Beef Cattle Tour to Dodge City Kansas
April 15th ~ 18th, 2014
Will include: National Beef Packing Plant (A RARE OPPORTUNITY)
Conducted by: Cleburne, Stone, & Van Buren County Extension Offices

The bus will depart from Clinton on April 15 at 6:00 am. The tour will include stops at the University of Arkansas and Oklahoma State University Animal Science Departments, various farm tours, feedlot and grower operations, and the highlight will be a tour of a National Beef Plant in the Dodge City, Kansas area. The tour will travel from Clinton to Fayetteville and then on to Wichita, KS the first day, from Wichita on to Dodge City the second day, from Dodge City back to Stillwater the third day, and then back to Clinton on the fourth day. The total cost (charter bus travel and 3 nights hotel) of the trip should be around $300 max per participant (40 paid participants) sharing a Hotel room. A $200 deposit to hold your spot on the bus is due in the County Extension office by Friday March 7, 2014.

Little Red River Beef Cattle Conference ~ Thursday April 10th Cattlemen and industry experts will gather to discuss issues affecting the cattle industry at the Little Red River Beef Cattle Conference, held at the Cleburne County Livestock Auction in Heber Springs. Program registration and supper will begin at 5:00 pm with the conference starting at 6:00 pm and concluding around 8:30 pm. The speakers and topics to be covered are as follows:

- Dr. Jeremy Powell, Professor and Veterinarian, Animal Science Dept. Univ. of Arkansas, - Herd Health and Deworming Update.
- Dr. Tom Troxel, Extension Beef Cattle Specialist- Are you a Cow Manager or a Cost Manager?

Registration is $20 per person at the door on the day of the conference. This year’s conference sponsors are AgHeritage Farm Credit Services and Farm Credit Services of Western Arkansas. The Cleburne County Livestock auction barn is located at 749 Pangburn Road in Heber Springs. Call 501-362-8378 for directions.

Artificial Insemination Class to be Offered Big Branch Breeder's Service will teach a 3 day AI & Reproductive Management class on March 27, 28, 29 at Arkansas Livestock Auction in Searcy. Class times are 9 to 4 with a quick break for lunch. The fee for the three days is $500 for first time students. For any of our former students we welcome you to come for a refresher at no charge. The refresher rate for those who have attended training from another provider is $85 per day, neither semen credit nor manual is included. Please send your deposit of $150 to register. In addition to AI Tech Certification you will receive a 'best in the industry' Reproductive Management manual and $150 credit for any bull in ABS's inventory.

The bulls may be viewed at www.absglobal.com. Instruction will be 'hands on' so wear appropriate clothing. Class size will be limited in order to provide each student individual attention and is booked on a first come first serve basis. If you are interested, please send a non-refundable deposit of $150 for each student, to hold your place. To get more information please call Tom Murray at 501-316-3536. If you are not able to attend, but would like information on future AI schools, let us know, we would be happy to send you a notice.

Big Branch Breeder's Service 501-316-3536 14608 Laura Way - Alexander, AR 72002
www.bigbranchbreeders.net
Maximizing Cow Herd Efficiency
By Assessing Body Condition Scores

Spring calving season is upon us and has already started for many, and assessing body condition scores is essential in maximizing cow herd efficiency. Stress at calving, ample lactation and reproductive performance are key factors that can affect cow herd efficiency and ultimately affect profitable production. Body condition scoring at calving to ensure that breeding condition is favorable is an evaluation tool that can be utilized by farmers and ranchers to assess the level of fat reserves of cows. The processes of fetal development, delivering a calf, milk production and repair of the reproductive tract are all stresses that require large quantities of energy to enable cows to be rebred within 60 to 85 days. Additionally, the environmental stresses on spring-calving cows may require even more energy intake. We have seen increased intake of forages and feed by cattle this winter due to the harsh winter temperatures and weather we have experienced. Be careful when just doing visual body condition scores in the field. Cattle with long winter hair will sometimes look to be a score or two better than what they actually are if you had your hands on them in the chute. Hair can cover a lot of bones and thin conditions. If you have questions on cattle nutrition, please contact

### Description of Body Condition Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>BCS</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thin</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Severely emaciated. All ribs and bone structure easily visible and physically weak.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Emaciated, similar to 1 above but not weakened. Little visible muscle tissue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Very thin, no fat on ribs or brisket, and some muscle still visible. Backbone easily visible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borderline</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Thin, with ribs easily visible but shoulders and hindquarters still showing fair muscling. Backbone visible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimum</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Moderate to thin. Last two or three ribs can be seen. Little evidence of fat in brisket, over ribs or around tailhead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Good smooth appearance throughout. Some fat deposition in brisket and over tailhead. Ribs covered and back appears rounded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Very good flesh, brisket full, tailhead shows pockets of fat, and back appears square due to fat. Ribs very smooth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fat</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Obese, back very square, brisket distended, heavy fat pockets around tailhead, and cow has square appearance due to excessive fat. Neck thick and short.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Rarely seen. Very obese. Description of 8 taken to greater extremes. Heavy deposition of udder fat.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FYI—Feeding Time Related to Calving Time

Research has shown that evening cattle feeding will result in more calves being born during daylight hours. Therefore, adjusting the time of day you feed pregnant cows can have an effect on the time of day they give birth. Feeding after 5 p.m. results in an approximately 80 percent chance of cows calving during daylight hours while feeding during morning hours results in a 50 percent chance of cows calving during day light hours. The benefits of calving during the day include making it easier for you to check the pregnant animals, increasing the likelihood of identifying cows with calving difficulty, and a decreased potential for calf death loss from hypothermia due to calves being born at night when temperatures are generally colder.
It is Time to Soil Test Pastures, Yards, & Gardens

Pull subsamples 4-6 inches deep across the area to be tested and mix the subsamples together. Bring a pint of the mixed soil into the Extension office for each area to be treated differently. For example, if you have a pasture and yard or more than one pasture, you will need a representative sample for each area. Make sure the sample is dry before you bring it into the office. We have soil boxes available if you would like to get those before bringing the sample in to the office. Plan ahead due to it takes around 3 weeks to get your results back. The later you wait into spring the longer it can take to get results back (maybe over 3 weeks).

Prune Your Fruit Trees Yearly

Fruit trees should be pruned every year to maintain their health, encourage balanced growth and productivity, and control their size and shape. When you plant a fruit tree, you should be dedicated to giving the tree proper care and pruning to maximize both fruit quality and quantity throughout the life of the tree. Understanding the principles of pruning and practicing them are important. Pruning is both an art and a science. Artists understand what they are doing and scientists understand why.

The best time to prune is during late winter or early spring just before the beginning of active growth. If large blocks of trees are to be pruned, time it so that you finish just before bud break. It will not harm trees if sap is beginning to flow at the time you prune. The main reasons you should prune during the late dormant period are: 1) Wounds heal quickly when growth starts. 2) Undesirable branches and other wood to be pruned can be easily seen since there are no leaves on the tree. 3) The bark is less likely to tear when cuts are made. 4) Trees pruned in early winter may be damaged by low winter temperatures that occur after pruning.

Summer pruning may also be used to control growth of young trees, improve light quality in the fruiting zone, thin heavy fruit loads or remove water sprouts and other undesirable wood.

Community & Economic Development

Strengthening Arkansas Communities

There will be a pruning demonstration workshop scheduled for Thursday February 20th at the U of A Fruit Research Station in Clarksville. In this workshop, you will learn about the principles of pruning along with a hands-on demonstration for pruning apples, blueberries, brambles, grapes, and peaches. Registration will begin at 1:00 pm and the workshop will begin at 1:30 pm and end at 4:00 pm. Please call 479-754-2406 to pre-register, or to get further information. When you call, please state whether you are a commercial producer or a home owner. There will be a $5.00 charge collected on the day of the event.

There were 40 Master Gardener Trainees. Pictured Left to Right: Karen Mulder, Beth Tucker, Cynthia Lacken, Dan Ratcliff, Mary Ratcliff, Linda Yarman, Kaye Miles, Bill Miles.

These Master Gardener Trainees completed 40 Hrs of training and are now members of the VBC Master Gardeners. Congratulations to this group! Check out the Master Gardener Plant Sale on Saturday, May 10th at Ed Leamon Park in Fairfield Bay from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Arkansas Farm to You

Arkansas Farm to You is sponsored by University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service. Arkansas Farm to You was conducted at South Side Elementary November 14, 2014. The Arkansas Farm to You is a 40 foot enclosed walk-through exhibit with nine learning stations. Small groups of elementary students traveled through the educational, interactive experience where they learned about food from farm to market. The children learned about the link between: agriculture, nutrition, good hygiene practices, physical activity and health. The children followed the food from the farm and learned how the body used it to be healthy. South Side High School students and volunteers were provided training with the assistance of Flora Philips-School Nurse, Lori Rooney-Family and Consumer Science Teacher, and the Van Buren County Extension Staff on conducting the skits in each section of the exhibit.

Hydrate Your Body!

Isn’t it amazing that more than 60% of the adult human body is fluid! This makes up 92% of blood, 79% of muscles and kidneys, 73% of the brain and heart, 64% of your skin and 31% of your bones as well! Staying hydrated helps these organs. Fluids are like automobiles, they transport nutrients from the food you eat to all cells, and drive waste out of your body. Fluids maintain body temperature, blood pressure, create saliva, lubricate joints between bones and carry out many other biological functions every day.

How much fluid do we need? Everybody’s fluid needs are different. In general, drinking at least 8 cups of fluid a day is a good way to start. What counts as a fluid? Water is best – it is zero calories, with no fat or cholesterol, very low sodium and is the least expensive choice. Milk, 100% fruit juice, smoothies, tea and coffee also count. Even fruits and vegetables contain fluid! Vegetables with the highest water content (over 95%) are iceberg lettuce, cucumbers, celery, radishes and zucchini. Fruits that contain over 87% water are watermelons, strawberries, grapefruit, peaches, pineapple, raspberries, cranberries and oranges.

Try these tips to consume more fluid every day. Carry a water bottle with you. Drink a glass of water first thing in the morning and last thing before going to bed. Flavor your water naturally with fresh squeezed lemon juice, mint leaves, lemon or cucumber slices, berries or unsweetened flavored tea packets. Challenge yourself to drink a glassful of water every hour. Drink a glassful with every meal.

Drink up!

Damascus EHC will host the 2014 EHC Spring Council Meeting. Details will be coming soon.

Time for Spring RADA sales: Spring RADA orders are due by Friday March 21, 2014. Mail all orders with payment by check to Viola Scott.

The VBC Extension Homemakers Council Bake and Plant Sale will be held on May 9, 2014. Club members will prepare baked goods and seedlings of vegetable and herbs to sale. Opportunity Quilt Raffle drawing will be held at 3 pm. EHC members need to sign up to help during the day by calling Thelma Murry at 501-253-7264. Please come out and support the Extension Homemaker Club’s volunteer efforts.

AEHC Spring Officers Training will be held March 11-12, 2014 at the C. A. Vines 4-H Center. The education workshop is held every other spring to train EHC county and local officers in their duties. Officers should attend but all EHC members are welcome. Registration, meals and lodging cost are: registration is $10, Tuesday Lodging $31, Tuesday lunch is $8, Tuesday Dinner $9.50, Wednesday Breakfast is $6.50, Wednesday Lunch is $8.00. The cost of attending on Wednesday, March 12, 2014 (only) is $18.00 which includes lunch and continuous beverages. Call Viola Scott, treasurer for more information.
LITE ALFREDO SAUCE  YEILDS 5 SERVINGS
Nutrition Information for each serving: Calories 117, Fat 5 g, Saturated Fat 3 g, Protein 9 g, Carbohydrate 9 g, Fiber 0 g, Sodium 324 mg

Ingredients
- 1 cup Non-Fat Dry Milk + 2 cups water (can substitute with 2 cups UHT milk)
- 1 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 3 tbs all-purpose flour
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup cheese (parmesan or other)

Directions
In a saucepan, stir together milk, chicken broth and flour. Make sure there are no clumps. Heat the saucepan on medium-high until the sauce starts to thicken — about ten minutes. Stir in salt, pepper and parmesan cheese. Tip: Mix in canned vegetables, chicken and serve over cooked macaroni.

Extension Get Fit
Did you make a New Year’s Resolutions to lose weight or to exercise more? Would you like to join an exercise program? Two programs are ongoing at Chimes Community Center and Shirley Senior Center. Trained Strong Women and Men Leaders and Extension Wellness Ambassadors are leading the classes. If you would like to join these exercise classes or start one in your community, contact the Van Buren County Extension Office and ask for Regina Chaney, County Extension Agent- CEA-FCS/4-H.

Walk Across Arkansas: Fall 2013 Success
The Walk Across Arkansas participation totals are rising. Six active teams registered with a total of 52 people committing to the Walk/Exercise Challenge.
*Participants walked a total of 100,458 minutes or 1,674 hours
*On average each participant walked 1,794 minutes or 30 hours
This amounts to an estimated total of 5,023 miles and a healthcare savings of $10,046 for our County. The team that walked the most was the Ten Wonders with Highway 110 Strollers second, BananaBerry in third, Walkers Delight in fourth, Hooper’s Troopers in fifth and Golden Girls in sixth. Regardless of the place all walkers are Winners because they received the benefits from the exercise. Let’s get walking!

Spring 2014 Walk Across Arkansas  March 24th—May 18th
Register NOW at: http://survey.uaex.edu/wwa/wwa-default.asp
Van Buren County 4-H

4-H Enrollment is Necessary to participate in any 4-H activity

Be sure you renew your membership by logging into https://arkansas.4honline.com/ using your email address and password. Inactive members will not be able to participate in any activity (Includes showing livestock & poultry at the county, district, & state fair) or receive future mailings, emails or notifications of 4-H Activities.

Poultry Chain Deadline ~ February 20, 2014

The Van Buren County Extension office will be participating in the 4-H Poultry Chain project again this year. We will be offering members a chance to purchase UP TO 25 day old Bovan Brown Chicks at a cost of $25. The chicks are scheduled for delivery around the third week of April. If you are interested, a signed contract (available from the county extension office) and your payment of $25 are due in the Van Buren County Extension office no later than Thursday, February 20, 2014. YOU MUST BE ENROLLED IN 4-H THROUGH 4-HONLINE TO BE ELIGIBLE TO ORDER CHICKENS.

February 20th is the LAST DAY to order Poultry Chain ~ NO LATE ORDERS Due to Weather ~

4-H Poster Contest

2014 THEMES: Are You 4-H Strong? - Open theme (create a poster and theme to go with it)

WHO: The contest is open to all 4-H members ages 9-19 There is no limit of participants per county but only one poster entry per 4-H Member will be accepted.

WHAT: Posters should be 14" x 22" in dimension and may be horizontal or vertical. Posters may be any medium art—watercolor, ink, crayon, acrylic, charcoal, or collage. They cannot contain any copyrighted material such as cartoon characters and cannot have any three dimensional items on them.

APPLICATION: The 4-H member’s name, age, county, full address and brief interpretation of art work must be affixed to the back of the poster in the upper left hand corner (a 3” x 5” index card may be used).

AWARDS: The top ten winners will receive certificates, which will be presented at the District 4-H O-Ramas.

DEADLINE: Posters must be correctly labeled on the back upper left corner and be in the County office by April 21st. Submissions must be flat, not rolled.

Do You Aspire to be a Grill Master? Why not try competing in the 4-H Poultry BBQ contest to be held March 11th in the Annex Parking Lot at 5.00 pm. Bring your grill, table, special seasonings and show your expertise. Registration deadline is March 4, 2014. For all details and rules, contact Regina Chaney, CEA-FCS/4-H at 745-7117.

Van Buren County 4-H O'Rama ~ March 15, 2014

The Van Buren County 4 O’Rama will take place in the Clinton area, starting at 10 AM with the indoor activities, outdoor activities will follow. Place to be announced later.

O-Rama activities include: Agribusiness – Public Speaking, Animal Science, Baitcasting & Game Fish ID, Bicycle, Citizenship, Consumer Economics, Crops & Weeds, Entomology – (Collection and Talk), Fashion Revue – (Purchased and Constructed), Food Fair, Forestry, Grassland Plant ID, Gun Safety (BB Shooting), Health, Horse, Human Development, Ornamental Horticulture, Performing (Arts-Vocal, Instrumental (Classical/Non-Classical), Dance), Pet Care, Public Speaking, Reel into Sportfishing, Safety, Technology Showcase, Veterinary Science and Wildlife.

All 4-H members must pre-register for the O-Rama activities no later than Tuesday, March 4, 2014 by visiting the county extension office or calling the office at (501) 745-7117. A form must be signed by 4-H member and parent or guardian.

You Are Invited to the First VBC 4-H Clover Social

4-H Members, Parents and Leaders are invited to the first Clover Social to be held on March 15, 2014. Place and time have not been confirmed so an email will be sent out with all of the details. Please come February 18, 2014 to the 4-H Leader and Member meeting to assist in planning this event.
4-H Leaders & Members Met to Plan FY14 Events

4-H Leaders and Members met to plan FY14 events on January 21, 2014. The leaders were provided Core Competencies on 100 Years of U of A Cooperative Extension, Liability Awareness, Risk Management, Honesty, Ethics and Morals, and Developing Life Skills. Various activities were discussed including the County O-Rama. 4-H Leader and Members will meet each month so leaders can receive the trainings required of all 4-H Leaders and make plans for future events. The next training will be February 18, 2014 at 6:00 pm. Light refreshments will be provided as requested. Continue reading the newsletter to find out the SCOOP!

4-H Members 2013 Record Books

The Van Buren County Extension Staff wants to take a minute to recognize the efforts of our County 4-H Members who completed a record book this year. They should be commended for all their hard work in documenting their 4-H experiences.


4-H Recognition Day with the Arkansas Razorbacks

4-H Recognition Day is Saturday, March 1st where the Arkansas Razorbacks play the Georgia Bulldogs at 3:00 pm at the Bud Walton Arena. A discounted rate of $10.00 is being offered to all Arkansas 4-H Members, family and friends. Final date to order is Friday, February 28th.

Ticket Ordering: You have the option to order as group or as an individual. Please note all orders will require a credit card and there is an ordering fee applied to each order. There is no limit to the number of tickets that can be ordered! Don’t miss out on the game of the season! Get your tickets today!

1. Order Online at www.arkansasrazorbacks.com and hover over “TICKETS” at top of page.
2. In the drop down menu click on “Buy M Basketball Tickets”
3. Use promo code CLOVER (all caps) and select the Georgia game.
4. Click on “Let me pick my seats” and select your seats in Section 202 or 234 to sit with other 4-Hers.
5. Hit continue, & proceed to check out. (An ordering fee will be applied to all orders)

VBC 4-H Foundation Graduating Senior Scholarship

Van Buren County 4-H Foundation Graduating Senior Scholarship applications for 2014 will be due in the Van Buren County Extension Office by Friday, March 14, 2014. Two qualifying Senior Van Buren County 4-H members will receive a $250 annual scholarship that will be renewable for up to 4 years. For more information, application, & guidelines contact the Extension Office at (501) 745-7117.
Van Buren County Extension Office
1414 Hwy 65 S. ~ Suite 137
Clinton, Arkansas 72031

501-745-7117

Danny Griffin
County Extension Agent
Staff Chair

Regina Chaney
County Extension Agent
Family & Consumer Sciences

Marie Colden
Program Assistant - Youth

Kerri Jones
Administrative Support Supervisor

Sincerely,

Danny Griffin
County Extension Agent
Staff Chair

Regina Chaney
County Extension Agent
Family & Consumer Sciences

All meetings and activities announced in this newsletter are open to all eligible persons without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status. 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.