

## OSU EXTENSION

# *Spraying for insects and maintaining cattle body conditions in winter*

## Insects

As we move closer to winter here in Pittsburg County, now is a great time to look at insect control. Many insects such as mites, gall-forming insects, aphids, etc., have an over-wintering stage or hide out on plants during winter months in cracks and crevices of trunks and stems. One way to control them and keep their numbers to a low roar this growing season is to spray them with horticultural oil during the winter months.

Horticulture oils are petroleum-based products containing certain fatty acids that form layers on plant parts to smother insects and provide a mechanical barrier to prevent damage. There are two kinds of oils: growing season (summer) and dormant. Some common examples include:

- Sunspray (6E Plus): Normal dormant use. Summer use on vegetables, greenhouse ornamentals, flower and foliage

plants, some fruit and nut trees, some field crops, blueberries, grapes and citrus.

- Ortho Volck Oil Spray: Dormant and summer use on citrus, fruit and shade trees, evergreens, and some shrubs.

- Scalecide: Dormant and summer use on fruit and shade trees, ornamentals, evergreen and small fruit. Indoor or outdoor use.

“Dormant” refers to the time of year the application is made. Remember, as a general rule, that oils control insects, not plant diseases. Dormant oil should not be applied when the temperature is below 40° F and if there is a danger of freezing. Some dormant oil sprays should not be applied to evergreens or to certain deciduous tree species. Be sure to read and follow the product label. For more information on insect control, contact your local OSU Extension office.



**DAVID  
CANTRELL**

## Cattle

With “Ole Man Winter” greeting us rather rudely, cows are going to require plenty of available feed to maintain body condition throughout the next few months. In some situations, the standing forage in the pasture will provide much of the energy requirements of the cows. However, snow cover in many areas, as well as low quantities of grass may require that harvested and stored hay is made available to the cows. Here come the common questions: how much hay will the cow eat voluntarily? How much hay do I need to feed this winter? How much hay do I need to put out for the next few days?

These questions are all part of the decisions that ranchers must make each winter: Intake in forage fed to cattle is generally limited by the forage capacity of the digestive tract. Forage intake is also correlated with forage quality. The more rapid

rate of digestion and passage of higher quality forage results in considerably higher dry matter intake compared to lower quality forage that is lower in digestibility. Lactation represents the greatest need for additional energy beyond that needed for maintenance. An average milking beef cow requires 50 percent more TDN or energy than she does when dry. It should be noted that lactating cows consume more forage compared to gestating cows due to the increased energy demand. Note the table below.

Large cows will require more energy than will small cows. Therefore, the hay or forage requirements are calculated based on a percentage of the body weight of the cow.

*David Cantrell is the agriculture educator/CED for the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service in Pittsburg County. He can be contacted by phone at 918-423-4120 or by email at david.cantrell@okstate.edu.*