Markets Look Forward to 2009
Dr. Derrell Peel, OSU Extension
2008 has been a challenging and rather exasperating year for cattle producers and nearly everyone else in the economy. Profitability was scarce for most sectors of the cattle industry as input prices and output prices in turn limited returns. The first half of the year was mostly characterized by sharply higher input prices as feed, energy, and fertilizer prices all soared to record levels driven by growing demand and uncertainty. The second half of the year saw the precipitous drop of the U.S. economy led by the collapse of the artificially inflated home mortgage sector and the resulting domino effect on general consumer spending and business retrenchment. For cattle producers, the positive effect of decreasing input prices late in the year was equaled or exceeded by the decrease in output prices and the collapse of Feeder and Live cattle futures prices. It seems that most everyone is ready to close the books on 2008 and move on to a new year. Consumer holiday spending will be the final measure of just how bad a year was 2008. While there is no guarantee that 2009 will be better, there are some positive signs for the economy and for the cattle industry. It appears that the stock market has stabilized into a trading range, albeit a wide one due to volatility. This at least provides a base from which to launch economic recovery. The Federal Reserve has pumped tremendous amounts of money into the economy, so far with little effect. The increase in the money supply has been matched by a decrease in the rate of money turnover in the economy as lenders have been reluctant to lend and consumers and businesses are reluctant to borrow. Eventually, this decreased velocity of money should return to more normal levels and the economy will be poised for a big economic stimulus. Likewise there are a number of positive cattle market factors that will set the stage for 2009 markets. Tight feeder and fed cattle supplies will help support cattle prices, especially in first half of the year. Decreased beef production along with reductions in pork and poultry production will support the meat complex in 2009. Uncertainty and risk will continue with many markets expected to remain volatile but, baring a new round of macroeconomic weakness, consumer demand should stabilize and offer some chance for profitable margins for beef sectors. Beef trade is expected to continue as a positive factor but exchange rate volatility contributes to the uncertainty of beef product and by-product trade. 2009 will be a new year and hopefully it will bring a new perspective as markets move forward and past the rollercoaster that was much of 2008.
Grain Sorghum Production Meeting to be held in Blackwell

On January 27th producers interested in Grain Sorghum production practices will have the opportunity to gather valued information from OSU Extension Specialists about grain sorghum production. Also, The National Grain Sorghum Producers Association will talk about national grain sorghum issues and research. The meeting will be held at Kay Electric’s Kay Room in Blackwell. The meeting begins at 9:00 AM. Various speakers will cover topics such as grain sorghum budgets and markets, fertility, crop rotations, grain sorghum check off and research, livestock utilization of stalks, and diseases. All producers or those interested in Grain Sorghum production are invited.

Variety Trial Results Now Available

Variety trial results for corn, grain sorghum, and soybeans are now available for producers to look at and compare varieties for your 2009 planting date. These results are available at the Kay County Extension Office or on the web at the county website at www.oces.okstate.edu/kay.

Kay County Cattlemen’s Scholarship

The Kay County Cattlemen’s Association is sponsoring a $300 scholarship for High School Seniors and College students who are majoring or planning to major in Agriculture. The rules are as follows:

Parent, Legal guardian, or student must be a member of the Kay County Cattlemen’s Association as of February 6, 2009.

Student must be a High School Senior or Full time college student enrolled in at least 12 credit hours.

Student must be an Agriculture major.

Applicant must submit a short essay (100-200 words) on their involvement in the cattle industry.

There will be an interview to be held at the Kay County Courthouse on Thursday February 26th, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. Winners will be announced at the Annual Kay County Cattlemen’s Banquet.

Student must be present to win.

Membership is $15.00 per year.

Forms to complete this scholarship are available at the Extension office and must be turned in by February 6, 2009. If you have any questions regarding your membership status or the scholarship please contact Ryan Sproul at the OSU Extension office (580-362-3194).

Farm Bill Meeting

The Kay County Extension Office along with the Kay County FSA, NRCS and Conservation District is planning a Farm Bill Meeting to be held in mid February. We are waiting on some final details about the programs in the new farm bill from Washington. So be on the lookout for more information on the exact date and meeting location of this important meeting.

Private Applicator License Update

As many of you know by now, all private applicators will need to recertify this year. You must have a valid license to buy restricted use pesticides such as Grazon and others. As of January 1, 2009 all licenses will be invalid and you will not be able to buy any of those chemicals. The Kay County Extension Office has the testing packets available for you to purchase and take home to complete the test. The cost of the packet is $15. There will be a testing site held at the Noble County Fairgrounds on January 14th from 1 pm to 5pm for those of you that missed the one held here in Kay County. Call the Noble County Extension Office at 580-336-4621 to reserve your testing packet.
Great Western Feedout

The inaugural year of the Great Western Feedout was a huge success. We had 82 steers from 11 ranches participate in the program. The steers graded over 65% USDA Choice and had a cumulative average daily gain of 3.85 pounds per day. By participating in the Age and Source Verification program, the steers received a $25.00 per head premium at harvest. It is time to begin signing up for the 2009 Great Western Feedout (GWF) test. Remember the GWF has the same feeding and carcass data collection protocol as the OK Steer Feedout; however the GWF places the cattle on feed following a winter stocker program at the ranch. This production timetable is utilized on numerous Oklahoma ranches that are also interested in carcass and performance data from their cow herd. The GWF utilizes an Age and Source Verification program that allows producers to receive a marketing premium, so to accomplish this, steers entered in the GWF must have birth date records from the ranch of origin.

Entry forms are available at the Kay County Extension Office. The entry forms are due on Friday, January 16, 2009 and the steers are to be delivered on Monday, February 16, 2009. This will allow us the time needed to conduct the Age and Source Verification audits and process the steers. Contact the Kay County Extension Office for more information, or go to the web site at http://beefextension.com/new%20site%202/steerfeedout.html.

The Kay County Extension Office will be closed on January 1st, 2nd, 19th and February 16th.

No-till Oklahoma Conference

February 9 and 10, 2009
Sheraton Hotel
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

No-till Oklahoma is a conference designed to bring the latest developments in No-till cropping systems to interested farmers and ranchers from Oklahoma and surrounding states. No-till Oklahoma is a program of innovative speakers providing for maximum interaction between agriculture professionals ranging from producers to industry experts.

The cost for attending the conference is $95.00 per person, if reservations are made before January 10th. After that the cost will be $120 per person. Registration forms are available at the Extension office or more reservation information can be found online at: http://ocees.okstate.edu/notill.

COW/CALF CORNER

Grandpa Was Right!
Dr. Glenn Selk, OSU Extension Cattle Reproduction Specialist

Looking back on it now, I know that Grandpa was right! He (like many other experienced ranchers) often quoted: “You cannot starve a profit out of a cow!”

As we enter the winter of 2008-2009, that advice will ring as loud and clear as ever. Cow calf producers have faced record high fertilizer prices, record high feed prices, and record high fuel prices within the past 12 months. Some unfertilized introduced pastures did not grow as much forage as usual. The grass hay harvested from unfertilized pastures is lower in nutrient content than usual. Feed prices have moderated a little, but still remain a major cost item on the operation. These factors and softening calf prices have led some cow calf producers to allow the cows to go into winter in marginal to poor body condition. Unfortunately, the cows (and the hormones that control their reproduction) don’t care about the Dow Jones Industrials or even the price of urea fertilizer. Therefore it is still important to have the cows in good (BCS = 5 for mature cows; BCS = 6 for replacement heifers) body condition at calving. See OSU Fact Sheet ANSI-3283 “Body Condition Scoring of Beef Cows”. It is available at OSU County Extension offices or online at: http://pods.dasnr.okstate.edu/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-1965/ANSI-3283web.pdf

Body condition at calving (this February and March) is a key factor that determines how many days it will take that cow or heifer to come back into heat cycles to have a chance to rebreed so that she will produce a calf for you in the spring of 2010. Research at several universities has indicated that we should expect only about 60% of the cows in a body condition score of 4 (thin) to rebreed in a defined breeding season. Compare that to over 80%
of body condition score 5 (average) cows, and over 90% of the score 6 (good) cows rebreed in a defined two to three month breeding season.

If we are struggling to provide enough forage and supplemental feed to keep the cows in good body condition this winter, now would be a good time to remove some of the thinner, older cows and keep the ones that are in better body condition. We could turn a deaf ear to Grandpa’s advice and spend a little less money per cow, but a lowered percentage of the thin cows will produce a calf to sell the next year. While we may save some dollars on the current feed bill, taking poor care of the cows now will result in selling fewer calves in 2010. Poor rebreeding is only one of the problems. Increased incidence of weak calves, calf scours, and even “downer” cows often accompany underfed spring calving cows. Selling fewer and lighter calves per cow wintered will have a more costly impact on your bottom line than the cost of supplying proper nutrition to the cows now. Decide how many cows your place and your resources can take “good” care of this winter. I think Grandpa was right.

Wheat Pasture Conditions and Winter Grazing

Dr. Derrell Peel, OSU Extension Livestock Marketing Specialist

Mother Nature and markets have combined that make this a challenging and unusual year for winter wheat grazing. Stocker producer’s plans have been shaped and reshaped continuously this fall making it somewhat difficult to assess the current situation. Although climate conditions for wheat forage production were generally favorable in the early fall, many producers, faced with expensive fertilizer and fuel and with high wheat prices, made little effort to plant wheat early for forage production. More recently, falling wheat prices have renewed interest in grazing wheat among some producers, who now see little chance of recovering high production costs with grain-only wheat production. As a result a few stockers have dribbled out on wheat pasture in recent weeks. However, for the last 30 days, the entire state of Oklahoma has had less than 40 percent of normal rainfall and much of the south-central and eastern part of the state have been quite dry for the last 90+ days. Although not yet severe, the latest Drought Monitor confirms that a drought area is emerging in roughly half of Oklahoma. Producers in this region are seeing little forage growth and may be facing with de-stocking in the near future. It appears the number of winter wheat pasture cattle is well below average, initially because producers had reduced intentions of grazing and reinforced now by stalled forage growth that limits late stocking and may, in fact, prompt some early movement off pastures in the next few weeks.

Farmer and Rancher Tax Guides are Available in the Kay County Extension Office. Feel free to come and pick one up.

Price Protection Seminar Rescheduled

The final night of the price protection seminar series that was to be held on December 9th was cancelled due to the winter weather that moved in. The new date for the meeting will be Thursday January 22nd 2009 at 6:30 p.m. The location will be the Seminar Center Room at the Pioneer Technology Center in Ponca City. Dr. Kim Anderson, Extension Marketing Specialist will be speaking on how to protect yourself in the crop markets. Make plans to attend this excellent event.

Kay County Master Gardener Calendar of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 8th 9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Monthly Master Gardener Meeting at Cann Garden House</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 5th 9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Monthly Master Gardener Meeting at Cann Garden House</td>
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HORTICULTURE TIPS FOR JANUARY/ FEBRUARY

David Hillock

JANUARY

· Spray dormant Bermuda lawn weeds with a glyphosate product. One of the more effective ways to control winter annual weeds in Bermuda is to apply a winter application of glyphosate (Roundup, Killzall, or Kleeraway). Apply glyphosate when daytime temperatures will be at least 40° F. Add a 2,4-D product at the label rate to glyphosate to improve control of winter broadleaf weeds. Add dye to the tank to see where you have sprayed. Glyphosate will kill every green plant so do not apply to tall fescue or where bermudagrass is green.
· Prune elms, maples and pines.
· If precipitation has been deficient (1” of snow = 1/10” of water), water lawns, trees, and shrubs, especially broadleaf and narrow leaf evergreens. Double check moisture in protected or raised planters.
· Check on supplies of pesticides. Secure a copy of current recommendation and post them in a convenient place.
· If you did not treat young pines for tip borers in November, do so before March.
· Check that gardening tools and equipment are in good repair.
· Control over wintering insects on deciduous trees or shrubs with dormant oil sprays applied when the temperature is above 40° F in late fall and winter. Do not use “dormant” oils on evergreens.
· Develop and refine landscape drawings.
· Sit by the fire and check all your colorful seed or nursery catalogs and make sure your list is complete. Do you have a place to put all of that?
· Watch the paper for garden shows dates. For Oklahoma Garden Festival advanced tickets call 405-528-2996 before the festival starts.
· Moisten compost pile if weather is dry or extremely windy.

FEBRUARY

· Base any plant fertilization on a soil test. For directions, contact your county Extension Educator or ask for F-6404.
· Fertilize trees, including fruit and nut trees and shrubs, annually.
· Finish pruning shade trees, summer flowering shrubs, and hedges. Spring blooming shrubs such as forsythia may be pruned immediately after flowering.
· Most bare-rooted trees and shrubs should be planted in February or March.
· Prepare garden soil.
· Plant frost tolerant vegetables after February 15. The soil temperature 2 inches deep should be at least 40°F for several days for proper germination of these cool-season vegetables. You can check the soil temperature with a candy or meat thermometer.
· Still time to control weeds in Bermuda with a dormant spray of glyphosate.
· Dormant oil can still be applied to control mites, galls, over wintering aphids, etc.
· Are the forsythias in bloom? Apply a preemergent herbicide for crabgrass control. These must be activated with ½ -1 inch of water, either from rain or sprinkler. A preemergent kills crabgrass as it germinates and needs to be applied and activated before March 5. You do not have to scalp Bermuda. It will take a few weeks longer to green-up, but your lawn will be just as healthy if you skip the scalping.
· Take out winter annual weeds before they go into their March growth spurt.

Horticulture Workshop

There will be a horticulture workshop held on February 26th 2009 at the Walcher Center on the NOC campus in Tonkawa. The program will start at 6:30 p.m. with Oklahoma state forester Dan Stidham. OSU Extension Consumer Horticulturalist David Hillock will discuss The Oklahoma Proven program and tree stress issues. The final speaker for the night will be Scott Harmon who will discuss turfgrass issues. There will be drinks sponsored by several local florists.
Results from grain sorghum trial on the Bill and Louise Rigdon Farm east of Braman.

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Cooperator: Bill and Louise Rigdon  
Soil Series: Kirkland Silt Loam  
No-till Practices: Followed non harvested wheat  
Soil Test: N: 8  P: 33  K: 353  pH: 6.1  
Fertilizer: N: 130 lbs/ac + 5 gal/ac 10-34-0 with planter  
Planting Date: April 19, 2008 Target Population: 45,000 plants/ac  
Herbicide: 2 qt/ac Cinch ATZ Lite (Preemergence)  
Harvest Date: September 18, 2008  
Monthly Rainfall (in.)  

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Stocker Receiving Management Conference

January 21, 2009
9:00 A.M. – 6:00 P.M.
Chisholm Trail Pavilion
Garfield County Fairgrounds, 111 W. Purdue
Enid, Oklahoma

Stocker Health Session
Dr. Dan Thomson
Jones Professor of Production Medicine
College of Veterinary Medicine
Kansas State University
KSU Beef Cattle Institute, Director

- Management Factors that Should Be Addressed on Every Load of Calves
- Key Steps for Receiving Success
- Thinking Through Your Receiving Program & Evaluating Yourself
- Outside Factors that Impact Health
- Preventing Problem Repeats
- Why the Cattle Industry Has to Address Animal Welfare

Issues in the Stocker Cattle Business

- Cattle Markets: Making Good Business Decisions in Turbulent Times
- What To Do For COOL

Low Stress Cattle Handling Techniques for Stocker Cattle
Curt Pate
Helena, Montana

Ron Gill
Stephenville, Texas

Nationally recognized Instructors in Cattle Handling and Behavior

- The use of position, distance, angles and speed to communicate with cattle
- Teaching cattle to respond in a positive manner
- Acclimation of newly arrived cattle to reduce the stress of address changes
- Helping cattle to express their true state of health
- Pulling single cattle
- Exercise therapy
- Removing cattle from pens or pastures
- Training horses for low stress handling
- Relationship of horsemanship and stockmanship

This Program is Presented by:

Registration

Name(s)_________________________ Address_________________________ City/St/Zip_________________________ Cost $20.00 per person

To Register: Send to Greg Highfill 316 E. Oxford, Enid, OK 73701; or Fax: 580.242.1955; or E-mail: Greg.Highfill@okstate.edu; or Call 580.237.7677

Please pre-register to allow for an accurate meal count. If pre-payment is not convenient, you may pay at the door. The cost includes lunch.

Oklahoma State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, State and Local Governments cooperating. Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability or status as a veteran, and is an Equal Opportunity employer.
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Editor, Ryan Sproul, Extension Educator, Agriculture, Kay County