



Jefferson Farm Advisor

Farm, Ranch, & Nursery Management in Jefferson County
Jefferson County Cooperative Extension Office
275 North Mulberry Street, Monticello FL 32344

Special Beef, Dairy and Forages Issue

January, 2006

Florida Beef Quality Assurance Producer Program

Beef Specialists will train cattlemen on the Florida Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) Producer Program. The program was developed by UF-IFAS Extension, Florida Cattlemen's Association and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Cattlemen from Madison, Jefferson and surrounding counties will learn how to take part in the BQA program at the day-long certification course. The program is scheduled for **Wednesday, February 15 at the Madison County Extension Office from 10 till 4 o'clock**. Jefferson and Madison County Cattlemen's Associations and Farm Bureau offices will co-sponsor a hamburger lunch. An agenda is included with this newsletter. We'll offer 2 CORE and 1 Category (Private Applicator Ag Plant or Ag Livestock Pest Control) CEUs if you attend the entire training program.

**Call the Extension Office in Jefferson County (342-01870) or Madison County (973-4138).
We'll reserve a space for the first 75 who call.**

Forages for Jefferson County

I have compiled a booklet of useful forage information for livestock producers, including the following:

- Forage Planting and Establishment Methods SS-AGR-161 UF/IFAS (edis)
- Bahiagrass SS-AGR-36 UF/IFAS (edis)
- Bermudagrass Varieties for Top Quality and Yields DS56 UF/IFAS (edis)
- Bermudagrass Production in Florida SS-AGR 50 UF/IFAS (edis)
- Hay Production in Florida SS-AGR-70 UF/IFAS (edis)
- Pastures and Forage Crops for Horses SS-AGR-65 UF/IFAS (edis)
- Choosing Forages for Maximum Grazing Availability ANR-155 Auburn ACES
- Fences for the Farm Cir 774 UGA CES
- Fences for Horses Bulletin 1192 UGA CES
- Fertilizing and Liming Forage Crops SS-AGR-176 UF/IFAS (edis)
- Weed Management in Pastures and Rangeland-2005 SS-AGR-08 UF/IFAS (edis)

Come by the office and ask Joann Demott for a copy. Additional information may be purchased from the IFAS Extension Bookstore. The booklet *Florida Cow-Calf Management* (SP 170, second edition, revised 2001) is available for \$10.00 plus tax and S&H. The *Florida Forage Handbook* (SP 253) is may be ordered for \$10.00 plus tax and S&H. Call us, or go online at < <http://www.ifasbooks.ufl.edu/merchant2/> >

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Calendar items are updated frequently at our website
<http://jefferson.ifas.ufl.edu/calendar.html>

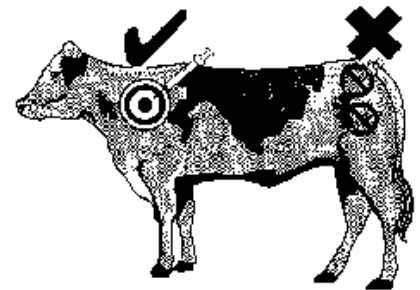
Events and Important Dates

- USDA announced that the Cutoff date for Signup for Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) and the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) are extended until February 15, 2006. Check with NRCS and FSA to apply for financial and technical assistance in these two programs
- The 42nd Annual Florida Dairy Production Conference will be held May 3 and 4 at the HiltonUF Conference Center, SW 34th Street, Gainesville.
- The 55th Beef Cattle Short Course is scheduled for May 3-5 at the HiltonUF Conference Center. Agendas with registration forms are enclosed.

Beef Quality Assurance Tips: Syringe Hygiene

No matter the season, it seems there is always a need for animal health products at the chute. Vaccines, antimicrobial drugs, dewormers, reproductive compounds all may be delivered by injection. Because we use these products so frequently, it's easy to be less than diligent about caring for syringes. Many times, these tools only receive attention right before being used. For such an important tool, more care is required.

Plastic disposable syringes are appropriate and safe to use, especially when only administering a few doses. However, when you're processing multiple animals or the whole herd, it makes sense to use a multiple-dose, or repeater syringe. Although they can cost \$25 to \$50 each, they can provide time and labor savings, as well as a drug cost savings because you will be delivering an accurate dosage every time. There are several models available – choose one that is durable (don't choose models with glass barrels), accurate, and comfortable to use.



Remember that a key attachment to any syringe is the needle. Use the right needle for the job. For most products that allow a sub-cutaneous (Sub-Q) delivery, and 16 gauge by three-quarters or five-eighths inch needle is appropriate. More importantly, keep a sharp needle on your syringe by changing to a new needle every eight to ten injections. Needles are meant to pierce through tissue. Dull or blunted needles cause major tissue damage and can lead to injection site infections quickly. Above all, keep it clean – if it hits the dirt, change needles immediately.

Depending on how you deliver vaccines, antibiotics, and other syringe-able animal health products, here are a few tips to ensure you're not undoing your good intentions and animal health programs by causing an injection site infection or damaging the product. [Dr. Jeff Carter, Extension Beef Specialist, NFREC-Marianna]

Do

- Clean only the exterior of multiple-dose, or repeater syringes with warm soapy water and a brush – be careful not to force the soap inside
- After each use, rinse internal components of repeater syringes with hot (> 160°F) distilled water and let syringe cool before next use
- Store cleaned repeater syringe in a dust-free, dry environment like a dedicated tool-box, or even in a zip-lock bag in the freezer

Don't

- Use soaps, disinfectants, or other products that might leave residues harmful to vaccines on the inside of syringe barrels or other components
- Use one repeater or other syringe for all products – using the same to deliver certain IV and antimicrobial drugs can be lethal
- Clean transfer needles with soaps or disinfectants – residues may kill modified-live vaccines and greatly reduce your program's success

Keys to Pollution Prevention

Over the years, cattlemen's associations have published recommendations for water pollution control. These following common sense suggestions are from the Water Quality Best Management Practices (BMP) Manual for Cow-Calf Operations for avoiding pollution problems. I have a few printed copies to distribute. View the manual at the FCA web < http://www.floridacattlemen.org/best_water_quality.htm>.

Develop a ranch conservation plan

A ranch conservation plan developed with help through the NRCS can help guide management decisions for improved water quality.

Maintain adequate vegetative cover

Vegetative cover helps to filter pollutants from runoff, reduces runoff velocity and controls soil erosion. Management practices which help to maintain vegetative cover usually involve distributing cattle so they don't overgraze portions of the grazing resources, and allow for recovery of the vegetation following a grazing period.

- Use grazing systems (prescribed or rotation grazing) to minimize the impact of grazing
- Adjust the stocking rate in sensitive watersheds

Carefully plan watering and feeding sites

Most nonpoint source pollution problems occur in the vicinity of watering, supplemental feeding or loafing areas where animals tend to congregate most often. Such concentrations can have an impact on vegetation and on the condition of the soil so that erosion is more likely and water percolation is diminished.

- Place supplemental feeding and mineral stations a reasonable distance away (approx. 100') from stormwater drainageways, streams, drainage canals, lakes, wetlands, wells and sinkholes
- Develop alternative water sources to attract animals away from streams, drainage canals, and lakes as much as possible
- Plan your shading facilities to keep cattle away from streams, drainage canals, and lakes as much as possible. Leaving or planting small, scattered clusters of trees in upland areas of pastures can serve as shade structures
- Move feeding stations, alternative water supplies or shade structures periodically to prevent areas of concentrated waste accumulation and denuded vegetation

Carefully plan temporary holding areas

Concentrated animal areas such as cowpens and other temporary holding areas have the potential to produce large pollutant loads.

- Locate new cowpens more than 200 feet away from a canal, stormwater drainageway, stream or lake or include a berm to prevent runoff into the water body.
- For existing concentrated animal areas that are located near a water body, use filter strips, grassed waterways, berms or waste management systems to minimize the transport of pollutants to water bodies.

Use structural techniques

Sometimes it may be impossible to locate supplemental feeding or shade facilities outside of sensitive water quality areas. In such cases, other techniques can be used to help keep sediment, nutrients, and organic matter out of the water.

- When feasible, re-establish natural flow patterns, plug drainage canals and divert water through internal marshes, cypress ponds or other natural wetlands that can assimilate nutrients. Contact Suwannee River or NW Florida WMD before making structural changes.
- Use practices such as grassed waterways, filter strips, sediment traps, swales, retention and detention ponds

Minimize off-site discharge

Pollutants are carried off-site by water. By reducing the amount of water leaving your property, you can reduce the off-site water quality impacts.

- Carefully control seepage irrigation to minimize tailwater
- Prevent overdrainage to reduce the movement of pollutants off-site.
- Use water control structures such as a flashboard risers on culverts to retard water flow
- Heavy vegetative cover in ditches should be mechanically removed instead of using herbicides due to high nutrient releases when the vegetation decomposes

- When cleaning ditches, pile vegetation and sediment away from the ditch so nutrients don't wash back into the water
- When cleaning ditches, use turbidity screens in the water at discharge points so turbid water does not leave your property
- Plug unnecessary drainage canals
- Utilize filter marshes or vegetation in wet areas to clean water before movement off-site
- Utilize man-made ponds in upland areas to reduce cattle use of natural wetland systems

Use source control

You can minimize pollutants which leave your property by carefully controlling imported materials which you use and apply on your ranch. Pollutants can come from fertilizers, sludge application, pesticides, chemicals and fuels. If these materials are properly stored, applied and disposed of, there is less chance that runoff will carry them off-site.

- Use a nutrient management plan
- Use soil and plant nutrient tests to determine fertilization rates
- Follow UF-IFAS fertilizer recommendations
- Apply sludge at agronomic rates, consistent with your nutrient management plan and DEP Agricultural Use Plan
- Don't apply fertilizer, organic fertilizer, or sludge directly to water bodies, drainage ditches or prior to forecasted heavy rainfall
- Use a pesticide management plan
- Follow directions on the pesticide label
- Prevent accidental spills and dispose of empty containers properly
- In the event of a spill have a response plan
- Use Farm*A*Syst to help identify potential sources of pollution
- Store materials (pesticides, chemicals, fuels, and fertilizers) carefully

Minimize risk of man-induced erosion

Cows aren't the only ones contributing to soil erosion. Human activities, such as land clearing, culvert installation, road building, ditch and canal maintenance, pasture renovation activities and certain other short-term crops can expose soil to erosive factors that can increase pollutant loading.

- When land is cleared, quickly plant a vegetative cover
- Leave grass buffer strips during land clearing along drain areas
- During construction, follow DEP's erosion and sedimentation control practices (Florida Land Development Manual)
- Minimize the number of vehicle crossings through streams and canals. If stream crossing cannot be avoided, locate the crossing in the area of least impact considering habitat, soil types, slopes, streambed characteristics, and bank stability.
- Use stabilized culverts or hard surface crossings. Crossings can be concrete or geotextile fabric with rock on top.
- Don't mow canal banks too closely, leave some vegetative cover

Train Employees

Employees whose duties include activities which relate to Best Management Practices should be properly trained to perform them. The employee should be informed of pertinent information relating to job duties as needed. Personnel should be informed annually of the general components and goals of the BMPs. Training sessions should be documented in the Employee Training Log.

- Inform employees about BMPs
- Review the Conservation Plan with employees, so it is clear what your goals and priorities are
- Re-train annually and when changes are made
- Train employees to document and retain records of activities

Two additional pages are enclosed with this newsletter are for your information:

1. Information from Stephen Monroe of the Department of Agriculture about NAIS, the National Animal Identification System. Help protect the security our Livestock industries and their markets by filling out the information on the Form, and return (mail or fax) it to FDACS.
2. A quick reference for Pasture Weed Control from Doug Mayo (Jackson County) and Jay Ferrell (UF-IFAS Agronomy). Control of TSA was discussed in the January, 2006 newsletter.