



Blaine County Agricultural Newsletter



October-November 2004 Blaine County OSU Extension Service, 212 N. Weigle, Watonga, OK 73772 580-623-5195
Email: blaineco@watonga.com

Watch Out For Fall Armyworms

Roger Gribble
OCES NW Area Agronomist

There are times when I struggle for a topic to discuss; however, this will not be the case for this article. The case is more of a need to let producers know we have worms in newly emerged wheat. These worms would be of the fall armyworm variety and not the army cutworm variety that we experienced last fall and winter.

Fall armyworms often go unnoticed for a while because they don't eat much until they become older and much larger. By the time they reach their 7th instar of growth, they can eat 70% of the total amount of wheat tissue that they will consume over its entire life cycle. That feeding cycle is one reason why the worms seem to cause damage in a relatively short period of time.

During their first three instars, these caterpillars do not remove much foliage. Since they are so small, they scrape the epidermis off the leaf, leaving a clear, papery membrane that you can see through. This feeding damage is called "window paining" or some call it "skeletonizing". As caterpillars get larger, they will chew through the leaf and begin eating along the leaf margin.

Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension Entomologists have established treatment guidelines for the Fall Armyworms in wheat. If a producer finds 2 to 3 Fall Armyworms per foot of row in seedling wheat, you should consider the use of a crop protection product. There are several crop

protection products labeled for use in small wheat. The Blaine County Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, Agriculture Educator can help you identify which options you should consider. At this time of the year, producers will want to look closely and the grazing restrictions that go with the crop protection product used. Grazing restrictions may be as little as a couple of days or may extend to a month or more. Wheat acres intended for grazing will want to choose a crop protection product with the shorter restrictions.

For identification of these worms, the best technique is to look at the worm's head. The Fall Armyworm has an inverted "Y" on the front of his head. There is a higher chance of finding these worms at the field margins rather than in the middle of the fields. This worm will be a problem from now until we get freezing weather. If a producer chooses to use cold temperatures for control, expect a heavy loss in forage production as well as tiller counts.

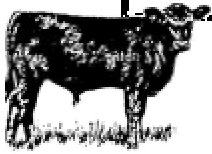
There are many reasons to get on your knees for this years wheat crop. These very small worms are but one reason. These worms are very easy to control when in the early instar stages of growth. Cost of control and loss of plant material go up as producers wait for the worms to cycle out. Contact the Blaine County Cooperative Extension Service at 623-5195 for more information about these worms and their identification.

OSU-USDA Cooperating. The Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, or status as a veteran, and is an equal opportunity employer.

NW Oklahoma Beef Cattle Conference

Making the Most From This Beef Market

December 1, 2004



Seiling, OK

Flying G Restaurant
9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

December 2, 2004



Kingfisher, OK

Kingfisher County Fairgrounds
9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Contact the Blaine County OSU Extension Service for reservations: 580-623-5195 or Toll Free: 877-826-1808

Enid, OK

Garfield County OSU Extension Center
4:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

PROGRAM

Calving Management of Beef Cows and Heifers

Dr. Glenn Selk
OSU Beef Cattle Reproduction Specialist

Sorting Through All of These Herd Health Issues

Dr. John Kirkpatrick
OSU College of Veterinary Medicine

Winter Nutrition Options for 2005

Greg Highfill
OSU Extension Area Livestock Specialist

How Much Plant Management Can a Cow's Back Carry

Roger Gribble
OSU Extension Area Agronomist

Program Sponsor



Each location has a sponsored meal. Please register by November 29 to help assure an accurate meal count.

Meal Sponsors

Merial Animal Health
Ft. Dodge Animal Health
Pfizer Animal Health

Blaine County Cattlemen's Annual Meeting

October 28, 2004

The Blaine County Cattlemen's Association will hold its annual meeting on Thursday, October 28th, 6:30 p.m. at the Blaine County Fairgrounds. Registration begins 6:00 p.m. Greg Highfill, OSU Area Extension Livestock Specialist will be the guest speaker. Entertainment by LeRoy Jones, Cowboy Poet from Mountain View, Oklahoma. The annual dues are \$20.00 per year, which includes two free dinners at the annual banquet. Spouses are encouraged to attend. Any additional guest will be charged \$7.50 per plate. Meal is to be catered by End O'Main.

RSVP by contacting the Blaine County Cooperative Extension Office at 623-5195 by 3:00 p.m. Wednesday, October 27th.

Blaine County Minerals Owners Annual Meeting Scheduled

The Mineral Owners Annual Meeting to be held Tuesday, October 26th, 6:30 p.m. at the Blaine County Fairgrounds. Guest Speaker: Darryl Bennett. Topic: Oklahoma Tort Reform. RSVP by contact the Extension Office at 623-5195 by Friday, October 22nd.



- A Good Time to Control Broadleaf Weeds in Yards

David Hillock

Summer temperatures make it too risky to use the broadleaf postemergence herbicides due to the volatility and threat of drift, which could then damage desirable plants in the landscape. However, the cooler daytime temperatures associated with fall make it an excellent time to think again about controlling broadleaf weeds in the yard. Dandelion and other broadleaf weeds are easily controlled with post emergence herbicides such as those that contain a Trimec solution or other 2, 4-D formula. Remember to spray early in the day when winds are low and before temperatures begin to get too warm.

Care should be used when applying these herbicides around desirable landscape plants. Do not over apply especially around tree and shrub roots. Spot spray when possible as it is not necessary to do a blanket cover spray when only few weeds actually exist in the yard. Spraying young weeds as they first appear this fall will be more effective than waiting until the foliage is more mature. Mature foliage resists the herbicide more easily than the younger shoots. Always read and follow label directions!!

Prussic acid poisoning is a concern after a light frost

It was discovered in the early 1900s that under certain conditions sorghums are capable of releasing hydrocyanic acid or commonly called prussic acid. Prussic acid when ingested by cattle, is quickly absorbed into the blood stream, and blocks the animal's cells from utilizing oxygen. Thus the animal dies from asphyxiation at the cellular level. Animals affected by prussic acid poisoning exhibit a characteristic bright red blood just prior to and during death. Lush young regrowth of sorghum plants are prone to accumulate prussic acid especially when the plants are stressed such as drought or freeze damage. **Light frosts, that stress the plant but do not kill it, are often associated with prussic acid poisonings.** Producers should avoid grazing fields with sorghum type plants following a light frost. The risk of prussic acid poisoning will be reduced, if grazing is delayed until at least one week after a "killing freeze". As the plants die and the cell walls rupture, the hydrocyanic acid is released as a gas, and the amount is greatly reduced in the plants. One can never be absolutely certain that a field of sorghum is 100% safe to graze.

Cattle that must be grazed on sorghum pastures during this time of year should be fed another type of hay before turning in on the field, and should be watched closely for the first few hours after turn in. If signs of labored breathing, such as would be found in asphyxiation, are noted, cattle should be removed immediately. Call your local veterinarian for immediate help for those animals that are affected.

Wheat Pasture Back on Track



Most of Oklahoma has received some rain in the two weeks. Although amounts vary, there was enough rain in most cases to get wheat pasture established. In some areas, early planted wheat has been at a standstill for lack of moisture and should respond very quickly with forage production. In many other areas, wheat has been “dusted in” and will germinate quickly with this moisture. Although it will take 4 to 8 weeks for enough growth for grazing, cattle markets will likely respond immediately with firmer prices for stocker calves. In some areas, follow-up rain will be needed before long to keep wheat growth on track for adequate supplies of winter forage.

Stocker calf prices usually reach a seasonal low in early November dropping by 1-2 percent from October into November. This year, such a drop is unlikely because 1) developing demand for wheat pasture stockers will offset the fall run of calves coming to town and 2) the fall run will be smaller than usual in any event. On the other hand, it is hard to expect stocker calf prices to go up a great deal from the record prices we already have. While wheat pasture producers will be interested in owning calves as wheat pasture comes on, they (and their lenders) are concerned about the risk of owning these high-priced calves through the winter.

Unfortunately, there are several reasons to be concerned about how these stocker cattle will turn out when sold in February or March. Boxed beef and fed cattle prices continue to struggle and show signs of relative demand weakness. Increased pork and poultry production will add even more pressure on the meat complex in the coming weeks. Finally, it appears that the Asian markets will remain closed to beef for a while longer yet and even when they do open, will not return immediately to previous export levels. The political uncertainty continues to drag on and will likely be with us for some time to come.

Fenceline Weaning

California researchers weaned calves with only a fence (Fenceline) separating them from their dams. These were compared to calves weaned totally separate (Separate) from dams. Calf behaviors were monitored for five days following weaning. Fenceline calves and cows spent approximately 60% and 40% of their time, respectively within 10 feet of the fence during the first two days. During the first three days, Fenceline calves bawled and walked less, and ate and rested more, but these differences disappeared by the fourth day. All calves were managed together starting 7 days after weaning. After two weeks, Fenceline calves had gained 23 pounds more than separate calves. This difference persisted since, after 10 weeks, Fenceline calves had gained 110 pounds (1.57 lb/day), compared to 84 pounds (1.20 lb/day) for Separate calves. There was no report of any differences in sickness, but calves that eat more during the first days after weaning should stay healthier. A follow-up study demonstrated similar advantages of fenceline contact when calves were weaned under dry lot conditions and their dams had access to pasture. To wean and background, even for short periods, fenceline weaning should be considered.

Source: Price and co-workers. Abstracts 2002 Western Section of American Society of Animal Science.