



Your Experts for Life

LAUDERDALE COUNTY OFFICE
802 Veterans Drive
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Office Phone

Our phone number is no longer listed under Lauderdale County. It can be found under Alabama Cooperative Extension System in the new phone book. Write it on your book 766-6223.

New Regional Extension Agent

Alabama A&M has hired a new livestock agent, Robert Spencer. He will be working with goat, sheep and rabbit producers. He is located at our office in Lauderdale County but will be working across North Alabama. Call him at 766-6223.



Horse Science Course

There will be a horse science course offered by Auburn this fall through satellite technology. It will cost \$100 and begin Monday October 2 and will continue each Monday and Thursday evening through November 2. There will be a total of 10 three hour sessions. I will make this course available at my office if there is enough interest. If you are interested please call my office and reserve a spot 766-6223. The next nearest site will be at Belle Mina.

Milan No-Till Field Day

Crop variety trials and equipment demonstrations will be among the highlights of the 24th Milan No-Till Field Day, scheduled for Thursday July 27. The field day is among the best known and most attended no-till events in the nation. The field day, which is sponsored by the Tennessee Agricultural Experiment Station, will feature 13 tours covering a variety of topics from switchgrass, cotton and soybean production to pest and weed control and forestry and wildlife management. Other tours will include soil and nutrient management, **enhancements in beef cattle production** and profitable irrigation of row crops.

Forage Field Day

A big Forage Field Day is planned for Friday August 4th at the Belle Mina Experiment Station. Enclosed is a flyer with all the details. I hope you will make plans to attend.

DOT Numbers

At our annual Beef Field Day there was much interest in the program about getting the DOT (Dept. of Transportation) numbers. The good news is the mandatory date for compliance has been moved from July 1, 2006 to January 1, 2007. The bad news is you still must get one if your gross vehicle weight rating is more than 10,000 pounds. Enclosed is a few of the most asked questions and answers. To get more information or to apply for a number, call (800) 832-5660 or go to www.dps.state.al.us and look for Intrastate DOT Numbers

Biodiesel

Another county meeting held this spring with much interest was on biodiesel. To learn more go to the website www.biodiesel.org. There is a possibility this could be produced as close as Muscle Shoals.



History

Seventy-five years ago, in 1931, Lauderdale County Agent, G.B. Phillips was pushing the cow, sow, and hen program to provide the family unit with their home and farm needs. He writes, there is now, and has been several years, a shortage of hogs in the county.

He worked with the Florence Civitan Club and established a 4-H Pig Club with 26 boys participating. Each boy signed a note with his father to cover the cost of the pig, in addition each boy planted an acre of cotton to help pay for his pig in the fall to prevent the necessity of selling the pig to pay the note. Things do change over time.

Without the technological advances of the last 50 years, the U.S. cattle herd would need to number 181 million head to produce the 2004 beef supply vs. the current herd of approximately 95 million head. At current stocking rates, doubling the U.S. cattle herd would require an additional 442 million acres of land, an area equal to the combined acreage of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado and Kansas, to provide the additional pasture and feed grains.

Organic Meat

Organic meat is the fastest growing organic food category in 2005, growing 55.4 percent, according to the Organic Trade Association's 2006 Manufacturer Survey. Sales of organic dairy products grew by 23.5 percent. Total organic food sales in the U.S. reached nearly \$14 billion, or 2.5 percent of retail food sales. By the end of 2006, organic food sales are expected to near \$16 billion

Beef Cattle Marketing

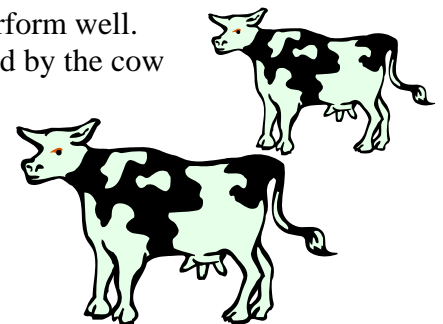
There will be a 2 day Southeastern Beef Cattle Marketing School in Auburn on September 14-15. Registration will be \$35 which includes notebook, meals, and breaks. If you are interested, contact me for agenda and registration form 766-6223.

Bad Start

Some research with dairy cows has shown why summer born calves do not perform well. The study showed that both the quality and volume of colostrum milk produced by the cow during the summer was lower than that produced other times of the year.

Sincerely,

Randall Armstrong
County Extension Agent



1. Who has to get the Alabama intrastate US DOT number?

If the vehicle(s) you operate meet the following definitions for intrastate (See Question 2A) commerce, you are now required to obtain an intrastate (See Question 2B) US DOT number for your business and properly display that number on your vehicle(s) along with the name of your business. (49 CFR Part 390.21)



2. What does commerce mean?

COMMERCE is defined as:

- A. INTRASTATE: Any trade, traffic, or transportation beginning and ending within the boundaries of this state.
- B. INTERSTATE: Any trade, traffic, or transportation within the jurisdiction of the United States between a place in a state and a place outside of the state, including a place outside the United States.

3. Why do I have to get the intrastate US DOT number for Alabama?

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) were adopted by Alabama in 1987 (§ 32-9A-2). Those regulations have long required the legal name of the company and the USDOT # to be displayed on both sides of the vehicle.

This action will serve to bring Alabama into compliance with a program known as Performance and Registration Information Systems Management (PRISM)

4. But my truck is not big enough for a CDL, Why do I have to get an intrastate US DOT number?

You do not have to have a CDL to operate a commercial vehicle if the Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR - usually found on the VIN specs plate of the vehicle) from the manufacturer is less than 26,001#. If you use a vehicle in connection with your business, farm, or any other commercial enterprise, you need to know the GVWR to determine your status.

There are 2 definitions for commercial vehicles, the first is all commercial vehicles and the second is commercial vehicles that require CDL testing.

The definition of ALL commercial vehicles from the FMCSRs (49 CFR Part 390.5) states:

A COMMERCIAL VEHICLE is defined as any self propelled or towed vehicle used on the highways in commerce to transport passengers or property if the vehicle meets any of the following:

- 1. *It has a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) or gross combined weight rating (GCWR) of more than 10,000 lbs., whether operated in interstate or intrastate commerce.*
- 2. *It is designed or used to transport more than 8 passengers (including the driver) for compensation.*
- 3. *It is designed or used to transport more than 15 passengers, including the driver,*
- 4. *It is used to transport hazardous materials in a quantity requiring placards under regulation of the U.S. Department of Transportation.*

The definition of commercial vehicles that require a CDL from the FMCSRs (49 CFR Part 383.5) states:

COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLE (CMV) means a motor vehicle or combination of motor vehicles used in commerce to transport passengers or property if the motor vehicle-

- (a) Has a gross combination weight rating of 11,794 kilograms or more (26,001 pounds or more) inclusive of a towed unit(s) with a gross vehicle weight rating of more than 4,536 kilograms (10,000 pounds); or*
- (b) Has a gross vehicle weight rating of 11,794 or more kilograms (26,001 pounds or more); or*
- (c) Is designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver; or*
- (d) Is of any size and is used in the transportation of hazardous materials as defined in this section.*



5. How much will the intrastate US DOT number cost?

There is no charge for the intrastate US DOT number. The online application will ask for a credit or debit card information. This information is used only for signature only. It eliminates the requirement of an original signature to the application and allows the number to be issued online.

6. How long does it take to get the intrastate US DOT number?

The online application process will generally take about an hour. You can print the application ([MCS-150](#)) and have it completed by hand before you attempt to complete it online. If you choose to submit the application by mail or fax, the average time to receive an answer is 4-6 weeks. The mail and fax information is on the MCS-150 form at the above link.

7. What is the mandatory date of compliance?

January 1, 2007.

8. Do I need a different number for each of my vehicles?

No. The number is for your company and all vehicles that meet the definition in Question 4 will be marked with the number issued to your company.

SUMMER HEAT STRESS IN CATTLE

Source: Jim Neel, University of Tennessee

Managing to avoid heat stress in cattle is a “good thing” during the “lazy, hazy days of summer.” A large number of cow-calf producers will work cattle at times during the summer when heat stress is likely.

Cattle have an upper critical temperature approximately 20 degrees cooler than humans.

When people are uncomfortable at 80 degrees and feel hot at 90 degrees, cattle may be in the danger zone for extreme heat stress. Elevated humidity adds to the stress in that it intensifies the heat by making body heat dissipation more difficult. Cattle in the “Fescue Belt” would be even warmer.

Producers need to think about heat stress in deciding when to work cattle. For example, the weaning and working of fall dropped calves in preparing for feeder calf sales will soon be taking place. Weaning by itself is stressful, even in pleasant conditions. With both high humidity and temperatures, the stress would be greater which could result in increased susceptibility to respiratory problems and even death.

It all boils down to “common sense” in working cattle during the summer. Following are a few suggestions that should be considered by producers in working cattle.

1. If possible, work cattle before 8:00 a.m. Complete it by 10:00 a.m. Some producer may want to delay working cattle until after sundown or at night. At first, this may make sense but, cattle may need 6 hours or before enough heat is dissipated to cool down, especially with a “belly full” of Fescue forage.
2. Do not allow cattle to stay in the working facilities more than 30 minutes. Most pens filled with cattle permit little, if any air movement. Only bring into the working facility the cattle than can be worked in 30 minutes.
3. Provide clean, cool water to cattle when confined for any length of time. Cattle will drink 1% of their body weight daily in an hour during hot weather.

How producers feel in heat is an excellent indicator of the effects of heat stress on cattle.

Remember that cattle have an upper critical temperature of 20 degrees less than humans. If the producer feels stressed, then the cattle will be really stressed.



CALM CALVES HAVE BETTER IMMUNE RESPONSE

Researchers at the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station studied the immune response of calves as it related to their temperament. The researchers utilized 6 to 7 month old Brahman bull calves in the study. The calves were divided into two groups, temperamental and calm. The classifications were based on “exit velocity” as they left a squeeze chute and “Pen Scores” based on their reactions to humans while in a feedlot situation. Calves were vaccinated with a Clostridial vaccine with immune response measured. Results indicated that on day six following vaccination, both groups showed significant immune response. At the end of six weeks the calm calves had a 50% greater antibody response than temperamental calves. After the booster shot at 42 days the temperamental calves were slower to show an immunological response than the calm calves. Immune response for temperamental calves decreased from day 49 to the end of the trial. At the end of the trial the calm calves had more than a 60 percent advantage in immune response. In addition to a higher immune response, the calm calves gained more than 0.3 pounds more per day than temperamental calves.

Question: What can I expect if I do nothing to help meet the nutrient demands of cattle on drought-stressed pastures?

Answer: Thin cows and lightweight calves are a likely result if nutrient demands of the herd are not met. If cows are allowed to decline to a state of poor condition, then additional nutrients will be required to regain lost body condition. Research has consistently shown that reproductive rates of thin beef females are lower than those of cattle in moderate to high body condition. Dramatic declines in pregnancy rates occur when cows fall below a body condition score of 5 (moderate condition with generally good overall appearance with spongy fat cover over ribs and palpable fat cover on either side of tail head) on the 1 to 9 scale for beef cattle. A change of one body condition score on this system equals approximately 75 to 80 lbs. change in body weight on an 1100 lbs. cow. Although there is added expense in supplemental feed, the cost of having thin cattle that do not rebreed or calves that do not grow like they should can be even more costly to profitability. In addition, dramatically reduced weaning weights for calves from inadequate nutrition can hurt profitability.

Question: I am considering reduced herd numbers to reduce forage and feed demands on my operation. Which cattle should be culled first?

Answer: During drought or other conditions where forage and feed resources are limited, culling deeper into the herd than normal is often appropriate. Culling can help alleviate grazing pressure on drought-stressed pastures and decrease overall operation demand for supplemental feed or forage. Stocker operators running short of forage may want to consider shipping cattle to feedlots early and can still take advantage of retained ownership opportunities as they pencil out. In cow-calf operations, prime candidates for culling are open (non-pregnant) cows, cows without calves, cows with physical defects (cancer eye, bad udder, feet and leg soundness problems), older cows (10 years old and older), poor producers, late calving cows, cows outside of the desired calving season, and bad temperament cows.

A logical culling order that may be used is as follows:

Open old cows

Open replacement heifers (still young enough to feed out and meet fed market targets)

Old cows with unsound mouth, eyes, feet and legs

Open cows of any age

Thin cows over 7 years old (body condition score < 4)

Very late bred 2 year olds

Healthy bred cows that are over 7 years old

Healthy bred young cows 2 or 3 years old

Healthy bred cows 4 to 7 year old cows

Cull cow price levels and seasonal trends should be taken into consideration when deciding when to sell cull cows. When cull cows prices are trending upward, it is often advantageous to wait to market cows if the increasing values can cover added production expenses from holding over cull cows. It may also be advantageous to retain cull cows until weight and body condition can be added. Unlike feeder cattle prices, cull cow prices generally increase on a per pound basis with increasing cattle weights. If cull cow prices are trending downward, however, it may be advisable to market cull cows in a timely manner before more money is invested in cow maintenance, particularly if this investment will not likely be recovered.



**Alabama Farmers Federation
2006 Commodity Conference**



**Hay and Forage and Livestock Expo
Friday, August 4th, 2006
Tennessee Valley Research and Extension Center
9:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.**

The Alabama Farmers Federation would like to announce the Alabama Hay and Forage and Beef Cattle Expo to be held in conjunction with the 2006 Alabama Farmers Federation Commodity Conference. The Expo will be held on Friday, August 4th, at the Tennessee Valley Research and Extension Center in Belle Mina, Alabama, from 9:00 A.M. until 4:00 P.M.

The Expo will include live haying demonstrations, live cattle handling demonstrations, a trade show, static equipment displays, real-time premises registration for livestock producers, low cost GPS – herbicide application demonstrations, field tours, and other events.

Registration cost of the expo to attendees is \$15.00/person, and this includes lunch. You may pay upon arrival, or you can pre-register by sending the attached registration form and payment to:



**Alabama Farmers Federation
Attn: Perry Mobley
P.O. Box 11000
Montgomery, AL 36191**

**Directions to
Tennessee Valley Research and
Extension Center:**

**From I-65, take Exit #340,
merge onto I-565 East. Take Exit #2
(Mooresville Road or County Rd 71).
Go four miles north;
the Center is on the left**

**For more information you can contact
Perry Mobley at (334) 613-4221 or your
Regional Extension Agent**



Alabama Hay and Forage and Beef Cattle Expo
August 4th, 2006
Tennessee Valley Research and Extension Center
Belle Mina, AL

Pre-Registration Form

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please enclose \$15.00/person attending expo
Make checks payable to the Alabama Farmers Federation

Feel free to make additional copies as needed

For questions or comments contact:

Randall Armstrong at (256) 766-6223

or

Gerry Thompson at (256) 353-8702

ALABAMA
HAY & FORAGE PRODUCERS