

'COOL' (Country of Origin Labeling) Update

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The mandatory rule concerning COOL, Country of Origin Labeling, went into effect September 30 on an interim basis. However, until changed this rule did take effect.

First thing that a producer will need to do is an inventory of all animals owned on July 15, 2008. This should be done as soon as possible to make sure all animals are counted. Any animal counted in this inventory is grandfathered into the COOL program. This inventory count would be especially helpful for those young heifers that will have years of production ahead of them. You will need to put down all cattle owned on July 15th and keep this in a safe place until all these animals have been sold, which could be years.

Second is keeping up with

your production records. Examples of the types of records would be annual cow numbers, births, deaths, weaning numbers, and sales. Records on purchased feed, hay, mineral, vaccination and deworming products can also be used. Simply put, a basic production record-keeping system. Receipts can be kept to provide documentation.

Third is keeping up with sales. This means filing in a safe place the stub portion of the check received from the sale barn. All cattlemen will need to keep your origin information as of July 15th until all those cattle have been sold. All other records must be kept for **1 year** from date of transaction.

Producers will now be asked to sign an affidavit

at the local sale barn when any livestock is sold. This affidavit simply stated that the animals that are being sold came from your farm and whether they were raised in the U.S. or other country. If purchasing breeding stock, ask for an affidavit stating country of origin.

How this will work is, as follows, it is up to the packer to tell the retailer/wholesaler where the livestock product was raised. Only if there is any question about the original location of origin will any producers be asked to prove anything. And this is only after they ask all of the middlemen in between the packer and the producer. Then all the producer would have to do is pull out their records and prove they produced what they produced.

Culling Cows for Physical Reasons

A producer should check his cows closely after weaning for physical problems that might interfere with performance or require extra labor or expense to get them through the winter. Some of these problems are correctable, however, in many cases salvage is the most logical avenue. Check eyes closely at time of pregnancy testing to make sure no growths are present. These growths usually indicate the start of cancer eye. If a cancer-eyed cow is culled early enough she can bring current market price per pound. If you wait, she can bring \$.0 to \$.10 per pound. That's a big difference.

Excessive hoof growth can be temporarily treated by trimming but will often reoccur. If the female has foundered, she should be removed from the herd. The tendency for this condition to expose itself can be passed on to future offspring.

Cont'd Culling Cows for Physical Reasons

Cows exhibiting lameness not explained by a localized foot infection should also be culled. Antibiotic withdrawal times must be followed in cows salvaged after failure to respond to treatment. Typical of this type are injuries to joints of older cows, particularly in the shoulder and stifle. These injuries are normally not correctable and will often start a general decline in the cow's overall condition.

During the fall months, be on the lookout for cows that are excessively thin for no apparent reason. It may be due to some physical problem that is not obvious. Worn-off teeth in older cows may

interfere with chewing of roughage and feed. As a general rule, cows exhibiting an unthrifty condition that cannot be related to parasite infestation or management should be culled. It is best to receive some salvage value rather than to spend money and labor only to lose the cow later.

Cull cows with udder problems could hinder calf health and/or performance. Eliminate such things as blind quarters, large teats, pendulous udders or other problems that may interfere with a newborn calf's first meal. If they are not removed from the herd, these cows will usually propagate these faults through their daughters.

Generally, cows should be sold immediately after they are culled. This is particularly true of cows that are being eliminated because of physical problems.

However, cull cow prices have been very strong and many producers have excess forage this year. They might benefit by feeding some of it to cull cows.

If a producer does decide to hold his cows until after the first of the year, he should make sure he does sell them. Often, after being kept this long, the temptation is to hang on and breed them again. Failure to sell these cows will weaken your total program.

The "Positive Associative Effect" of High Protein Supplements

As you drive across much of Oklahoma this fall you see many big round bales of hay stored for winter feed. If you are a frequent traveler down the same roads, you may have noted some of these bales are left over from last winter. The high cost of grains and protein commodities are influencing many cattle producers to look to feeding hay as the primary winter feed for beef cows. The quality of this hay will vary a great deal. Frankly, some of it will be low in protein content and therefore low in digestibility. The micro-organisms in the rumen of beef cows and replacement heifers require readily available protein to multiply and exist in large enough quantities to digest the cellulose in low quality roughages. Protein supplementation of low-quality, low

protein forages results in a "*positive associative effect*". This "positive associative effect" occurs as supplemental protein available to the "bugs" in the rumen allows them to grow, multiply, and digest the forage more completely and more rapidly. Therefore the cow gets more out of the hay she consumes, she digests it more quickly and is ready to eat more hay in a shorter period of time. Data from Oklahoma State University illustrates this. The prairie hay used in this study was less than 5% crude protein. When the ration was supplemented with 1.75 lbs of cottonseed meal, retention time of the forage was reduced 32% which resulted in an increase in feed intake of 27%. Because hay intake was increased, the animal has a better chance of meeting both the protein and energy requirement

without supplementing other feeds. Because retention time was decreased, one could postulate the protein supplementation in this situation also increased digestibility of the hay.

As producers prepare their winter supplement strategies, they can see the importance of providing enough protein in the diet of the cows to feed the "bugs" in the rumen. If the hay is low in protein (less than 8 % crude protein), a small amount of supplemental protein such as cottonseed meal, soybean meal, or one of the higher protein by-product feeds, could increase the amount and digestibility of the hay being fed. This strategy requires that ample forage is available to take advantage of the "positive associative effect".

Cattle Producers Schedule October Meeting

The Pottawatomie County Cattle Producers and the OSU Extension Service will sponsor an Ag Producers meeting on **Thursday, October 30**, beginning at **6:30 p.m.** in the **Tecumseh Ag-Ed Building**, located on the grounds of Tecumseh High School on North 13th Street.

The program will be presented by Brian Geneva, Merial Representative, concerning “Advancing Your Cow Herd Genetics” through the use of selection of breeding stock using DNA or genetic markers for different traits such as marbling, heifer pregnancy, tenderness, feed efficiency, etc.

The meal will be sponsored by LiphaTech, who sells gopher bait. Mark Newman will give a short explanation of his product to attending producers.

Please R.S.V.P. to 273-7683 by **Monday, October 27** if attending. Please make sure if you call that you attend. Meals are purchased according to R.S.V.P. numbers. Those that don't attend still have a meal purchased for them. See you on the 30th!

Master Gardener Class Scheduled

The Pottawatomie County Extension Office is pleased to announce they will be hosting a Master Gardener program again this year. The Master Gardener program is a volunteer organization for the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service. Projects and volunteer work is approved by the Extension Educator in the county. The program is for anyone with a high school education or equivalent, a genuine interest in horticulture and would enjoy sharing their research-based information with others. During the course of the eight-week program, participants will learn the latest OSU horticulture research results, techniques and practices.

Master Gardener classes will begin in early January. These courses will be held on Thursdays from 9:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. You will receive approximately 40 hours of training from local OSU Educators and State Horticulture Specialists. Educational materials will be provided. After training, 40 hours of assistance to the local OSU Extension Horticulture program is required through community service projects and assisting your local extension horticulture program.

We currently have a number of openings available. The deadline for application is November 14, 2008. The registration fee is \$75, non-refundable, with half due at sign up and the balance due the first day of class. This is to cover the cost of materials. If class does not have the required number of participants, your initial sign up money will be refunded promptly. This year, the class will be canceled if less than 20 participants, with a maximum of 25 participants. Applicants will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis. Applications are available in the OSU Extension Center, 14001 Acme Road, Shawnee or by calling the OSU Extension Center at 273-7683.

Date Set for Cattle Producers Banquet

Mark your calendar for December 5th! We are in the process of making plans for the annual Cattle Producers banquet. As in previous years, we will hold the banquet at Tecumseh City Hall. We will let you know more details as we get closer.

Biofuels Field Day

There will be a Biofuels Field Day on **Monday, October 13th**, at the South-Central Research Station in Chickasha, 1105 E. Iowa, 1/2 mile of Highway 62 on the east edge of the city.

Registration is **8:30—9:00 a.m.**, with the program beginning at 9:00. lunch will be provided. Tours will be conducted in areas concerning the following topics:

Storage Techniques for Forage Crops and Lignocellulosic Biofeedstock

In-Field Production for Ethanol from Sweet Sorghum

Converting Biomass to Ethanol—Bales to Barrels

Agronomic Consideration for Sorghum Production

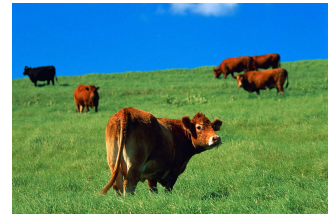
Equipment Needs for the Future: An Industry Perspective

Prussic Acid Poisoning a Concern After a Light Frost

The average first frost date for central Oklahoma is about November 1. However, light frosts often occur in the northwest part of this state much earlier. Of course, producers that live in states north and west of Oklahoma can expect these cool nights to occur almost at any time. Light frosts, that stress the plant but do not kill it, are often associated with prussic acid poisonings. It was discovered in the early 1900s that under certain conditions sorghums are capable of releasing hydrocyanic acid or commonly called "prussic acid". Prussic acid, when ingested by cattle, is quickly absorbed into the blood stream, and blocks the animal's cells from utilizing oxygen. Thus the animal dies from asphyxiation at the cellular level. Animals affected by prussic acid poisoning exhibit a characteristic bright red blood just prior to and during death. Lush young regrowth of sorghum plants are prone to accumulate prussic acid especially when the plants are stressed such as drought or freeze damage.

Producers should avoid grazing fields with sorghum type plants following a light frost, this includes johnson-grass. The risk of prussic acid poisoning will be reduced, if grazing is delayed until at least one week after a "killing freeze". As the plants die and the cell walls rupture, the hydrocyanic acid is released as a gas, and the amount is greatly reduced in the plants. One can never be absolutely certain that a field of sorghum is 100% safe to graze. Although pearl millets have been shown to be potential sources of nitrate toxicity (like the other forage sorghum types), they are generally considered to be unlikely to accumulate prussic acid.

Cattle that must be grazed on sorghum pastures during this time of year should be fed another type of hay before turning in on the field, and should be watched closely for the first few hours after turn in. If signs of labored breathing, such as would be found in asphyxiation, are noted, cattle should be removed from the pasture immediately. Call your local veterinarian for immediate help for those animals that are affected.



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