<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interstate Cattle move</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Selecting Meat Goats/Fescue as a Hay Crop</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximizing vaccines</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing Insurance Costs/Event May 14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Interstate cattle movement impacted by USDA rule courtesy of:** Craig A. Payne, DVM, MS  
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A new USDA Animal Disease Traceability rule requires that livestock be officially identified before they are moved across state lines. University of Missouri Extension Veterinarian Craig Payne says everyone involved in the cattle industry should be aware of the rule that went into effect nationwide on March 11.

“This regulation applies to the interstate movement of cattle in the U.S.,” Payne said, “and under the regulations there are three classes of cattle that will be impacted.”

“If you are shipping sexually intact beef cattle 18 months of age or older out of state those animals will have to be officially identified and have a certificate of veterinary inspection,” Payne said.

Another class of cattle that will need to be identified and have a certificate of veterinary inspection is any cattle, regardless of age, that are going out of state to a rodeo, recreational event, show or exhibition.

“The last one pertains to dairy cattle,” Payne said. “All female dairy cattle regardless of age and all male dairy cattle including dairy steers born after March 11, 2013 will require official identification as well as a certificate of veterinary inspection before moving out of the state.”

There are some exemptions to the identification requirement of the rule such as cattle moving directly to a recognized slaughtering establishment and those moving directly to a tagging site in another state such as livestock markets that have been authorized by Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, State or Tribal animal health officials.

“Another class of cattle that will need to be identified and have a certificate of veterinary inspection is any cattle, regardless of age, that are going out of state to a rodeo, recreational event, show or exhibition.”

Payne says the primary forms of identification that will be used include the silver or “brite” metal ear tags. “If heifers have been brucellosis vaccinated their orange brucellosis vaccination tag will qualify,” Payne said. “There is also a tag called an AIN tag which has a 15 digit number beginning with 840. These include a variety of different types; one is the electronic identification tag and there is also a visual tag.”

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"The final thing to remember about the rule is it is not a substitute for individual state import regulations which may be more stringent than the USDA regulations," Payne said. Because of this, Payne recommends that you call the destination state prior to shipment to make sure you are in full compliance with their import regulations.

For more information about the Animal Disease Traceability visit: [http://mda.mo.gov/animals/health/disease/traceability.php](http://mda.mo.gov/animals/health/disease/traceability.php)
Selecting Meat Goats for a Commercial Herd
By: Jodie Pennington

Selecting goats for your breeding herd is very important. It is critical to select animals that are suited for the environment for which they will be maintained. In most cases, it works well to visit a nearby farm that has a similar operation to the environment that your animals will be kept and select from those goats. A second option is to select above-average females from more than one farm. Either option has advantages. With selection from one herd, there is less chance of introducing disease. With more than one herd, greater selection intensity and diversity will be available.

First, all goats must be healthy and free of diseases, including internal parasites or worms. Second, the goats must be functionally sound with no apparent structural problems. Then, you can select goats. Initially the females for the breeding herd, based specifically on visual, performance, and pedigree traits. Later, superior sires can be selected that will improve the performance of offspring from the females selected. Expected progeny differences (EPDs) provide the best means of comparing potential sires but may not be available in many cases. Hybrid vigor from the offspring of different breeds is another factor to consider when breeding or selecting animals.

There are many traits that the breeding stock will pass on to their offspring. Some of the more important traits economically are weaning weight, muscle, percent kidding crop, and kidding ease (or lack of need for assistance at kidding). Other traits such as resistance to disease and parasites, adaptability to forages, fertility, and mothering ability are more difficult to measure but can significantly affect returns on investment and time needed to manage the business. From eXtension.org/goat (http://www.extension.org/pages/63281/goat-reproduction-selection-visual-appraisal), below are the descriptions of desirable does and bucks.

**Doe:** A replacement doe should exhibit a feminine head and a feminine wedge appearance to the body with a long elegant neck that blends smoothly into a wide shoulder and back. The doe should project good spring of rib and depth of body, which is a good indicator of volume. There should be adequate muscling in the rear leg without losing femininity. The body should have volume and capacity that demonstrates the ability to breed, carry several kids, and rear young in a pasture environment. The external genitalia of the female should be well developed and properly structured. Vulvas that turn up on end can cause a problem when the buck is serving the doe and can result in poor doe fertility. Does should have well-formed udders with good attachments. It is important that the udder is constructed so that the offspring are able to nurse unassisted. The number of functional teats should not exceed two per side with one teat per side as more desirable. Cull faults include udder and teat abnormalities or defects to include, but not limited to, oversized or bulbous teats and pendulous udder. Other culling characteristics include cluster teats, fishtail teats, or a doe that has not kidded or exhibited signs of pregnancy by 18 months of age.

Goats are prolific animals that will naturally reach puberty and be able to conceive without losing femininity. The body should have volume and a well-defined objective of volume. There should be adequate muscling in the rear leg with greater scrotal circumference. Mature bucks should have a scrotum circumference of at least 25 cm or 10 inches. Young bucks, testicles should be of equal size and large for day of age. Avoid selecting bucks that exhibit sizable splits in the scrotum.

Avoid selecting bucks that show overly pendulous testicles. Testicles should be free of bumps or lumps and should be smooth. Cull faults include a single testicle, testicles too small, abnormal or diseased testes, and excessive split in scrotum. The test structure of the buck should also be reviewed as the buck has a large impact on the herd if his daughters are retained as replacements.

Overall, the same principles of selection should be used year after year to select replacement animals in the herd, regardless of age. These steps of visual appraisal, performance and breeding records, pedigree information, and, most importantly, progeny information will provide a sound herd into the future.

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**Tall Fescue as a Hay Crop**
By: John Hobbs

Tall fescue has long been an important forage crop in Missouri, and for years it has been the dominant species of Missouri pasture and hay land. "Fescue" is an extremely useful forage grass, but it is not without its' drawbacks. Although it comes as close to being a year-around forage as any species we can grow in Missouri, mid-summer production and forage quality are poor, especially during summers that are unusually hot and dry. Added to this problem is the fact that most of our fescue is infested with the endophytic fungus, which is known to produce toxins that have an adverse effect on livestock gains and reproduction. How can we ensure quality hay when using tall fescue? Tall fescue has a reputation of being poor hay, but most of the reasons for the reputation is the haymaker, not the grass. Anytime a cool-season plant matures, forage quality drops rapidly. **Crude protein will drop 0.5% per day from boot stage to mature seed stage.** The secret of quality fescue hay is adequate fertility and early cutting. Normally, fescue hay should be cut no later than May 20-25th in this area. Harvest when the plants’ seed heads are in the boot to early heading stage of growth. Often, producers harvest fescue hay after it has become mature to obtain higher yield and to avoid rain damage that might occur earlier in the spring. This results in poor-quality hay that contains large amounts of toxic fescue seed. Early-cut hay will be leafier and more digestible, and it will be consumed in larger amounts than late-cut hay.

Cutting fescue earlier allows the chance of a second cutting of high-quality leafy hay. Hay made late is not only low quality, but also may contain higher levels of toxins, which reduce animal performance. Fertilizers, especially N, are necessary for good fescue production. For hay production up to 2 tons per acre, apply the recommended rates of N, P and K in late winter at spring green-up. Fescue to be used for hay should receive at least 60 pounds of N during early spring. But if a yield of 3 tons or more is desired, at least 200 pounds of N in split applications (120-80) should be used. Phosphorus and potassium may be applied any time during the year with satisfactory results.
Getting the most from vaccines
By: Dona Goede

As calving season starts to slow down, many cattle producers will begin to think about the next item on the to-do list, the spring working of the cows. Spring time is usually when producers vaccinate their cows and process those young calves. Whenever you are working with vaccines there are several things you need to consider to maximize the effectiveness of the vaccine.

The biggest problem I run across is people not paying attention to ultraviolet light. The vaccines are sitting out in the sun waiting to be used. Ultraviolet light can impair vaccines’ effectiveness, particularly modified-live virus (MLV) products. Vaccines need to be kept cold and dark from the time of purchase through transport to your place, and until use. MLV vaccines are fragile and need to be handled carefully.

It’s also important to know how the vaccine was stored before you obtained it. That means always purchasing from reputable sources. When ordering vaccine by mail try placing orders on Monday so it won’t be sitting somewhere along the way over the weekend. Check the box as soon as it arrives and put it in your refrigerator immediately.

If you buy vaccines locally, take an insulated cooler for transport home, and use multiple ice packs. When you buy from a retailer, ask if they have a thermometer in their vaccine refrigerator, and ask if they monitor and record temperature on a regular basis. Producers can help educate retailers about the importance of checking fridge temperature to make sure it’s maintained at 35-45°F.

Always check expiration dates before purchase. You want to make sure a vaccine won’t expire by the time you plan to use it. Avoid buying something that will expire in just a few months.

If you use an old refrigerator in your barn or shop to store vaccines, make sure it works efficiently. Keep a thermometer in it – and check it regularly. Outdoor temperatures can affect the refrigerator if it’s not in a well-insulated building. Older units may freeze items near the cooling unit, while vaccines stored in the door may get too warm if the door doesn’t seal properly.

Keep a log of your refrigerator temperature to monitor if there are fluctuations that might be dangerous for vaccine. This could alert you if the refrigerator is starting to fail.

After rehydration modified live vaccines are good only a few hours under perfect conditions. Exposure to sunlight and heat will inactivate them very quickly. Alcohol or any disinfectant applied to the needle between animals can kill a modified live vaccine if only a drop remains in the needle. For this reason, when you use a modified live vaccine refrain from disinfecting the needle between animals. You should use disposable needles.

If you are using a syringe and needle to make the diluent transfer, use a clean syringe for this purpose to avoid contamination of the entire vial with the syringe you are vaccinating with. You should also maintain a clean needle for withdrawing vaccine from the vial, avoiding the possibility of contamination by using the needle you are vaccinating with.

Always read the label directions on the vaccine label and follow them. Manufacturers often mix vaccines for the convenience of the user; however, never mix vaccines since they may not be compatible. Proper handling and storage of vaccines will enhance the development of a strong immunity to the diseases you are vaccinating for.

So what can you do with vaccines and antibiotics that need to be disposed of? With the increased pressure against the use of antibiotics in animals, proper disposal of all things related to antibiotic use at the farm and ranch level is as important as proper antibiotic use. Contamination of the environment, especially water with hazardous or potentially hazardous biological wastes is one of the top 30 environmental concerns of the public.

Vaccines containing live attenuated virus may go into a municipal solid waste landfill without being autoclaved or otherwise treated to inactivate the virus. Reconstituted live virus vaccines are unstable and will become inactive within a few hours at unrefrigerated temperature. Individual landfills may have policies regarding this type of waste.

Many county landfills accept veterinary waste as non-hazardous provided the material is adequately packaged. Animal vaccines, both modified live and killed/inactivated, can be disposed via trash/incineration. Killed veterinary vaccines can be disposed of through trash removal.

Outdated or unused antibiotics should be placed into a rigid plastic container with cat litter or compost, sealed and placed into the trash. DO NOT place antibiotics into sewer or septic systems or water sources. Empty antibiotic bottles should also be disposed in trash containers or incinerated.

Needles should be placed into an appropriate “sharps container” and placed into the trash. A plastic gallon jug with a small neck and lid are appropriate sharps receptacles. Used syringes should be disassembled and the tip removed before disposal; incineration is the optimal disposal to eliminate possible misuse.

If you have questions about proper vaccination schedules for your livestock or for questions about vaccines, contact your veterinarian. He/she should always be your first choice for animal health questions.
Reducing Insurance Costs
By: Janet LaFon

Insurance is one expense item that many people tend to forget about, until the premiums come due! They may decide to reduce their insurance costs by not buying it in the first place (or at least not buying as much). But think about the consequences of not having adequate insurance coverage. Frequently we hear stories about people who are faced with huge bills when a house is destroyed, a car is damaged, they suffer a major illness or accident, or someone passes away, and they didn’t have insurance. Yes, premiums can be high. But paying all of the bills for such a loss is usually much higher.

So, where do you begin? The first step is to review your current policies. You may want to visit with your agent and/or the companies to see if there are ways to reduce costs. In addition, you might want to shop around. Get quotes from various companies offering the coverage you need (such as automobile, health, homeowners/renters, life and disability). Here are some things to consider:

- Deductibles. A deductible allows you to self-insure the first portion of any loss. You will find that the higher the deductible, the lower the premium.
- Coinsurance. This means that you and the insurer share in the payment for any loss, usually on a percentage basis.
- Exclusions. These are items that are not covered, at least initially, by the policy. Be sure to check how exclusions affect the premium, as well as noting the time frame for exclusions.
- Multi-coverage discounts. Many companies offer discounts for having more than one type of coverage with them (such as homeowners and automobile).
- Other discounts. Many companies offer discounts such as safe driver, good student or non-smoker discounts. And there may be discounts for things that reduce risk such as dead bolt locks, smoke alarms, anti-lock brakes, or airbags.
- Be sure you are not duplicating coverage.
- Review insurance coverage periodically to make sure you are not over insured.
- Check to see if it is cheaper to pay premiums for a full year rather than in monthly or quarterly installments.

Take a look at group plans offered through employers, organizational memberships, etc. These often have lower premiums than individual policies.

A good resource for insurance information is the Missouri Department of Insurance. They can tell you such things as if a company is operating legally in Missouri or if there have been complaints filed against a company. You can call them toll free at 1-800-726-7390, or visit their website: http://insurance.mo.gov/.

Special Missouri Cattleman’s Meeting – Branding, Cattle and Equipment Theft Prevention, and Fly Control

On May 14th at 6 PM, the Newton/McDonald County Missouri Cattleman’s Association will be holding a meeting at the Crowder College Agriculture Department. All are invited. Bayer Advanced will present a program on fly control. Newton County Law Enforcement will be presenting a livestock and equipment theft prevention program. The Crowder Agriculture Department will be demonstrating hot and cold branding of cattle.

There will be a light meal at 6 PM followed by the program.