

Virginia Cooperative Extension

A partnership of Virginia Tech and Virginia State University



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Livestock Update

Beef - Horse - Poultry - Sheep - Swine

August 2011

This LIVESTOCK UPDATE contains timely subject matter on beef cattle, horses, poultry, sheep, swine, and related junior work. Use this material as you see fit for local newspapers, radio programs, newsletters, and for the formulation of recommendations.

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Scott P. Greiner, Extension Project Leader
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www.ext.vt.edu

Extension is a joint program of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and state and local governments.

Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.

Dates to Remember

BEEF

AUGUST

15-16 Tri-State Beef Conference. Johnson City, TN. **Contact:** Scott Greiner, 540-231-9159, email: sgreiner@vt.edu

OCTOBER

28 17th Annual Hokie Harvest Sale. Beef Cattle Center/Livestock Judging Pavilion. Blacksburg. **Contact:** Dan Eversole, 540-231-4738, email: deversol@vt.edu

HORSE

SEPTEMBER

15-18 State 4-H Championship Horse & Pony Show. Virginia Horse Center. Lexington. **Contact:** Celeste Crisman, 540-231-9162, email: ccrisman@vt.edu or Joi Saville, 540-231-2257, email: joi.saville@vt.edu

OCTOBER

8-9 Virginia 4-H State Fair Horse Show. The Meadow Event Park. Doswell. **Contact:** Eleszabeth McNeel, email: e7aquila@aol.com

SHEEP

AUGUST

27 Sheep Field Day & Ewe Lamb Sale. Shenandoah Valley AREC. Steeles Tavern. **Contact:** Scott Greiner, 540-231-9159, email: sgreiner@vt.edu

27 Virginia Performance Tested Ram Lamb Sale. Shenandoah Valley AREC. Steeles Tavern. **Contact:** Scott Greiner, 540-231-9159, email: sgreiner@vt.edu

SEPTEMBER

3 12th Annual Virginia Tech Sheep Center Production Sale. Alphin-Stuart Arena. **Contact:** Scott Greiner, 540-231-9159, email: sgreiner@vt.edu

10 Parasite Control in Your Sheep and Goats Fecal Egg Counts and FAMACHA Course. Virginia Tech. **Contact:** Ann Cinsavich, 540-231-5261, email: aclapsad@vt.edu

August Beef Management Calendar

Dr. Scott P. Greiner

Extension Animal Scientist, VA Tech

Spring Calving Herds

- End breeding season early in month (if not already stopped); remove bulls
- Manage 1st calf heifers separately- provide access to highest quality forages and supplement if needed
- Plan marketing program for calf crop
- Line up pre-weaning vaccinations for calves to be sold in value-added programs such as VQA
- Continue fly control program
- Continue feeding high Selenium trace mineral salt
- Continue creep grazing and grazing warm season grasses
- Fertilize pastures that will be stockpiled for fall-winter grazing
- Move cattle to some hay fields to give pastures a rest
- Evaluate winter feed supply and options

Fall Calving Herds

- Body condition score cows
- Separate thin cows from rest of the herd- provide access to highest quality forages and supplement if needed
- Prepare for calving season; make sure you have all equipment and supplies
- Continue fly control program
- Continue high Selenium trace mineral salt
- Move cattle to some hay fields to give pastures a rest
- Fertilize pastures that will be stockpiled for fall-winter grazing
- Market calves early in month if not already done or continue backgrounding program
- Evaluate winter feed supply and options



Tri-State Cow/Calf Conference

August 15-16, 2011
Boones Creek Christian Church
Gray, TN

- August 15** Optional tour of Tennessee cow/calf operations leaves at 1:00 p.m.
- August 16** Registration begins at 7:45 a.m.
Program begins at 8:30 a.m.

Contact your county Extension Agent
for registration information.

Pre-registration assures you a space
on the tour and lunch at the conference.

 Extension

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www.TNBeefCattleInitiative.org

810-000-00-016-11
Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development. University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture,
U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating. UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

2010-11 BCIA Bull Test Season Initiated

Dr. Scott P. Greiner

Extension Animal Scientist, VA Tech

The Beef Cattle Improvement Association (BCIA) has initiated its 54th consecutive year evaluating bulls with the delivery of 88 fall-born bulls to its Culpeper Senior Bull Test held at Glenmary Farm in Rapidan, VA. The Culpeper Bull Test is operated by Glenmary Farm, owned by Tom and Kim Nixon and family of Rapidan.

As a third-party administrator of the Bull Test Program, BCIA works to serve its primary purposes of: 1) to foster the improvement of beef cattle in Virginia through improved genetics and management with major emphasis placed on selection criteria for traits of economic importance, and: 2) to carry on educational and promotional work in connection with the production of improved beef cattle. Through its membership of seedstock and commercial producers from Virginia and surrounding states, program guidelines are established via a 10-member Board of Directors. Virginia BCIA is a state organization which belongs to the Beef Improvement Federation -- the national organization which sets guidelines and standards for beef cattle genetics.

With the above mission in mind, BCIA sets forth strict requirements for bulls to be sold through one of their test sales. Some of the eligibility requirements include: bulls meeting minimum YW EPD requirements based on breed; minimum frame score of 5.0; soundness; disposition; and pre-weaning and vaccination programs.

In addition to the Culpeper station, BCIA also operates a central bull test in Southwest Virginia which is conducted at Hillwinds Farm, owned by Tim and Cathy Sutphin family of Dublin. The Southwest Bull Test will receive bulls in early October (both fall and spring-born bulls) with the sale scheduled for March 24, 2012. Bulls at both locations are on test for 112 days. During the evaluation period, growth and frame size are evaluated, along with ultrasound carcass merit, genotyping for coat color and genetic defects, screening for structural soundness and disposition, and finally a comprehensive breeding soundness exam. Following the test, a targeted two-thirds of the bulls are sold which are designated based on meeting minimum criteria along with a combination of both individual performance and EPDs.

The 88 bulls recently delivered to Culpeper consist of 74 Angus, 3 Gelbvieh, 4 Polled Hereford, and 7 Simmental and SimmAngus bulls. The bulls are scheduled to come off test on November 1 with the sale scheduled for Saturday, December 10, 2011 at Culpeper Agricultural Enterprises.

Watch for updates in the BCIA Bull-e-tin on both the Culpeper and Southwest Tests. For additional details, including progress reports and detailed information on all the bulls visit the BCIA website www.bcia.apsc.vt.edu.

Virginia Livestock Hall of Fame

A. L. Eller, Jr., Chair
VLHF Operation Committee

The Virginia Livestock Hall of Fame was established in 2009 by four Virginia state commodity organizations, namely, the Virginia Cattlemen's Association, the Virginia State Dairymen's Association, the Virginia Pork Industry Association and the Virginia Sheep Producers Association. The purpose is to bestow honor and recognition upon Virginians who have made outstanding contributions to the state's livestock industry and its people.

The first group of honorees were recognized in 2010 with their portraits being hung in the Meadow Pavilion at the State Fair of Virginia at Doswell, Virginia. The 2011 honorees will have their portraits hung at a ceremony during the State Fair on Friday, October 7, 2011 at 11:00 a.m. at the Meadow Pavilion. These will include: Dairy: Paul M. Reaves and George A. Miller; Beef: James D. Bennett, C. Curtis Mast and K. C. Williamson; Pork: Clifford A. Cutchins III, Ernest H Rogers, L. Barnes Allen, and Bobby H. Bryan; Sheep: Willie Irby. Family, friends and the general public are invited to attend the ceremony.

Those whose portraits were hung in 2010 and are on permanent display include: George A. Allen, Jr., John D Hardesty, Ritchie A. Jordan, James R. Nichols, Richard S. Ellis, IV, William M. Etgan, Morris F. Fannon, Charles C. Funkhouser, Nelson Gardner, James M. Hoge, E. William Hess, Ronald A. Hope, George W. Litton, W. Hugh Ownby, Samuel F. McClure, W. Alexander Stuart, Jr., Roy A. Meek and Frank S. Walker, Sr.

Nominations for those to be honored in 2012 must be made prior to the deadline of November 15, 2011. Nominations must come through the appropriate state commodity association, such as Virginia Cattlemen's Association (Bill McKinnon), P.O. Box 9, Daleville, VA 24083, 540-992-1009; Virginia State Dairymen's Association (Eric Paulson), P.O. Box 29, Bridgewater, VA 22812, 540-828-6960; Virginia Pork Industry Association (John Parker), P.O. Box 1163, Richmond, VA 23218, 804-786-7092; or Virginia Sheep Producers Association (Scott Greiner), Dept. of Animal & Poultry Sciences, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA 24061, 540-231-9159. Each can provide information and nomination forms.

Tips for a Successful Breeding Season

Dr. Scott P. Greiner

Extension Animal Scientist, VA Tech

The start of the fall breeding season is just around the corner. Proper management of both rams and ewes prior to, during, and after the breeding season is critical for a successful subsequent lambing season.

Ram Management

Most often, newly purchased ram lambs are coming off a high plane of nutrition heading into their first breeding season (completing a structured performance test, or managed on the farm for high growth rates to optimize maturity). To prepare ram lambs for the breeding season, rams should be “hardened up” prior to introduction with ewes. This can be accomplished through limit feeding grain while on pasture. The amount of supplementation will vary according to the ram’s body condition and pasture quality, but as a guideline 1-2% of body weight will suffice to achieve a moderate body condition at the start of the breeding season (not excessively fat or thin). Be certain that housing and facilities provides adequate shade and ventilation so that rams can stay cool. These principles also apply to mature rams, which may be new to the flock or been in use for several years. Exposure to high temperatures can compromise the reproductive soundness of rams.

Newly acquired ram lambs should not be commingled with older, mature rams either prior to or during the breeding season. Particular care should be taken if rams from different sources (of similar age) need to be commingled and all commingling should take place prior to the breeding season.

Prior to the start of the breeding season, all rams should be subjected to a breeding soundness exam by a veterinarian. The breeding soundness exam assess the physical fitness of the ram, and most importantly the ram’s reproductive soundness and capability of settling ewes. Plan ahead to allow adequate time to find a replacement ram should an existing sire be found to be a non-breeder.

Many factors influence the breeding capacity of rams, including age, breed, nutrition, management, and environment. As a general guideline, ram lambs are capable of breeding 15 to 25 ewes during their first breeding season, and most mature rams can service 50 or more ewes. All rams, and particularly ram lambs, should be observed closely to monitor their breeding behavior and libido to ensure they are servicing and settling ewes. The use of a marking harness, rotating colors every 17 days, is an excellent management tool for this purpose. The breeding season should be kept to a maximum of 60 days for young rams. This will prevent over-use, severe weight loss and reduced libido. Severe weight loss may impair future growth and development of the young ram and reduce his lifetime usefulness. When practical, supplementing ram lambs with grain during the breeding season will reduce excessive weight loss (feeding rate of 2% bodyweight daily). Rams used together in multiple-sire breeding pastures should be of similar age and size. Ram lambs cannot compete with mature rams in the same breeding pasture. A sound management practice is to rotate rams among different breeding pastures every 17-34 days. This practice decreases the breeding pressure on a single ram.

Ewe Management

Some advance planning and simple management practices will assist in having a successful breeding season. Vaccination of the ewe flock for Campylobacter (vibrio) and Chlamydia are important for abortion disease control. For ewe lambs and ewes not previously vaccinated, these products typically require an initial injection prior to the breeding season followed by a second vaccination during gestation. In subsequent years, a single booster vaccination is required. Follow product label directions when administering any vaccine. A month prior to the breeding season is also an opportune time to trim and inspect feet on the ewe flock and perform preventative foot care. This is also a good time to make final culling decisions and sell poor producing and thin ewes.

Flushing is the practice of increasing energy intake, and therefore body condition, during the 10-14 days prior to breeding. This practice has been shown to be effective in increasing ovulation rates, and thereby increasing lambing percentage by 10-20%. The response to flushing is affected by several factors, including the body condition of the ewe and time of the breeding season. Ewes that are in poor body condition will respond most favorably to the increase in energy, whereas fat ewes will show little if any response. Flushing can be accomplished by moving ewes to high quality pastures or through providing .75 to 1.25 lb. corn or barley per head per day from 2 weeks pre-breeding through 4 weeks into the breeding season. Provide a high-selenium, sheep mineral free choice.

Like rams, ewes are also prone to heat stress during the breeding seasons. Prolonged exposure to high temperatures can have an effect on ewe fertility and embryo survival. To help reduce these embryo losses and resulting decrease in lamb crop, minimize handling during the heat of the day and allow the flock access to a cool, shaded area.

Ram Management After the Breeding Season

Young rams require a relatively high plane of nutrition following the breeding season to replenish body condition and meet demands for continued growth. Body condition and projected mature size of the ram will determine his nutrient requirements during the months following the breeding season. Rams should be kept away from ewes in an isolated facility or pasture after the breeding season. In the winter months, provide cover from extreme weather that may cause frostbite to the scrotum resulting in decreased fertility.

Sheep Update

Dr. Scott P. Greiner

Extension Animal Scientist, VA Tech

Sheep Field Day, Performance Tested Ram Lamb Sale and Replacement Ewe Lamb Sale is August 27

A full day of sheep activities are planned for Saturday, August 27 at the Virginia Sheep Evaluation Station near Steeles Tavern, Virginia. At 10:30 a.m., a Sheep Field Day with educational programs will be held. Topics and speakers include: Pasture Weed Control- Blox Daugherty; Economical Feed Options- Dr. Mark McCann, Virginia Tech; Forage Varieties- Jason Carter, Augusta VCE; Practical Experiences with CIDRs- Dr. Mark McCann & Dr. Scott Greiner, Virginia Tech; Lamb Market Outlook- Mike Carpenter, VDACS; and Economics of Rainfall Insurance- Tom Stanley, Rockbridge VCE. The 36th Annual Performance Tested Ram Lamb Sale will begin at 1:00 p.m. The top end of the fifty-five Suffolk, Dorset, Hampshire, Katahdin, White Dorper, North Country Cheviot and crossbred rams being evaluated on the 63-day test will be sold. All rams sold will be evaluated for structural and reproductive soundness, and will be sold as guaranteed breeders. Complete performance information will be available, including ultrasound measurements for carcass traits. Following the ram sale, the Virginia Sheep Producers Replacement Ewe Lamb Sale will be held. A select group of 35 ewe lambs ready to breed will be offered. The Virginia Sheep Evaluation Station is located at the Shenandoah Valley Agriculture Research and Extension Center, 0.5 mile east of I-81 at Exit 205 (just south of Staunton, VA). For sale information and a catalog, contact Scott Greiner, Department of Animal & Poultry Sciences, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA, 24061, phone (540) 231-9159 or email sgreiner@vt.edu. Current information is also available on the Virginia Tech Sheep Extension and Education website at <http://www.vtsheep.apsc.vt.edu/>.

Virginia Tech Sheep Center to Host 11th Annual Production Sale September 3rd

The 12th Annual Virginia Tech Sheep Center Production Sale will be held Saturday, September 3rd at the Alphin-Stuart Livestock Arena on the campus of Virginia Tech. The sale offering will include Suffolk and Dorset ram lambs, along with Suffolk and Dorset ewe lambs. Complete performance data including EPDs and carcass ultrasound records are available. Proceeds from the sale will be used to support the sheep teaching, extension, and research missions of the Department of Animal & Poultry Sciences. Sale details and catalog are available on the web at http://www.apsc.vt.edu/centers/sheepcenter/index_sheep.htm. For additional information contact

Dr. Scott Greiner, phone 540-231-9159 or email sgreiner@vt.edu.

**Sheep Field Day, 36th Annual
Virginia Performance Tested
Ram Lamb Sale and
Replacement Ewe Lamb Sale**

**Saturday, August 27, 2011
10:30 AM - Field Day
1:00 PM - Ram & Ewe Sale**

**Virginia Sheep Evaluation Station
Shenandoah Valley Research and Extension Center
Steeles Tavern, Virginia**

**Selling 50 Performance Tested Rams and 35 Replacement Ewe
Lambs**

**Dorset, Katahdin, North Country Cheviot, Hampshire,
White Dorper & Suffolk**

Field Day Program includes information on Pasture Weed Control,
Economical Feed Options, Forage Varieties, Practical Experiences with
CIDRs, Lamb Market Outlook, and Economics of Rainfall Insurance

For a sale catalog or more information contact:

Virginia Sheep Producers Association

Dr. Scott Greiner

(540) 231-9159

Website -- www.vtsheep.apsc.vt.edu

Parasite Control in Your Sheep and Goats
Fecal Egg Counts and FAMACHA
September 10, 2011 - 8:30am until 4:00pm
Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine,
Blacksburg, Virginia
Virginia Cooperative Extension

Faculty:

Dr. Anne M. Zajac, DVM, MS, PhD, Parasitology, VMRCVM

Small ruminant owners mount a significant effort to control important parasite infections. This course will help you and your veterinarian evaluate parasite infections and methods for parasite control. It will be educational for owners, veterinarians and technicians.

The morning session will cover microscope techniques for parasite identification and fecal egg counts for evaluating parasites and the effectiveness of dewormers.. In the afternoon, integrated parasite control and the FAMACHA Deworming System will be covered and participants will receive a FAMACHA card.

You can sign sign up for only one session or for both.

For more information contact:

Anne Cinsavich L.V.T.

Continuing Education & Extension
Virginia-Maryland Regional College
of Veterinary Medicine
aclapsad@vt.edu (540) 231-5261

Registration Form

Name: _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Morning session, \$15.00/ person. \$ _____

FAMACHA (afternoon session), \$15.00/ person. \$ _____

Total enclosed. \$ _____

Checks payable to:

Treasurer of Virginia Tech

Mail to:

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