



# TEXAS COUNTY AG NEWSLETTER

May 2007 <http://countyext.okstate.edu/texas>

## WHEN ARE PROTEIN & ENERGY SUPPLEMENTS NEEDED?

Supplementation can dramatically affect performance during all seasons of grazing. Balancing dietary protein and energy in supplements is important to ensure successful response to supplementation. Generally, the nutrient that is most limiting or deficient should be supplied first. The key is to have a good idea of the quality of the forage being grazed and to adjust the supplement used accordingly.

All supplements are a source of energy and protein, however those feedstuffs that are higher in their concentration of crude protein (CP) are classified as protein supplements (i.e., soybean meal, cottonseed meal, corn gluten meal, etc.) and those with lower CP concentrations relative to energy would be classified as energy supplements (i.e., corn, sorghum, wheat).

The ultimate goal of supplementation is to optimize performance or gains, but the value of the gains must be examined from an economic standpoint. The economics of supplementation should be scrutinized within each individual operation as discussed by Brethour (11). The value of added gain needs to be

weighed against how that extra weight affects market price and the costs associated with the labor, equipment, etc., it took to feed the supplement, above the cost of the supplement itself. Because many factors can affect the responses, each producer's supplementation program should be tailored to the individual enterprise. The benefits of supplementation can be numerous:

1. Implants will increase gains more in cattle that are supplemented compared to those that are not.
2. More uniform gains are often achieved with supplementation.
3. Feeding a supplement provides the carrier to feed an ionophore.
4. Supplemented cattle often perform better in the feedlot, probably because they are already partially adapted to grain and an ionophore.
5. Hand-feeding tends to quiet the cattle and make them more manageable, particularly at sale time, causing less weight loss.
6. Supplementation forces a closer observation of the cattle, which can be very valuable.

## WHEAT VARIETY PLOT TOUR

May 23, 2007 @ 1:30 p.m.

Ernest Herald Farm - - - 3 miles NE on Hwy 54 & ¼ mile East

The tour will begin Wednesday, May 23rd at 1:30 p.m. with refreshments provided by White Wheat Producers Alliance.

Dr. Brett Carver, OSU Wheat Genetics and Breeding Specialist will be present to discuss the varieties and experimental lines in other places.

Rick Kochenower, OPREC Agronomist will be present, as well as Oklahoma Wheat Commission Director Mark Hodges.

## Breeding & Selection

### Develop Heifers to 50% or 55% of Mature Body Weight

For many years, it was recommended yearling heifers be developed to reach 60-65% of their projected mature body weight (MBW) prior to the start of their first breeding season. Recent research indicates this recommendation may be lowered to 55% of MBW without jeopardizing first- and second-calf conception rates.

In a three-year University of Nebraska study, a total of 261 March-born heifer calves were developed to reach either 55% of MBW prior to a 45-day breeding season, or 50% of MBW prior to a 60-day breeding season.

Extending the breeding season by 15 days for the heifers developed to 50% of MBW resulted in pregnancy, calving and weaning rates comparable to heifers developed to 55% of MBW. And reduced development costs in the 50% system more than offset reduced income from lighter weaning weights caused by later calving dates, resulting in lower costs to produce one pregnant yearling heifer or two-year-old cow.

The results suggest developing heifers to 50% of MBW prior to their first breeding season is a feasible alternative for some producers (Creighton et al. 2005. Univ. of Nebraska Beef Cattle Report MP 83-A).

### Observe Bulls Closely As Breeding Season Begins

By Glenn Selk

A good manager keeps an eye on his bulls during the breeding season to make sure that they are getting the cows bred. Occasionally a bull that has passed a breeding soundness exam may have difficulty serving cows in heat, especially after heavy service. Inability to complete normal service and low fertility are more detrimental than failure to detect cows in heat to calf crop percent. Such problems can best be detected by observing bulls while they work. Therefore producers should (if at all possible) watch bulls breed cows during the first part of each breeding season. If problems are apparent, the bull can be replaced while salvaging the remainder of the breeding season and next year's calf crop. Likewise a small proportion of bulls can wear out from heavy service and lose interest. These, too, will need to be replaced. The greater the number of cows allotted to each bull in the breeding pasture the more critical it is that every bull be ready to work every day of the breeding season.

Injuries to bulls during the breeding season are relatively common. When a bull becomes lame or incapable of breeding, because of an injury to his reproductive tract, he needs to be removed from the breeding pasture and replaced with another bull.



## Free Soil Test

A free soil test will be offered to area wheat producers from June 15th to August 1st. Producers submitting samples will be able to get soil analysis at the Texas County Wheat and Stocker Cattle Meeting in early August. Top soil and subsoil will be required for each sample submitted. Producers will be limited to 5 samples (top soil 0-6" & a sub soil 6-24" would be considered one sample). A short survey about farmers soil testing practices will be completed as part of the educational meeting. Surface soil samples are analyzed for pH, NO<sub>3</sub>-N, available P index, and available K index. Subsurface soil samples are analyzed for NO<sub>3</sub>-N only. For further information contact Steve at Texas County OSU Extension office, 338-7300.

## **OKLAHOMA WHEAT COMMISSION TO HOLD DISTRICT II ELECTION**

The Oklahoma Wheat Commission will hold an election to fill the District II opening. The election will be held Thursday, May 24, 2007, commencing at 2 p.m. in the Texas County Activities Center, 4<sup>th</sup> and Sunset, in Guymon, OK. District II consists of Beaver, Cimarron, Ellis, Harper, Texas, Woods and Woodward counties.

All wheat producers within District II boundaries who are actively engaged in wheat production, have marketed wheat, paid a check-off fee and left that fee with the Commission for the current year are eligible to vote. It will be the responsibility of the producer to prove their eligibility to vote by providing a dated grain elevator receipt including the producer's name and amount of wheat sold, and a driver's license or some other form of identification.

Candidates wishing to run in the election must be at least 25 years old, a resident of Oklahoma, engaged in growing wheat in the state for at least five years and must derive a substantial portion of his/her income from growing wheat.

Three nominations will be made at the election, from which the Governor of Oklahoma will appoint one person to serve a five year term with the Oklahoma Wheat Commission.

The Commission's vacancy meeting, which is open to the public, will begin at noon, and the election will begin promptly at 2 p.m.

Every wheat producer in the district is urged to participate in this important election. For further information, contact the OWC office at (405)605-4350.



## GROWING TOMATOES



The requirements for growing healthy tomato plants are few:

1. Give them full sun -- at least 6 hours of direct sun per day.
2. Plant them in rich soil with plenty of organic matter.
3. Keep the soil moist, but not soaked, and keep the plants' leaves dry.
4. Feed them with a balanced plant food every other week.

You can successfully grow great tomatoes in the ground (after working in the organic matter) or in containers. If you're using containers, select pots that have drainage holes in the bottom and are at least 12-inches wide. That will give the roots plenty of room to grow and keep them from drowning. Using stakes, a trellis, or tomato cages will keep the plants growing upright and will make harvesting much easier.

Steve Kraich, Ag/4-H Educator  
Texas County OSU Extension Service

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Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Robert E. Whitson, Director of Cooperative Extension Service, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma. This publication is printed and issued by Oklahoma State University as authorized by the Dean of the Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources and has been prepared and distributed at a cost of \$13.16 for 329 copies.

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