WINTER 2022

TRI-COUNTY LIVESTOCK NEWSLETTER

Serving residents of Anson, Stanly and Union County

IN THIS ISSUE

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Upcoming Events

Title: **Mineral Feeder Workshop**
Description: Learn how to build your own mineral feeder using an old tire at this hands-on workshop. RSVP by contacting your local agent.
Date: Feb 17th 2023

Title: **Union County Cattlemen's Association Meetings**
Description: Join the UCCA for our monthly educational program and meal. $8 per person. RSVP with Rachel Owens.
Date: Jan 19th and Feb 16th, 6:30pm, Simpson Event Center-Monroe

Title: **Stanly County Cattlemen's Association Annual Meeting**
Description: Join SCCA for our annual business meeting, dinner is $15 per person and annual dues are $15. Educational meetings throughout the year will follow. RSVP to Katelyn.
Date: January 5th, 6:30 PM

Title: **Anson County Cattlemen's Association Meetings**
Description: Join the ACCA for our bi-monthly educational program and meal. $15 annual dues. Contact Katelyn with questions.
Date: Feb 14th, 7:00 PM

For any meeting or program listed, persons with disabilities may request accommodations to participate by contacting the Extension Office where the meeting will be held by phone, email, or in person at least 7 days prior to the event.

NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

N.C. A&T STATE UNIVERSITY

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

NC Farm School

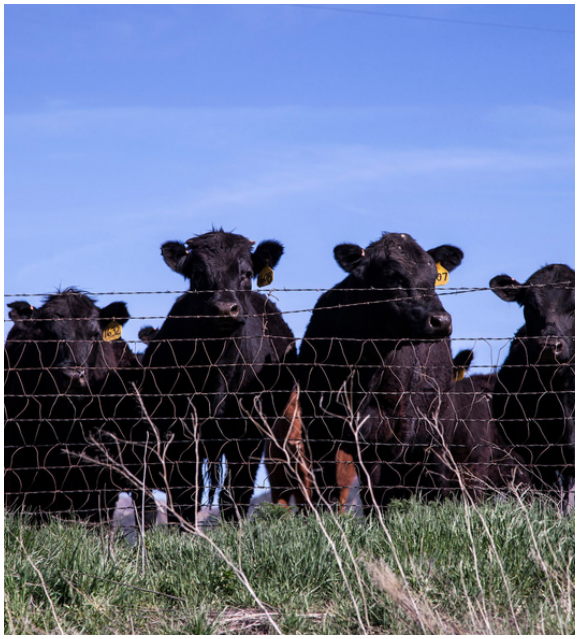
The Piedmont Region NC Farm School will be held in Stanly County in 2023!

"North Carolina Farm School (NCFS) is a unique entrepreneurial program for aspiring, new or transitioning farmers with the mission of increasing the number of successful farmers in North Carolina"

For more information, class dates, and application, follow this link
https://ncfarmschool.ces.ncsu.edu/
or scan the QR code below!

Foot Rot in Cattle

by Katelyn Stegall



While it hasn't quite gotten here yet, a wet winter is inevitable in this area. Additionally, due to a dry fall producers have been feeding hay a little earlier this year. These two things together can lead to a very wet, muddy hay-feeding area which may cause some issues for your cattle. As we're coming into the winter, keep an eye out for lameness in your cattle, as it could be the first sign of foot rot.

First, we'll talk about what causes foot rot. Compromises in the skin or integrity of the hoof wall allow bacteria to get in. Injury, nutrition deficiencies, and moisture all lead to these compromises. Some minerals such as zinc, selenium, and copper support hoof and skin strength as well as immune strength, so deficiencies in these lead to a perfect storm when considering foot rot. Injuries can occur by walking on rough, stony ground, and all the foot rot bacteria need to invade the hoof is a small opening in the skin. Standing in lots that are very wet and muddy and contaminated with urine and manure (much like some of our areas surrounding hay rings this time of year), will soften the skin and allow bacteria in. These all can cause foot rot separately, but together can be even more problematic.

There are a few things to keep an eye out for when thinking about foot rot. As stated, watch out for lameness in your cattle, as this may be a sign that you need to do some further investigating. Lameness will increase in severity as the disease increases in severity. You will need to look at the hoof to determine if foot rot is the reason for the lameness, and you will be looking for swelling and redness of the interdigital tissue, and lesions may be present on this tissue as well. The tissue may be necrotic and will have a foul odor. Swelling and both digits of the hoof, and around the hairline may be present. Other symptoms may include loss of appetite and increased body temperature.

Foot rot will require treatment, as it will not go away on its own. First, the foot will need to be cleaned. Some mild cases of foot rot can be treated topically, but most will require antibiotics. In some cases, pain management care may be necessary. It is best to consult with your veterinarian for best treatment practices for foot rot. The animal should be kept in a clean, dry place to heal. If no improvement is seen in three or four days, contact your veterinarian as the bacteria may have infected deeper tissue.

As with most diseases in the cattle world, it's better (and easier) to prevent foot rot than to treat it. Try to keep your cattle off of areas that may be rough or abrasive to avoid injury. In the wetter months, try to minimize they are standing in mud or very wet areas. In some cases, a foot bath may be necessary, but those are usually used in confinement beef or dairy operations. If you do have an animal that has foot rot, keep them away from the rest of the herd until they are healed, as the bacteria can and will spread.

Foot rot is costly, contagious, and can cause problems in your herd. Start prevention early, and keep an eye on your cattle's feet so you can intervene early and keep foot rot at bay in your herd this winter.

Stretching Hay Resources

by Rachel Owens

Our dry fall created lots of challenges for forage production this year. Hay yields were reduced and winter annual planting was delayed waiting for moisture. Cool season forages did not grow well which led to livestock producers dipping into winter hay feeding supplies earlier than desired. So how do we make sure we are being the most efficient with our hay feeding to stretch our hay resources?

One of the first steps is to calculate the amount of hay that is needed for your herd. It is generally assumed a cow will eat 2% of her body weight every day in dry matter. You also must take into consideration hay waste which can range from 10-40% depending on the feeding method. Securing enough hay earlier in the season will be cheaper and less stressful than waiting until the middle of winter to try and source and pay for bales. To search for local hay, visit NCDA's Hay Alert or the Tri-County Hay Directory.

When hay supplies are tight, it is even more important to test your hay so you know what you are feeding. Samples can be submitted to the NCDA lab for $10 and will tell you the nutrient values so you know how to best feed your animals. Reserve the best hay for the animals with a higher nutritional plane and leave the lower quality feed for dry cows, bulls outside of breeding season, etc.

Look into feeding supplemental feed or hay alternatives. If you know what nutrients your animals are getting from the hay, you can then add in grain or other feed alternatives to meet nutritional needs. Be aware that one pound of grain is not a direct substitute for one pound of hay. If you need help evaluating your feeding program, reach out to your local Extension Agent for assistance.

Planting winter annuals is a great way to help reduce the need for hay over the winter. There are many different species and varieties to consider. Be mindful of when your forage needs are the greatest. The late fall time is a transition time where the perennial species are declining but most winter annuals are not ready for grazing yet. Be sure to include early maturing varieties or a quick growth species like oats. These quicker growing options can help you get through transition times while you wait for the rest of the annuals to be ready.
Be careful to avoid grazing winter annuals too early. Just remember that overgrazing early in the season hurts future regrowth capability which reduces the overall tonnage you will get from the field. You trade quick initial grazing for long term production.

If you don't have any winter annuals ready to graze, you're stuck feeding hay. There have been many studies to evaluate feeding methods to reduce waste. Feeders help reduce the amount of hay that is dropped on the ground and trampled. For horses, round bale hay nets reduce waste down to 5-10% as opposed to 50% when not using a feeder. Unrolling round bales also helps reduce waste and has the added benefit of spreading animals out so all the damage and manure isn't confined to one spot. Only providing enough hay for a day or two can also reduce waste but increases the labor needed to feed hay daily.

Finally, consider reducing livestock numbers to help reduce the need for hay. When hay is tight, now is the time to evaluate your animals to determine which ones do not fit your herd and production goals. Open cows, poor performers, or animals with bad attitudes may all be candidates for the sale barn. Early weaning may also be an option to reduce the burden on lactating mothers.

With limited supplies and high prices, it can be a little scary when you consider how you are going to keep your livestock fed this winter, but making plans now will help you avoid running out of hay and give you peace of mind this winter.

EIA in Horses in NC

by Rachel Owens

There have been multiple confirmed cases of Equine Infectious Anemia in North Carolina this month. Surry, Henderson, and Yadkin Counties all have a confirmed case. All facilities are under quarantine and neighboring facilities are being monitored.

Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) is a viral disease that affects equines, such as horses, donkeys, and mules. EIA is transmitted through infected blood, and therefore is most commonly spread through horseflies. When a horsefly bites an infected animal and then bites another uninfected animal, the disease is transmitted. Additionally, contaminated hypodermic needles, bits, and dental floats can also serve as a source of transmission. This disease is a very serious concern as there is no cure or remedy. The only current options for control are complete quarantine of an infected equine or euthanasia. Once a horse is infected, they carry the disease for life.

Equine Infectious Anemia can present in different ways. The acute form of this disease develops at the initial attack and often ends with the horse's death 3 to 14 days later. However, the subacute form of EIA is more common, where the symptoms are not as severe and death seldom occurs. These horses appear to recover after 7-20 days and then remain symptom free for weeks or months later. However, periods of stress can cause another relapse. A horse can test positive for EIA without displaying symptoms and is called a carrier. The majority of EIA infected horses are asymptomatic carriers, which means it is incredibly important that all equine owners continue Coggins testing to identify carriers to ensure large outbreaks do not occur.

A Coggins test will be performed by a licensed vet, who will collect a blood sample and send it to a lab to test for EIA. Coggins paperwork, which certifies a negative result for EIA, is required for transporting equines across state lines and many shows and boarding facilities require proof of Coggins. It is always advisable to have a Coggins test performed before purchasing a horse and only board at barns or attend events where a Coggins is required. Even if your horse never leaves the farm, it is still necessary to have Coggins paperwork, since flies are the vectors and can travel from farm to farm. Coggins paperwork is good for 12 months. Keep the papers in a secure location where you can access it as required throughout the year.