

Calendar of Events

Mar 28	VA BCIA Bull Sale, Wytheville
Mar 30	VQA Steer Take-Up and Sale, Tri State Livestock Market
April 1	VQA Heifer Take-Up and Sale, Tri State Livestock Market
June 19	Deadline to consign calves to the July VQA Sale
July 15	VQA Sale, Tri State Livestock Market
July 17	Deadline to consign calves to the August VQA Sale
July 19-23	National Ag Agents' Annual Meeting and Professional Improvement Conference, VA Beach
July 20	VQA Steer Take –Up, Tri State Livestock Market, 6:30 AM to Noon
July 22	VQA Heifer Take Up, Tri State Livestock Market, 6:30 AM to Noon
July 25– Aug 1	Rich Valley Fair
July 27-31	Smyth County 4-H Camp
July 27	Market Lamb Show, Rich Valley Fair
July 28	Beef and Dairy Cattle Show, Rich Valley Fair
August 19	VQA Sale
August 24 & 26	Steer & Heifer Take-Up, Tri State Market
September 25-27	Chilhowie Apple Festival
October 14	Smyth County Ag Field Day for 4th Graders
October 20-22	Sunbelt Ag Expo, Moultrie GA Virginia is the Spotlight State!



Just Look at Everything That's Going On!

A great way to stay current is to pick up a Saturday edition of the **Smyth County News**. In it, you will find an “Upcoming Events” section at the end of all of Andy’s weekly articles!



If you are a person with a disability and desire any assistive devices, services or other accommodations to participate in this activity, please contact Andy Overbay or Pam Testerman at (276) 783-5175/TDD (800) 828-1120 during business hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. to discuss accommodations 5 days prior to the event.

Serving You by Reporting and Listening!

I hope you enjoy this edition of the Smyth County Agriculture Extension Newsletter! My goal is to continue to provide you with a newsletter packed with information at least once each quarter. Let us know what you think. If you have ideas for articles or topics of interest, please contact us at (276) 783-5175.



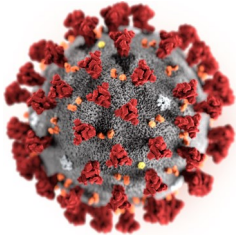
COVID 19 Impact on Programming, Office Operations

I am sure that many of you are tired of hearing about the Coronavirus, known as COVID 19. Like many other educational institutions, Virginia Cooperative Extension has had to make some changes in the way we conduct business. In Smyth County, 4-H has had the greatest challenges as schools close and camp planning has been altered.

Our Ag and Natural Resources programming has had challenges as well. The gathering limit of 10 people has affected many of our sale Bull and VQA sales and the order to telework has slowed soil sample testing and shifted plant and bug identification to on line only.

One thing that has not changed is our commitment to help our clients as much as we can, so please do not hesitate to give us a call or shoot us an email. At present, our office building is closed to the public, so if you are in town and thought of stopping by, sorry for the temporary inconvenience.

In the meantime, take time to care for yourselves and we will all get through this challenge together.



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BCIA SOUTHWEST BULL TEST SALE UPDATE Changes to Sale Format

Like any large event, the SW Bull Test Sale had to change a bit to align with COVID 19 restrictions. There will be no live auction at the Bottomly facility in Wytheville although you can bid on line or at remote locations. You can download a complete list of locations and other details by going to:

<https://1drv.ms/b/s!Ag5DIKvARnZ0nh3VYUIPSwSxs9gz>

Or

The Smyth County Ag Facebook Page

Important Dates for Future VQA Sales

Sale Date	Last day to Wean	Consignment Deadline	Take-up Dates
		Last day to Vaccinate	
March 25	February 14	February 21	S – March 30
		March 9	H – April 1
July 15	May 21	June 19	S - July 20
		June 29	H - July 22
August 19	June 25	July 17	S – August 24
		August 3	H – August 26
November 11	September 17	October 16	S – November 16
		October 26	H – November 18
December 2	October 3	October 30	S – December 7
		November 16	H – December 9
January 13, 2021	November 19	December 11	S – January 18
		December 28	H – January 20



Important Changes to Abingdon VQA Program

Since 2005, the VQA program has sought to position our local beef producers to receive more money for calves that they have properly backgrounded. During that time, we have had pretty much the same criteria.

All VQA calves of the past had to be weaned 45 days, be vaccinated with a 7-way Clostridial (Blackleg) and boosted, have one round of modified live virus (MLV) respiratory vaccines containing IBR, PI3, BRSV, and BVD types I and II. They also need a modified live vaccination for Mannheimia haemolytica, commonly known as Pasteurella. These shots had to be completed 14 days prior to the calves' take-up date.

Finally, the calves needed to be dewormed, feed bunk and water trough broke and the owners had to have a current Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) certification. These four pieces are really the only unaltered facets of the new VQA program. The calves will still have to be dewormed, trough broke and you will need a current BQA certificate.

Here are the things that have changed. First, all animals must have been vaccinated no fewer than 21 days prior to take up. Earlier is better, but the extra week gives the calves longer to develop their immunity and increase their ability to resist disease.

Next all calves must receive two rounds of vaccines. While they are still on the cow, the calves should receive a blackleg shot and a respiratory vaccine (either killed or MLV) once and be castrated or banded as early as possible. Waiting to castrate will increase the chance of dropping and 'bull-like' characteristics. AFCA's policy is that all animals displaying these will be deemed a 'stag' and will be rejected.

For the "On the Cow" program, if the cows are not vaccinated or killed products were used on them, use a KILLED PRODUCT on the calves. Only use a modified Live product if the cows have been vaccinated annually with the same product line.

When should you give the "on the cow" protocol? You can choose to give the shots at spring turn out, mid-summer, or two weeks prior to weaning.

Once the calves are weaned, administer a MLV respiratory shot, booster their blackleg shot, and give them a MLV Pasteurella shot unless it is included in the respiratory vaccine. Deworm or repeat deworming the calves as well.

If you are marketing purchased animals, first you need to establish the farm of origin and have the animals inspected as close to your receiving of them as possible. Purchased calves must be owned for at least 120 days and all purchased calves must be black or black white faced. No red, red cross or Charolais cross calves with be accepted.

Each purchased calf must receive two rounds of MLV respiratory vaccines. Administer the first round when the calves are "straightened out" and the second within 60 days of the sale and at least 21 days prior to the take up. Work with a vet or animal health professional to determine the program best for you that meets the protocol.

Finally all calves must be weaned a minimum of 60 days. Buyers are requesting a longer weaning period and this will also help us reinforce the value of the calves coming from our area.

Please save the table found on page 2 as a reminder of important dates for upcoming sales and if you are not selling VQA calves and want to learn more, give us a call at (276) 783-5175. We will be happy to visit your farm, look over your calves and help you analyze your options. After all, among the VCE, VCA and VDACS employees involved in making this program go, no one gets one extra penny from the VQA program. The VQA program is geared to pay producers the maximum value of their calves on the day of the sale.