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TOURS – REAL & VIRTUAL

Below are details on a couple of educational opportunities just around the corner. The traditional Southwest Research Center Field Day, Mt. Vernon will be Virtual this year on September 10. That means you can catch it on your computer. More details as they become available can be found at: <https://cafnr.missouri.edu/2020/07/going-virtual/>

The other is a real, on-the-farms tour by the Southwest Missouri Cattlemen and Extension. The tour will visit three farms that feature producing and marketing home-raised beef, Show-Me-Select heifers that are now cows, calves out of Beefmaster bulls, zero haying equipment, management intensive grazing, smaller operations, Beef Quality Assurance participants, young cattlemen, custom cowboys and more. Check the enclosed flyer for more details.

FEEDOUT RESULTS

We finally finished killing the steers in the feedout on July 7. That's about 60 days longer than we normally feed them., The extra time probably helped the dairy-beef steers on their average sale weight which was around 1150 pounds. One of them even made Prime minus, but some only made Select quality grade. The genetic variability of their dams played a big part in their outcome. Even though they were variable, they were the only group that made a profit in the finishing phase. Their per head profit was \$61.63. The whole group average loss was \$159.95.

Of course, the profit for the finishing phase was pretty much established when the dairy-beef crosses were possibly under-valued at only \$1 per pound last November. We did have 29 steers out of 122 (24%) that showed a profit during the finishing. The top-profit steer made \$219.72 and was the top daily gainer at 4.55 lbs. overall. His carcass graded premium Choice with a 2.8 Yield Grade. He was consigned by Ronnie Veith, Purdy.

The best gaining group for the feedout were 5, Hereford-sired steers out of Brangus cows. Their daily gain was 3.68 lbs. The owner was Duane Walker, Neosho. The best quality grading steers were 12 Angus from Carrier Muddy Creek Angus, Lockwood. They had 10 of the 12 grade

Prime minus or better. The top Yield Grading steers belonged to Keuper Farms, Ionia with a 2.29 Yield Grade average.

You can see many of the feedout steers and their data on a power point presentation by going to the following link: <https://extension2.missouri.edu/media/wysiwyg/Extensiondata/CountyPages/Lawrence/Docs/Feedout2019-2020.pdf>

The next Missouri Steer Feedout begins on November 3. Entry deadline is October 10. Groups must be at least 5 head of calves or more born after January 1, 2020 and weaned by September 19. If you've always wondered how your calves perform after they leave your farm, this program lets you know. I don't guarantee you'll make money but you'll gain valuable information that could help you make marketing and breeding stock decisions on down the road.

FOR THE WOMEN

A free, virtual zoom event geared for women is set for 9 am.to noon, September 3. The focus is on resilience, financial and farm stress, self-care and mental well-being. Several interesting and timely talks will be given. The wrap-up session features a panel of farm women sharing how they find balance in their work and personal lives. Register at: <https://extension2.missouri.edu/events/farm-family-me-summit-for-women-1596489812>

LAMENESS SURVEY

Back before COVID-19 became such an item, I received a request to help a couple of veterinarians on campus with distributing a survey. It involved producers answering a few questions about lameness and antimicrobial use in Missouri beef herds. They promised it would only take 10 or 15 minutes. I told them I would be helping with the bull breeding soundness clinics during March and could have some of them complete the survey. I did end up having around 50 surveys completed. If you happened to be one of those surveyed, don't do it again. Otherwise, give some

consideration to completing the on-line versions now at this link:

https://missouri.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1BV2TqAhImIBzJb

The goal of the study is to determine the most common causes of lameness in beef cattle and which antibiotics and treatments are most commonly used to treat them. Please help them if you can.

VESICULAR STOMATITIS

A few weeks back VS was identified in some horses in southwest Missouri. The clinical signs are lesions in and around the mouth, nose, coronary band and/or sheath and udder. Mostly it is found in horses but sometimes in cattle. They may have a fever and drool or froth at the mouth. Lameness may occur if the lesions develop around the coronary band.

I've not heard of any Missouri cattle being affected but some horses were under quarantine in three or so counties. This is just a heads up in case you see some of those symptoms that can't be explained. If seen contact your veterinarian as VS is a state reportable disease. As I write this in mid-August there are 8 Missouri counties pending or positive in Missouri.

LOTS OF COWS

Progressive Cattle magazine's recent issue merely confirmed what we all know, there's a lot of beef cows in SW Missouri. This year's tally looks like this.

The top 50 beef cows per county in the United States include these from Missouri: #21 Polk – 54,000 head; #30 Lawrence – 50,000 head; #40 Texas – 47,000 head; #43 Barry – 46,500 head and #45 Newton – 46,000 head.

Missouri continues its back and forth battle with Oklahoma for second or third place in state beef cow numbers. We are third in 2020. Missouri is #2 in the U.S. with 53,497 cattle/calf operations, of course Texas is number one in that and most other categories. Nebraska did beat Texas in state rank for cash receipts and in cattle and calf sales.

I usually say the average cow herd size in Missouri is around 40 head. According to the Progressive stats we average 81 on the number of head per operation which probably would include replacements, bulls, stockers, etc..

HAY SHOW RESULTS

In the previous items we discussed Missouri's rank in beef cattle. Missouri also ranks fairly well in total hay production. This makes sense with all those cattle. Unfortunately, our high hay production isn't of the high quality stuff much of the time. However, we have a lot of farmers who do harvest high quality hay and haylage.

One of the best ways to bring attention to quality hay is through the Ozark Empire Hay Show. This year we had around 40 entries and some of them were outstanding. The judging process for hay and haylage is pretty much a numbers game using fiber levels and total digestible nutrient (TDN) which calculates into a Relative Forage Quality (RFQ) number. There's not sniffing of the hay, no cow tasting or any other subjective evaluation, it's just the laboratory analysis.

This year's haylage champion was from Groves View Dairy, Billings. It had a very high RFQ of 276. The TDN was 75.6% and crude protein was 19.7%. It was alfalfa and harvested on April 19.

The dry hay champion was entered by Glenn and Toni Obermann, Monett. This was their 6th champion hay in 11 years. Their hay, also alfalfa, was a 4th cutting with an RFQ of 221, TDN 68.2% and protein was 23.2%. The variety was a low lignin variety.

By the way, Obermann's used to dairy but strictly raises and sell high quality legume and grass legume hay. Interesting point is that over the years our champions usually come from the current dairy or former dairy farmers. Glenn's hay goes to dairy goats, alpacas and horses.

Alfalfa is disappearing from the scene but there's certainly a place for it in this area. It's the best companion forage I can think of for fescue, especially the Kentucky 31 variety with toxicity problems. The alfalfa doesn't have to be Supreme or even Premium to be a good supplement in the beef cattle diet, a Good quality grade alfalfa is satisfactory.

If any of you need to purchase hay this year, consider alfalfa with a hay test on it. Look at the RFQ or RFV numbers. You should use it as a supplement to your lower quality grass hay if you have beef cattle.

CREEP FEEDING

I've had several calls related to creep feeding calves before weaning time. As with so many good questions the first reply is, "it depends". If your pastures are dry and short, creep feeding could be a paying proposition. If you have a set of young cows especially thin ones, creep feeding or just wean early is often a good option.

You may never have thought about high quality hay as a creep, but it can work especially if it has alfalfa or another legume in it. Hay that runs at least 12 percent protein and 58 to 60 percent total digestible nutrient (TDN) can be helpful as a creep item.