice/Arkansas%20Rice%20Update%203-13-20.pdf>

Enlist Training: <https://courses.uaex.edu/course/index.php?categoryid=79>

Paraquat Training: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-worker-safety/paraquat-dichloride-training-certified-applicators>

Beef & Forage

Controlled Breeding Season: Managing the cow herd to calve in 90 days or less can be one of the most important steps toward increasing net calf percentage. The breeding season for replacement heifers should begin one month before the breeding season for the mature cow herd. Exposing replacement heifers to a bull one month before the cow herd breeding season allows an extra month for heifers to recover from calving before the second breeding season begins.

Advantages of a controlled breeding season include:

- Reducing the number of times necessary to gather cattle for vaccinating and weaning.
- Marketing a more uniform calf crop.
- Optimizing the winter feeding program.
- Allowing the use of cow herd performance records to select replacement heifers and identify cull cows.

Demonstrations across Arkansas have shown that reducing the breeding and calving season is the first step toward improving beef cattle management efficiency. Below are results from ABIP Breeding and Calving Season demonstrations:

- The percentage of cows calving in the desired calving season improved from 36 to 100 percent.
- Direct cost per animal unit decreased 32 percent.
- Herd breakeven cost decreased 38 percent.
- The gross margin (gross income minus direct cost) improved by 75 percent.

By shortening the breeding and calving season to 90 days, oftentimes average calf weaning weights increase. A short breeding and calving season helps produce a more uniform calf crop that can be sold at a higher price. In some situations, shortening the calving season to 90 days or less may take three to five years. Nevertheless, the breeding and calving season is a key element to improving efficiency and profits. For more information about a controlled calving season, click <https://www.uaex.edu/publications/pdf/FSA-3011.pdf>

2020 Southeast U.S. Hay Harvest Survey: This survey will be available until **March 27.**

Extension forage specialists with the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture and in the Southeast U.S. would like your help in gathering information on hay harvest methods and time required for harvesting hay to help develop more effective forage educational programs.

We would appreciate you taking the time to complete a survey regarding your hay harvest methods. If you do choose to participate, we appreciate your feedback and all information will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by applicable State and Federal law. By completing the survey, you are agreeing to allow the use of your responses for educational purposes. If you do not wish to complete the survey, your refusal to do so will have not any effect on your relationship with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture. To opt out of taking the survey, simply do not complete the survey.

If you have questions or concerns about this study, you may contact John Jennings at (501) 671-2350 or by email at jjennings@uaex.edu. For questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact Ro Windwalker, the University's IRB Coordinator, at (479) 575-2208 or by e-mail at irb@uark.edu.

Information gathered from the survey will provide direct insights into current hay harvest practices, and allow us to better develop forage educational programs. Additionally, the information provided will be used to prioritize research and Extension outreach efforts moving forward to more effectively address your needs.

Please click on the link below to access the survey. It should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. https://uaex.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cLVmS7buxux288R

Arkansas Department of Agriculture Market Report Link:

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

Upcoming Events

Pesticide Applicator Training: Cost is \$20 for the training.

Tuesday, May 19, 2020

6:00 p.m. at Workforce Training Center (Timberwolf Drive UACCM Campus, Morrilton, AR)

Extension Service Voluntary Tax

Residents of Faulkner County have a chance this year to help the Faulkner County Extension Service. There will be a chance for residents to give to an Extension Service Voluntary tax on their tax statements. The money will be used to support the Faulkner County Extension Service which includes not only agriculture, but also family and consumer science and 4-H. We really appreciate the support of Faulkner County residents.

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 and click the sign up for text link or text the message **uaex FaulkCrop** or **uaex FaulkBeef** to **313131**



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