

Brought to you by your
livestock specialists.....



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DATES TO

REMEMBER:

- August 26—MU Graves-Chapple Center Field Day, Corning
- August 27—MU Hundley-Whaley Center Field Day, Albany
- September 1—Labor Day Holiday, Extension Offices closed
- September 16—MU Thompson Center Field Day, Spickard
- September 18—MU Hundley-Whaley Center Youth Field Day, Albany
- September 19—MU Graves-Chapple Center Youth Field Day, Corning
- September 23—MU Forage Systems Research Center Field Day, Linneus
- October 10—Missouri Steer Feedout entries due
- November 13—Fall Beef Producers Meeting, Stanberry

Economics of Baleage for Beef Cattle Operations

Many producers in our area are looking at different options for their forage program. We have lost significant acres of pasture and hayground to corn and soybeans over the past few years. As a result, many are trying to figure out how to produce more and possibly higher quality forage on fewer acres. One alternative that seems to be gaining in interest is the use of baled silage or baleage. Baleage is produced by baling higher moisture forage (typically 45-65% moisture) and wrapping the bales in plastic to exclude oxygen and allow the forage to ferment/ensile. The advantages of baleage include reduced risk of field curing, reduced harvesting and storage losses, increased flexibility on types of forages used, higher feed value and increased palatability. The main disadvantage of incorporating baleage into an existing forage program is the cost associated with additional, necessary equipment (high moisture round baler and wrapper). Some manufacturers sell kits that will convert a conventional round baler to be able to handle hay that has high moisture content. There are two major ways to store forage as baleage: through use of an individual bale wrapper or an in-line wrapper that continuously wraps bales (pictured below).



Soybeans and forage sorghum grown in Gentry County, MO that will be used for baleage.

The LSU Ag Center for research and extension released a publication in December 2013 that looked at the economics of using baleage in beef cattle operations. They summarized their findings by stating that for beef cattle producers who have been affected by lack of winter forage in recent years, use of baleage systems to harvest and store forage may be a worthwhile investment. Producers may need to focus on increasing the nutritional value of the baleage for the decision to purchase to be economical. The high per hour costs of operation make it cost-prohibitive for smaller operations to purchase, but use in a custom wrapping situation can bring down the hourly costs and help a bale wrapper and/or high-moisture baler pay for itself. In general, producers that have at least 150 cows will find the decision to purchase a bale wrapper and high moisture baler to be cost-effective compared to using conventional hay making systems. In contrast, producers with 100 cows or less are less likely to find such a purchase to be economical, unless they use the machinery in a custom hire enterprise. For help with your forage system, contact your regional extension agronomist or livestock specialist.



Single bale wrapper. Photo credit: LSU Ag Center.



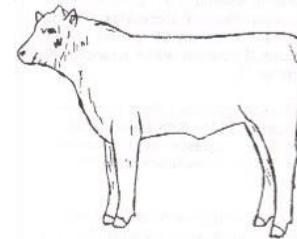
In-line bale wrapper. Photo credit: University of GA.



KSU Focus on Feedlots Report

Kansas State University Extension recently released their June 2014 closeout information in their latest Focus on Feedlots report which includes data from ten different Kansas feedlots. The 33,064 steers averaged 1381 pounds, 164 days on feed, 3.64 average daily gain, 5.77 feed/gain dry basis, 1.46% death loss and \$91.36 average cost of gain. The 30,473 heifers averaged 1229 pounds, 165 days on feed, 3.17 average daily gain, 6.05 feed/gain dry basis, 2.00% death loss, and \$98.14 average cost of gain.

Missouri Steer Feedout 2014-15



The Missouri Steer Feedout is an educational program for cattle producers. The purpose is to give cattlemen the opportunity to:

1. Evaluate the genetics and management of their calves as they influence feedlot performance and carcass characteristics.
2. Gain experience feeding cattle and retaining ownership without the risk and investment of feeding an entire pen of cattle.
3. See if the cattle hit the 70-70-0 target. 70% Low Choice or better, 70% Yield Grade 1 & 2, 0% outs.
4. Improve the quality and reputation of Missouri cattle while exploring marketing alternatives.

Eligible calves are those born after January 1, 2014. Birth dates and sire identity are requested, but not mandatory. A minimum of 5 head is required and there is no maximum. Calves must be weaned for at least 30 days prior to delivery with 45 days preferred. Calves must meet specific vaccination requirements as well. A non-refundable reservation fee of \$20 per head must accompany the entry form and entries are due October 10. Delivery date is scheduled for November 4. The feedout will be held in cooperation with the Tri-County Carcass Steer Futurity in Lewis, IA. Ten different feedlots participate. For more information, contact your regional livestock specialist.

??Question of the Week??

I have been looking at different mineral options. What is the best?

We seem to get this question quite a bit, and it really is difficult to answer. Every operation is different. Mineral programs range from very basic to more elaborate and can vary quite a bit in price. The bottom line is that beef cattle have specific mineral requirements, and we need to be sure that those are being met so that our cattle are healthy and productive. One thing producers should do when evaluating mineral mixes is to compare tags between products. Often times, this is very interesting and you may discover significant differences in ingredients.

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