



Hughes County Connection

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Bull Breeding Soundness Exams Do They Cost or Pay?

by Dave Sparks, DVM

Today lets look at three popular misconceptions about bull breeding soundness exams. The first is the idea that "He's been getting calves for several years, why would he have a problem now?" Things change. Bulls get infections, tumors, and injuries, all of which can reduce their effectiveness. Even just advancing age can lower a bull's fertility level. The second thought is "This young bull just came from a production sale and he was guaranteed." Many bull sellers guarantee their bull in lieu of testing, not after testing. He might be guaranteed, but this isn't much help if you are not aware of a problem until next fall when you pregnancy test. In addition, if you don't get back to the seller until you know you have open cows, he may not honor the guarantee. He may feel that the problem is due to something that happened in the several months that the bull was in your possession. He sure isn't going to assume the liability for your open cow problem. Have new bulls tested soon after you get them home. The third misconception is that the purpose for checking bulls is to eliminate sterile bulls. There are not very many sterile bulls, but there are a lot of bulls with reduced fertility.

Bulls which do not settle their fair share of calves early in the season are contributing to poor reproductive efficiency. This can be even more costly than dead calves, although not as dramatic. A 21 day delay in breed back time costs you 35 pounds of calf at weaning time. With today's prices that can mean \$50.00. When you have several cows that conceive two or three heat cycles behind their optimum time, you have a significant loss of income, even though the costs to keep, breed, and feed that cow are the same. Once a cow becomes a late calver, there is probably never going to be anything you can do to catch her back up, so she will wean young, light calves every year. You work hard to make your cows profitable, make sure the bull is not stealing from you through reduced fertility.

BASIC Goat Production Course—SOON!

OSU Extension is nearing completion of the BASIC Goat Production course and manual. The course is designed like the Master Cattleman course, but it is much shorter and less expensive. Although, cost has not been determined yet, the course will likely be three evenings in length. BASIC Goat Production will be taught by industry experts and OSU County Extension Educators. Look for this in June, but go ahead and call the Extension Office at 450-379-5470 if you are interested in attending or need more information.

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Viticulture education program to provide new opportunity for grape growers

By Trisha Gedon

Oklahoma grape growers will soon have a new educational opportunity thanks to Oklahoma State University-Stillwater, OSU-OKC, Tulsa Community College and the Oklahoma Grape Growers and Wine Makers Association.

Eric Stafne, OSU Cooperative Extension fruit and nut crops specialist, said the idea behind the Viticulture Certificate Program is to provide participants with a solid background in grape growing along with a more comprehensive horticulture knowledge.

"The program is two-tier professional in which the basic level provides college training in the fundamentals of horticultural science, plus applied training in viticulture and related techniques through OSU Cooperative Extension," Stafne said.

Participants will be given two years to complete the basic level of the program, which includes 12 total knowledge units. These units can be completed with a combination of a horticulture science class and required viticulture emphasis courses offered through the OSU Cooperative Extension Service. Participants also must attend the Oklahoma Grape Growers and Wine Makers Association Annual Conference or the Oklahoma-Arkansas Horticulture Industries Show.

"We are excited about this program and

the opportunity it provides for those interested in learning more about horticulture and elements of viticulture," said Dale Maronek, head of the department of horticulture and landscape architecture at OSU. "This has been the result of a lot of people willing to participate and support this educational program. Faculty from various departments at OSU-Stillwater and OSU-OKC have worked hard to develop this program. Eric Stafne, along with Brian Kahn, our department's Undergraduate Coordinator, has worked closely with their colleagues to make this program a reality. A special thanks go out to Doug Needham, floriculture professor, for his willingness to offer our Introductory Horticulture course via distance education. People can get information and college credit without leaving their work place."

Class and workshop topics include vine training and pruning, basic wine analysis, non-meat HACCP training, small fruit management, vineyard weed control, winery sanitation and introduction to interspecific hybrid grapes. In addition, the basic level also includes Certified Pesticide Applicator training.

See Viticulture Education—pg 4





4-H Project Work



When a reference is made to "4-H Project Work" it is to a subject/topic (i.e. Horticulture, Food Science, Safety, etc.) of interest to the 4-H'er. The member's long-term goal is to break the subject into smaller parts and learn more about the overall subject matter.

The term "project" refers to individual parts of "4-H Project Work." Breaking down the long-term goal into smaller parts is referred to as "projects" and the projects become short-term goals for the member.

Using the Horticulture project as an example of a long-term goal, short-term goals might include learning the parts of a plant, learning about fertilizers and researching perennial flowers appropriate for NW Oklahoma. Each "project" that is learned and applied, assists the member in the long-term goal of learning more about his/her "4-H Project" (i.e., Horticulture, Foods, Safety, etc.).

Successful "Project Work" will require the following:

- Using 4-H project manual(s) or good resource(s) for sound information.
- Setting goals and planning your 4-H Project Work.
- Being dedicated and committed to working the plan.
- Evaluating each step - verbally and in writing.
- Participating in club and county activities.



Job Search

Many people have called to ask when we will fill the FCS / 4-H position that has been vacant since last fall. Well, I wish I knew. We have interviewed several candidates and will continue our search until we find the best candidate possible. We have some very strong leads right now, but we do not have a time table to fill the job opening. I really appreciate all of the assistance from dedicated 4-H leaders, parents, volunteers, HCE members, and others who have lent a helping hand. Without your support and understanding I don't know that Phyllis and I could pull it all together. So, I'm sorry if it has taken me a few days to return your call!

Thanks for your cooperation,

Aubie Keesee

Hughes County Extension Director

COOKBOOKS

The Hughes County HCE club has cookbooks for sale. They are \$9 each and may be picked up in the OSU Extension Office or by calling any HCE member.

State 4-H Roundup

May 23–25

OSU Campus—Stillwater, OK

Score Sheets will be used this year!

Entries are due April 24

The Master Cattleman program has been very successful over the past three years. Another class will begin in the fall if there is enough interest. The location is dependent upon paid registrants. Please call if you are interested.

Tri-County 4-H Summer Camp

June 11-14, 2007

Robber's Cave State Park

Wilburton, OK

Viticulture Education (continued from page 2)

Stafne said the second tier of the program involves 16 total knowledge units of advanced level core courses which must be completed in three years.

"The second tier, or the advanced level, provides additional college training in horticulture science and related disciplines, along with further applied training through the OSU Cooperative Extension Service. Some of the courses in the second level provide more in-depth coverage of areas important for understanding horticultural as a discipline," he said. "The second tier has OSU horticulture courses as well as Cooperative Extension workshops and meetings that cover grape growing and wine making topics."

The second tier also includes some Certified Pest Applicator training.

There is a one-time \$25 registration fee that OSU will collect at the time of enrollment in the program. Any additional fees for courses, workshops, conferences, pesticide applicator testing or other related expenses will be paid directly by the participants to the appropriate entities.

"Enrollment in this program will give Oklahoma grape growers more of a well-rounded horticulture education," Stafne said. "Also, this is a way to infuse people into the grape growing industry. Some of the courses that participants take as part of this program will be counted toward a degree should they want to enroll at OSU and major in horticulture."

For more information or to enroll in the Viticulture Education Program, contact Stephanie Larimer at 405-744-5404.

April

4 – 4-H Day at the State Capitol

10 – S.E. District 4-H Speech Contest at McAlester—3:30 p.m.

12 – Hughes Co. 4-H Dress Revue and Impressive Dress Contest at Moss — 3:30 p.m.

24 – State 4-H Roundup entries are due in the OSU Extension Office by 4:00 p.m.

28 – S.E. District 4-H Shooting Sports Contest

30 – Master Cattleman Completion Banquet

May

4 – Entries due for 4-H Summer Camp at Robber's Cave

23-25 – State 4-H Roundup in Stillwater

June

4 & 5 – S.E. District 4-H Horse Show

11-14 – Tri-County 4-H Summer Camp at Robber's Cave

26 – S.E. District 4-H Livestock Judging Clinic and Quiz Bowl

28 – S.E. District 4-H Volunteer Leader's Conference at Ada

July

2 – Hughes Co. 4-H Record Books and Award Applications Due to the OSU Extension Office by 4:00 p.m.



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