



# Nuttin' but News

Caddo County OSU Extension Center



## AGRICULTURAL NEWSLETTER

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service • Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources • Oklahoma State University

201 W. Okla., Anadarko, OK 73005 405/247-3376

<http://countyext.okstate.edu/caddo> November 2006

### Upcoming Agricultural Events

- Nov. 8 - 61st Annual Oklahoma Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show / Wes Watkins Center, corner Washington and Hall of Fame / **Stillwater, OK** / To Register call Tonya Murray 918-437-0835
- Nov. 10
- Nov. 14 Tree Care Issues / Oklahoma Botanical Gardens / **Stillwater, OK** / 9:00 AM / Registration 405-744-5404 / Cost \$90
- Nov. 20 **Deadline for the Livestock Assistance Grant Program / Submit Forms by Nov. 20th / Grant applications may be picked up at the Caddo County OSU Extension Office**
- Nov. 20 Caddo County Cattlemen's Assoc. Educational Meeting / Caddo-Kiowa Technology Center / **Fort Cobb, OK** / 6:30 PM
- Nov. 30 Risk Management Meetings / **Hinton, North Caddo COOP, 9:30 AM / Apache, Apache Banking Center, Noon / Speaker at both meetings will be Kim Anderson, OSU Grain Marketing Specialist**
- Dec. 6 Oklahoma Unwanted Pesticide Disposal Program / Humphrey's COOP Elevator, 2109 Asphalt Road / **Altus, OK** / 8AM-2PM

### Forage Samples Tested for Nitrate

Now that hay harvest is complete we will stop doing the "Quick Test" at the OSU Extension Office until next summer. All samples received in November through June will go directly to the lab.

The OSU Forage and Soil Testing Laboratory's nitrate test is more accurate than the "Quick Test" and provides us with a nitrate rating that advises producers how to utilize the hay. The forage test is only \$6.00 per sample and we have forage sampling probes that producers can borrow at the OSU Extension Office in Anadarko. For more information call us at the OSU Extension Office at 405-247-3376.

### Oklahoma Fall Cow Culling and Calf Runs

*By Dr. Derrell Peel, OSU Livestock Marketing Specialist*

As expected, the large auction runs of calves observed July through mid-September are being offset now by much smaller than normal fall calf runs. In the first three weeks of October, the Oklahoma eight-market auction total of feeder cattle is down 33 percent compared to the same period last year. Generally smaller runs are expected for the next month which should limit any price pressure despite the lack of wheat pasture demand for cattle.

In contrast to the feeder cattle runs, the auction totals for cull cows are still running ahead of last year. It appears that some normal fall culling is yet to be done despite the large volume of cow sales this year. For the year to date, cow sales in Oklahoma auctions are running 43 percent ahead of last year. Although the drought has forced some culling and liquidation for several months, I suspect that some producers are still bringing cow numbers in line with winter feed supplies and others may be finding reduced pregnancy rates due to the poor conditions last spring and summer.

The latest Cattle on Feed Report shows slightly smaller than expected placements in September indicating that the drought induced summer bulge in placements is probably over.

### Transporting Cattle and Equipment

State Trooper Stan Rooker will be our next speaker at the Caddo County Cattlemen's Meeting Monday, November 20th. The Meeting will be held at the Caddo-Kiowa Technology Center in Fort Cobb at 6:30 PM (note the earlier time).

The topic will be "Transporting Cattle and Equipment". Our speaker, State Trooper Stan Rooker works in the area of Size and Weights and handles Commercial Vehicle Enforcement. There is no charge to attend. Farm Credit of Central Oklahoma will sponsor the meeting.



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## Using Wheat Pasture in Cow/Calf Operations

*By Bob LeValley, OSU Area Livestock Specialist*

Simply put, small grain forages such as wheat pasture, are too good for full feeding to cows. A lactating cow giving 10 to 15 lbs of milk per day requires around 2 pounds of crude protein and 13 lbs. of TDN per day. Wheat pasture often contains over 20 percent protein and 75 percent TDN (dry matter basis) and a cow can easily consume 30 lbs. of wheat forage dry matter each day. This means a cow grazing wheat full time, can be consuming 6 lbs. of crude protein and over 22 lbs. Of TDN. These nutrient intakes are far beyond the amount the cow can utilize.

Limit grazing has proven the most efficient approach to utilizing such a high quality forage. The protein requirement can be met by grazing her on wheat for one day, then returning her to dry pasture for the next 3-4 days. A pattern of one day on wheat and two to three days off, should meet the needs of the same cow after calving. A "day" on wheat should be defined as the amount of time required for the cow to graze her fill of wheat forage (usually 3-5 hours) and not a full 24 hours.

This 3-5 hour limit allows the cow to consume adequate amounts of protein to carry her for the ensuing days on dry grass while limiting the loss of forage due to trampling bedding down, etc. Under normal weather conditions, enough wheat forage should be accumulated by early December to supply the protein needs of about four cows per acre throughout the winter months when limit grazing is practiced.

Cows can suffer bloat problems the same as stocker calves. The same precautions should be taken. In addition to bloat, the possibility exists for serious problems with grass tetany. While rare in stockers,

tetany is not uncommon with cows lactating and calving on wheat pasture. It can be caused by a deficiency of calcium and/or magnesium.

Grass tetany can usually be prevented by feeding a free-choice mineral containing about 15% calcium and 15% magnesium. A good mineral mixture consists of 35% salt, 35% limestone, 25% magnesium oxide, and 5% cottonseed meal. A number of commercial mineral mixes are available with similar mineral content. It must be remembered that magnesium is useful for preventing tetany – it does nothing for bloat.

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