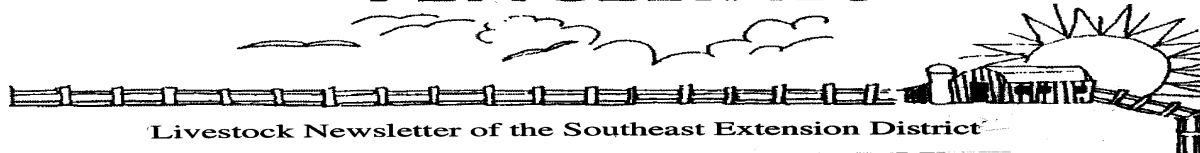


# FENCELINES



Livestock Newsletter of the Southeast Extension District

January-February-March 2013

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## DETECTING AND ADDRESSING ANIMAL HEALTH CONCERNS OF THE SMALL RUMINANT PRODUCERS

*Abby Dilley, Extension Agent, Onslow & Pender County*  
*By Uford A. Madden Veterinarian and Toxicologist, Tallahassee, Florida*

Being a small ruminant producer you are the first line of defense for identification and prevention of introduction of disease-causing agents (pathogens). By reducing the current on-farm vulnerabilities, improve food safety and food security, and enhance your capabilities of providing safer and more wholesome products for your consumers.

As a small ruminant producer you should know what is normal for your animals, and be able to recognize the abnormal changes in animals to determine and address the animal health concern at hand. Changes of behavior to be aware of include:

- Walking
- Feeding Habits
- Temperament
- Appearance
- Hair coat
- Eyes
- Nose
- Feet
- \* Hooves
- \* Stomach
- \* Genitals
- \* Horns
- \* Tail
- \* Head
- \* Back

Problems from lameness in goats and sheep may result from excess moisture. Their hooves may reveal overgrowth, darkened cuts, and tears that serve as reservoirs for bacteria, molds, fungi. Affected animals are unable to walk and feed normally.

Affected animals should be separated from the herd to reduce stress and provided adequate feed and water for easy observation and treatment. As a producer do not substitute treatment with drugs for good management and production practices to prevent infections and disease-agent transmission. Frequent cleaning and disinfecting of farm areas will result in better prevention and control of diseases. Colostrums should be provided to newborns from mothers within 24 hours after birth; if not, should be provided by producers.

North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T State University commit themselves to positive action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status or disability. In addition, the two Universities welcome all persons without regard to sexual orientation. North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.

Vaccination for animals should be updated to minimize susceptibility to diseases and to build strong immunity among animals.

### **Determining the causes of health concerns**

Animals with runny noses and coughing may suffer from respiratory diseases, including pneumonia. Other factors may be environmental: poor sanitation, poor ventilation, poor housing, and drenching animals. Stress of any type, shipping, animal shows, overcrowding, extreme temperature, feed changes, and weaning can cause pneumonia.

### **How to Diagnose Diseases to Determine**

**Treatment.** Diagnosis of diseases should include a history of the animals, clinical signs and symptoms and a careful physical exam. Confirmation can be done by isolation and identification of causative agents(s). Animals with runny noses, swelling in lower jaw, and coughing may suffer from respiratory diseases caused by single or a combination of agents, bacteria, fungi, molds, parasites and toxic fumes. Bacterial culture and sensitivity test will help to determine the antibiotic of choice to treat animals.

**Treating Diseases** Treatment of lameness may include trimming overgrown hooves, cleaning pockets in hooves, and applying iodine, betadine, povidone iodine, or zinc sulfate. Foul smell detected in hooves and fevers are indications of infections. Common antibiotics used to treat disease-causing agents include Penicillin, Albon, Gallamycin, and LA-200. Consulting with your veterinarian is advised before starting treatment.

### **Preventing and Controlling Diseases**

Reducing stressful incidences will decrease disease cases in animals. Young animals are more susceptible to stress and can relapse during feeding periods. Coughing can cause rectal prolapsed in feeder lambs. Prevention and control measures must involve good management practices to reduce pneumonia and respiratory diseases. Proper ventilation will reduce pneumonia problems, infectious agents, high humidity, and noxious gases like ammonia. Avoiding overcrowding will reduce animal-to-animal contact and spread of contagious diseases. Reducing the impacts of disease agents on the immune system of animals and building resistance to diseases are important to maintain healthy herds.

Producers' increased awareness of the changes that can occur because of introduction of pathogens into production systems will allow them to improve food safety and food security and reduce current vulnerabilities on their farms.

## **MAKE 2013 A WASTE-FULL YEAR**

*Eve H. Honeycutt, Livestock Agent, Lenoir and Greene Counties.*

These days farming takes a lot of planning. Swine farms take even more. Here are a few key points to remember when planning around your waste management for the swine farm in 2013.

- If you have row-crops in your operation, and you plan to add a new crop on one of your sprayfields (ex: sorghum) then don't forget to get your waste plan updated to reflect that change.
- If you have a sludge problem, or even close to a problem, start planning now. It takes time to plan to remove sludge and even more time if you apply for cost share. After you select fields to use, don't forget to choose the right time to apply so that the sludge can be soil-incorporated within two days, or before a rain event.
- Your farm permit will be up for renewal in 2014, and there will be public hearings conducted about the changes during 2013. You are encouraged to attend these meetings and stay updated about the potential changes to your new permit.
- You will only have one inspection per year, so don't get behind on your recordkeeping. It's easy to write your information down in your truck and keep going, but making an effort to keep your formal records up-to-date on a regular basis can save you a lot of headache the week before the inspector comes.
- Don't forget your annual sludge survey and bi-annual irrigation calibration. Many of you had sludge survey extensions that will expire in 2013 because of the permit renewal process.
- You have until January 31, 2013 to get your credit hours and pay your license renewal fee of \$10. They did not mail out the invoices this year

until you received your credit hours, but you must still pay the fee and return it by January 31, 2013. If you still need credit hours, call the Extension office for the last-chance classes available in limited locations.

## WINTER WEED IDENTIFICATION AND CONTROL IN BURMUDAGRASS PASTURES Q & A

*By: Margaret A. Bell, Livestock Agent - Craven & Jones Counties  
Adapted from Leon Warren's "Winter Weed Identification in Coastal  
Bermudagrass Fields" presentation at CCA Training.*

### **\*Why should I be concerned with grass weeds and broadleaf weeds?**

Grass weeds interfere with hay drying and growing pure stands. Grass weeds are not typically a health concern except johnsongrass. Broadleaf weeds are noxious, toxic, and due to their prickly nature, make it hard or impossible for livestock to graze them.

### **\*Why is it important to identify your weeds early?**

Early identification will help you control the weeds before your actual crop gets thinned out. You may be able to save money because younger plants usually require less herbicide. Some mature plants can not be controlled by herbicide no matter the rate. Weed seeds will not be killed by herbicides, just the parent plant- not offspring.

### **\*When is the best time to control weeds in winter annuals and cool season perennials?**

Usually October through December because weeds are young and actively growing. There are many factors that affect the best time to control weeds such as germination. Another good time to control winter weeds is February through April because they are starting their final growth spurt. However, you don't want to wait too late by allowing the weeds to seed out.

### **\*When is a bad time to try to control weeds in winter annuals and cool season perennials?**

Usually December through February is a bad time to try to control your winter weeds. However, you can apply glyphosate and paraquat to winter weeds on dormant bermuda during these months.

### **\*Is it permitted to pump hog waste on dormant bermuda in the winter?**

No, because nitrogen will not be utilized and you

increase the potential for runoff in streams and ditches. However, you can apply hog waste to cover crops such as cereal grains and winter grasses because they are actively growing in the winter.

### **\*What are several common winter weeds that I need to look out for?**

Henbit – winter annual broadleaf; common chickweed – winter annual broadleaf; white clover – perennial broadleaf; curly dock – perennial broadleaf; wild mustard – winter annual broadleaf; wild radish – winter annual broadleaf; Carolina geranium – winter annual broadleaf; Shepard's purse – winter annual broadleaf; spiny sowthistle – winter annual broadleaf; hairy bittercress – winter annual broadleaf; common dandelion – perennial broadleaf; buckhorn plantain – perennial broadleaf; buttercup – annual / perennial broadleaf; horseweed – annual broadleaf; vetch – winter annual or perennial broadleaf; cutleaf evening primrose – biennial broadleaf; wild garlic – clump forming perennial.

\*\*\*ALWAYS READ LABELS. Cooperative Extension agents can help you identify your weeds and help recommend a weed control program. However, it is very important you always read labels and adhere to restrictions – in livestock, especially hay and grazing restrictions. For more information, contact your local Cooperative Extension livestock agent.

## CRITICAL HOURS FOR CALVES

*Eileen Coite, Livestock Agent, Wayne County  
Summarized from The Cow-Calf Manager – First 72 hours Critical for Calves, by Dr. John Hall, Extension Animal Scientist, Beef, Virginia Tech, 2001 Livestock Update*

At our recent Eastern Carolina Cattlemen's Conference, Dr. Dee Whittier, DVM of the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine, presented a session titled "Getting Calves out Alive". Cattlemen and women in attendance observed and learned many tips and techniques from Dr. Whittier regarding normal vs. abnormal calving positions, and were reminded of the critical timing that can come into play when a cow prepares to calve. It's hard to put into words what was learned in this session of the conference. It was one of those events you just had to "be there", but, I have found what is a very helpful article by Dr. John Hall that may help us through the calving season.

You may be in the middle of calving season, finished, or just about to start, but wherever you are in this process, the following tips will be good to file away for reference whenever needed. Dr. Hall breaks up the calving process into a helpful timeline that we all can follow:

#### **Hour -4 to 0 – Labor through Calving**

Montana research has shown that nearly 50% of calves that die in the first 24 hours after birth and most stillborns are because of dystocia (calving problems). When it's calving season, cows and heifers should be checked often, 3-4 times a day or more is best. Some tricks to this might be moving them to a pasture closer to the house, and notifying family and neighbors that "its time" and asking others to notify you if they see activity. When should you assist? Earlier is better than too late, meaning if you think there is a problem, take a closer look, and if they cow is dilated assist her or get the vet there! Yes, this means spending some money, but a live calf will pay for the vet call, while a dead one (and the risk of a dead cow) is surely to lose you money. If you missed Dr. Whittier's calving presentation at the conference, we did videotape the presentation, and there are other videos available for review. Again, calling your local vet is always a good plan too.

#### **Hour 0-4 –Birth to Standing**

Especially during bad weather times, it is critical to see a newborn calf during the first 4 hours of its life. Sometimes we may not see them this soon, but the more that can be seen, the better. Calves should stand and nurse within two hours of birth under normal conditions. Cows and calves should be checked to see if the cow has been nursed and if calves need assistance nursing so they can get colostrum. If they have not nursed within four hours of birth, they will most likely need to be tube fed colostrum. Also, during extremely cold or wet weather, weak calves can develop hypothermia, and need to be moved to a warm area.

#### **Hour 4-12 – Standing to Processing**

If the calf has not received colostrum for some reason by 12 hours, the ability of their digestive system to absorb it is reduced by 50%. Therefore, this is the last chance to receive large amounts of colostrum and absorb antibodies from it. Scours and respiratory problems are common in these

calves. Processing of all calves should be done at this time. Processing includes procedures such as: tagging, navel dipping, castration of bull calves, followed by implants, tattooing (purebred operations), and documentation of weight and sex of calves. Cows should be checked at this time for expelling of afterbirth, and in severe cold weather, calves should be checked for hypothermia.

#### **Hour 12-24 – First day**

All calves not processed should be done at this time. Checking to make sure everyone is healthy, warm, and nursing is also important. If any cow-calf pairs are having problems, they can be isolated in a barn or pen at this time for closer monitoring and assistance.

#### **Hour 24-48 – Second day**

Calves should continue to be monitored, and should be easily following cows, nursing, and alert. They will of course rest and sleep a lot too as with all newborns.

#### **Hour 48 -72 – Third day**

By this time, calves probably will be and should be hard to catch, moving around well with lots of energy. Moving all healthy cows and calves into a larger, but well drained pasture is common at this time. Any cows with retained placentas should be treated at this time with antibiotics (before being turned out in a larger area). Again, keep weak or sick calves and cows in a smaller, well drained pen or barn area to monitor and treat.

These tips should give a good framework for getting cows and calves off to a good start during the calving season. Hope this give some helpful tips for starting off your new calf crop in the New Year!

## **Forage Management Tips**

### **January**

- If winter pasture is limited, feed hay in the pasture or allow cows to graze every other day. The priority for limiting pasture is (1) calves by creep grazing, (2) stockers, (3) nursing cows, and (4) dry cows.
- Keep animals off newly planted winter annuals during wet periods to prevent damage. Allow

- calves first priority to graze.
- Sample hay bales which are stored outside that will be fed during the next four to eight weeks.
- Decide which fields will be re-seeded or overseeded during late winter and early spring; obtain soil test and supplies for planting.
- Lime may be applied during this off-season.
- Keep a record of winter weed problems so that control measures can be taken next fall. This is the latest month that some herbicides may be used on legumes.
- Determine animal feed requirements for the year (about 6 tons of hay equivalent/cow-calf pair) and outline a 12-month forage production and use plan to meet the needs.

## February

- Apply nitrogen to cool-season grasses to stimulate early spring growth.
- Overseed legumes, such as ladino clover, into well-grazed (2 inches or less) grass pastures.
- Lime fields for spring plantings.
- Divide pastures to improve the quality and persistence of pasture plants.
- Locate sources of hybrid bermudagrass sprigs for planting.
- Burn warm-season grass residues in late February.
- Get herbicide sprayers ready to control weeds in dormant bermudagrass fields.

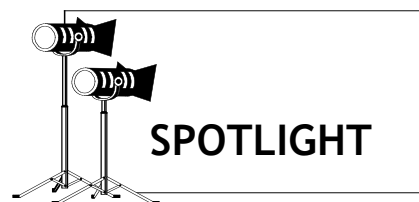
## March

- Apply nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium to cool-season grasses to increase spring production.
- Begin grazing of fall-planted fescue and clovers when growth reaches 6 inches.
- Overseeding ladino clover into grass pastures should be completed early.
- Spread manure accumulated in pastures where hay was fed or where cattle congregated during the winter.
- Dig weed-free bermudagrass springs and plant them before growth begins; consider using a herbicide.
- Consider controlling winter weeds (ex: henbit, hairy buttercup, etc) with herbicides.

Grass tetany may be a problem as rapid grass growth and cool, wet weather prevails.

*Recommendations for the use of chemicals are included in this publication as a convenience to the reader. The use of brand names and any mention or listing of commercial products or services in this publication does not imply endorsement by the North Carolina Cooperative Extension nor discrimination against similar products or services not mentioned. Individuals who use chemicals are responsible for ensuring that the intended use complies with current regulations and conforms to the product label. Be sure to obtain current information about usage and examine a current product label before applying any chemical. For assistance, contact an agent of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension in your county.*

*The use of brand names in this publication does not imply endorsement of the products or services named or criticism of similar ones not mentioned.*



## Pasture Weed ID

**By: Leon Warren NCSU Crop Science**

**Onslow County Extension office**

Want to know what weeds are growing in your pastures, and would like to know how to control them? **January 15, 2013 at 6pm**, Mr. Leon Warren will be doing a presentation on Identifying weeds in your pastures at the Onslow County Extension Office. Any questions please contact Abby Dilley.

## Planning for the Future of Your Farm and Forest

**February 20, 2013 9am- 12pm Lunch included**  
**RSVP by February 15<sup>th</sup>** to Nita Walton (910)-989-3101

Onslow County Extension Office  
 Questions contact Melissa Huffman or Abby Dilley

## Do you want to become a Master Gardener Volunteer?

**Onslow County Master Gardener Volunteer**  
**Class Starts January 31, 2013**

Are you a gardener who would like to learn

more about growing plants in Onslow County? Are you interested in volunteering in your community? If so, you may be interested in becoming a Master Gardener volunteer.

The Onslow County Center of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension is offering a Master Gardener Volunteer class starting January 31. The Master Gardener Volunteer Program is a joint endeavor of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service and volunteers who wish to learn how to be better gardeners and help other gardeners by sharing their knowledge. The program is designed to recruit and train volunteers to help meet the educational needs of the citizens of Onslow County.

Class participants learn about a wide variety of gardening subjects including vegetables, fruits, lawn grasses, shrubs, flowers and trees. The training focuses on developing diagnostic skills for insects and diseases of plants. Classes are also given on landscaping for water quality, soils, composting, propagation, wildlife control and much, much more!

Master Gardeners receive 40 hours of training and after graduation they provide 40 hours of volunteer work in the community. Master Gardeners are involved in a range of community projects including: answering homeowner inquiries at the Extension Office and Farmer's Market, mailing out information bulletins to homeowners, conducting plant clinics, working with school children on special horticultural projects, talking to garden clubs, working on community beautification projects and developing the new Discovery Gardens of Onslow.

The 2013 Master Gardener course will begin January 31 and end April 2. Classes normally will be taught Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9:00 am – Noon. Cost for the course is \$100, which includes a comprehensive Master Gardener Manual.

Persons interested in receiving an application for the 2013 course should call the North Carolina Cooperative Extension - Onslow County Center at (910) 455-5873, and request an application. Spaces in the class are limited.