Cull cows and bulls are a big part of the beef production in the United States producing 10% of beef available. We all contribute to this pool of meat and it pays to know what those cull animals will be classified as before selling. There are basically four classes of cull cows that are divided mainly on fatness. The four classes include breakers, boners or boning utility, leans, and lights. Glenn Selk from Oklahoma State University Extension explains the classes this way:

The highest conditioned cull cows are reported as "Breakers". They usually are quite fleshy and generally have excellent dressing percentages. Body condition score 7 and above are required to be "Breakers".

The next class is a more moderate conditioned group of cows called "Boners" or "Boning Utility". These cows usually would fall in the body condition score grades of 5 to 7. Many well-nourished commercial beef cows would be graded "Boners".

The last two groups of cows as reported by the market news service are the "Leans" and "Lites". These cows are very thin (Body condition scores 1 - 4). They are in general expected to be lower in dressing percentage than the fleshier cows and are more easily bruised while being transported than are cows in better body condition. "Lites" are thin cows that are very small and would have very low hot carcass weights.

Leans and Lites are nearly always lower in price per pound than are the Boners and the Breakers. "Lites" often bring the lowest price per pound because the amount of saleable product is small, even though the overhead costs of slaughtering and processing are about the same as larger, fleshier cows.

Be sure to pay attention to what condition your cows are in before you sell them. It may pay to put a little weight on the leans or lights to bring them up to boning class for more money. If you are planning on selling a cow right after weaning her calf you might be able to put some quick weight on her in 40 days to move up a class.
A Goat seminar will be held on Thursday, November 6, 2008 at the United Methodist Church in Marble Hill beginning at 6:30 p.m. Roger Eakins and I will speak about goat nutrition and grazing, parasite control and basic goat health. Refreshments will be provided courtesy of the Bollinger County Extension Council and the Bollinger County Commission. Please RSVP to the Bollinger County Extension office by November 4th by calling 573-238-2420 or e-mail bollingerco@missouri.edu

**BEEF PROFITABILITY SEMINAR**

With grain prices skyrocketing and livestock prices not following suit, farmers are looking at big losses this year. Better management and improved marketing strategies are going to be the keys to survival. On November 18th, the Reynolds County Extension Council will be sponsoring a Beef Profitability seminar presented by Kendra Graham, Livestock Specialist. Topics to be covered include the latest information on grain and livestock prices, tools available for managing feed prices and livestock price risk, and setting up your livestock enterprise for long-term profitability.

The program will begin at 6:30 p.m. in the Ellington City Hall. The cost will be $5 per person. To pre-register please call the Reynolds County Extension office at 573-663-2251 by November 14th.

**SHOW-ME-SELECT SALE**

The Southeast Missouri Show-Me-Select sale will be held on Saturday, December 6th in the Fruitland Livestock Auction barn beginning at 1 p.m. There will be about 107 heifers available with both crossbred and registered purebred stock selling. Catalogs should be out shortly. Let me know if you need one.

**SEMO BULL SALE REPORT**

Our 63rd SEMO Bull sale was held on October 24. 33 bulls were sold for an average of $2,108. Six buyers purchased 2 bulls each. Two bulls, one Angus and one Simmental, tied for the top selling price of $4,000. The breakdown of breeds is as follows:

- 23 Angus sold for and average of $2,146 ea.
- 3 Charolais sold for an average of $2,000 ea.
- 2 Herefords sold for an average of $1,950 ea.
- 4 Simmental sold for an average of $2,050 ea.

The next sale is scheduled for March 27th.

**SEMO MEAT GOAT PRODUCERS MEETING**

The SEMO Meat Goat Producers Association will have its next meeting on Saturday, November 8th from 2-4 p.m. at Madison County Farm Supply in Fredericktown. Please contact Dennis Sparks, president, at 573-833-6300 for more information.

**RED BOOKS**

The red pocket-sized cattle record keeping books will be available the first part of November. The cost is $4.25 per book. They are an excellent book to write down calving dates, pasture usage, breeding dates, calf information, annual precipitation, vaccination dates and much more. By making a few notes in this book here and there you will be better equipped to make sound management decisions later on.
Fall is a good time of year to cull animals that are not productive. Unproductive animals cost you quite a bit of money through feed costs, medication, labor, and space. You should begin culling by identifying animals that did not have a calf/kid/foal/lamb/pig this year. Most of the time these animals are older and are nearing the end of their reproductive life. However, younger animals can have their problems also. If an animal has not been bred this year you may want to look at your nutritional program first. Animals with poor nutrition tend to not breed because they are focusing all of their energy on maintaining themselves and not on reproduction. If your animals are well fed, they may have other problems contributing to lack of pregnancy. Problems with the birthing process last year may have contributed to unbred animals this year. Also, sick animals typically will not breed back as fast as a healthy animal. Breeding may not always be the reason to cull an animal. If the animal has poor offspring that is not as productive as its peers then the problem can point back to the mothering ability or genetics of the mother. A good rule of thumb is to do a check of your animals to determine which animals to cull.

1. MOUTH – A good set of teeth is needed to chew food. Gumming food does not help much in the digestive process.
2. EYES – Make sure they are clear and free of any diseases like pinkeye or cancer that may impair vision. A blind animal may not always find the feed bunk or hay bale.
3. FEET – Make sure the animal walks normally, toe growth is even, and corns or foot rot are not present.
4. TEATS – Look for functional teats and no large quarters indicating mastitis.
5. REPRODUCTIVE TRACT EVALUATION – Let your vet determine if there may be a problem or abnormalities with the animals reproductive organs.
6. BODY CONDITION – Make sure the animal is in the proper body condition to be productive. A thin animal usually indicates a problem.
7. OVERALL APPEARANCE – Look for lumps, bumps, abnormalities, disease such as fescue toxicity, and attitude of the animal. A fighting fence-jumper can cost a lot of money in fencing supplies and possibly hospital bills.

The best advice to offer when culling animals is to be objective and not make too many excuses. Your favorite pet cannot stay around forever without costing you a lot of money.

Winter is fast approaching and livestock producers need to be planning out winter feeding programs for their animals. The most common supplement fed to livestock during the winter is hay. Very few producers know what the nutritional value of their hay is and if that hay meets the animal’s nutritional requirements. The only way to find out the nutrient content of hay is to have it analyzed by a forage testing lab. A forage test typically runs $14 to $19 per test. Common analysis results will include moisture, crude protein, A.D. fiber, TDN, Calcium, Phosphorus and Nitrate. These numbers can help you figure out if a supplement is needed and how much. The Wayne, Butler, Reynolds and Ripley county offices have hay samplers available for use.

To get a proper hay sample you need to use a hay sampler. The sampler consists of a metal tube that fits on the end of a cordless drill. The tube is then pushed into the rounded side of a large bale or the end of a square bale. Up to 20 core samples can be combined to make one tested sample. However, be sure that all of those core samples come from the same cutting, is the same type of grass, and from one field or fields that have the same topography. Wayne County sends hay samples to a testing lab in Golden City, MO but other labs do similar testing. Be sure that the testing lab you choose is a certified lab.

When you get your samples back feel free to call me to get an explanation of your results. We can then work on a ration if you need a supplement for your cows.
**SOUTHEAST MISSOURI MARKET REPORTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>October 24th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Steers</td>
<td>Heifers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300-400 lbs.</td>
<td>$101-124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400-500 lbs.</td>
<td>$97-109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500-600 lbs</td>
<td>$90-103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600-700 lbs.</td>
<td>$89-98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>700-800 lbs.</td>
<td>$85-95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goat</th>
<th>Oct. 25 Oregon Co.</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
<th>Oct. 18 Fruitland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22-40 lbs.</td>
<td>85 cwt.</td>
<td>48 lbs.</td>
<td>$92 cwt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-60 lbs</td>
<td>$103 cwt.</td>
<td>62-68 lbs.</td>
<td>$93-96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-80 lbs.</td>
<td>$103 cwt.</td>
<td>70-85 lbs.</td>
<td>$82-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81 + lbs.</td>
<td>$70 cwt.</td>
<td>Fancy 70 lbs.</td>
<td>$99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Equal opportunity is and shall be provided to all participants in Extension programs and activities, and for all employees and applicants for employment on the basis of their demonstrated ability and competence without discrimination on the basis of their race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability or status as a Vietnam-era veteran. This policy shall not be interpreted in such a manner as to violate the legal rights of religious organizations or military organizations associated with the armed forces of the United States of America.