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BULL CLINICS SET

As you know, we've sort of designated March and October as bull breeding soundness days. Sure, you can work with your veterinarians any day of the year to have your bull checked for breeding soundness but for you forward thinkers with planned turnout days for bulls it's nice to have them tested several weeks in advance.

We've tested over 4500 bulls since 2005 at several different clinics and consistently we have roughly 10% of the bulls fail to be satisfactory potential breeders. Some bulls may be borderline cases that would breed and settle part of the females, but could string out the calf crop the next year. If you want to tighten your calving season make sure your bulls checked out with a couple of spares in the bull pen in case of an injury.

Here's the schedule of clinics I'll be at to talk bulls with you and answer questions about objective evaluation of bulls versus just looking at them.

October 12 – Dake Veterinary Clinic, Miller
417-452-3301

October 14 – Animals Clinic of Diamond, Diamond
417-325-4136

**October 20 – Barry County Veterinary Service,
Cassville** 417-847-2677

October 21 – Countryside Animal Clinic, Aurora
417-678-4011

We usually check around 180-200 bulls on these four days. The veterinarians like these events when they can concentrate on small herds of one or two bulls in a group of course we'll also have some who bring a trailer full of bulls.

The important thing is get your bull checked somewhere even though he was acceptable he could have had problems surface since the spring checkup.

University of Missouri System, Lincoln University, U.S. Department of Agriculture & Local University Extension Councils Cooperating

OTHER DATES

September 28, 6:30 pm – Winter Livestock Nutrition and Feeding Workshop – Presentations by Extension specialists Reagan Bluel and Tim Schnakenberg. Reserve your meal by September 24 at 417-457-6812. The event will be held at Crane Hilltop Church, 810 Hwy DD. Sandwich Supper provided by Rocking W Farm & Home and Extension.

October 1-3 – Ozark Fall Farmfest – University of Missouri Extension will have a booth in the West Hall. Please stop by.

October 10 – Deadline for entering 5 or more steer calves in the Missouri Steer Feedout. Pickup at Joplin Regional Stockyards on November 2.

October 25, 7 pm – Southwest Missouri All-Breed Performance Tested Bull Sale, Springfield Livestock Marketing Center.

BEEF REPRO MEETING

Jordan Thomas will be putting together a day-long workshop at different locations this fall. He's named the "baby", Whole System Management of Beef Cattle Reproduction. It will be held in southwest Missouri at our Center, Mt. Vernon. The agenda is not complete but Jordan will be doing most of the teaching with some help from Extension field specialists. Part of the meeting will be a tour through the Southwest Center's cow herd in transition and talks about stockpiling, body condition scoring and more. I feel you'll enjoy the day and we'll have registration information up soon.

BEEF BY-PRODUCT VALUE

This week's beef newsletter from Oklahoma State has some interesting items from Dr. Derrell Peel. He led off by saying the beef by-product values have increased a lot in the past few months. Now, you may not get excited about dining on tripe, liver, meat scraps, etc. but those are important in various parts of the world.

The single biggest item of the by-products is the hide. In August hide values were up 115 percent compared to 2020.

Other items that's helping out on overall steer value are: edible tallow; tongues up 111 percent; livers up as well as heart and cheek meats. The majority of hides and offal are exported.

JOHNSONGRASS

We're at the time of the year when some of you get nervous about johnsongrass in your pastures. If it was so bad, I'm not sure we'd have any cattle alive on many farms. But occasionally there are some unlucky folks that lose a cow or yearling from it.

Remember, the cause of johnsongrass death can be either from nitrates or from cyanide or prussic acid. Other plants in that family with similar risks are the sorghums, sudan and sorghum x sudan crosses. This time of year, frost might be a factor of concern. We suggest you wait about a week after a killing frost and after the grass is dry and brown before letting the cattle in to graze it.

Nitrates tend to show up earlier in the summer when dry weather strikes and the short, under two feet tall, pasture is grazed. We can do a quick test at many extension offices for nitrates. If there's a significant reaction, we encourage you to take it to a lab for a quantitative test to see how hot it really is.

The literature always points out that if death is from nitrates the blood will be a chocolate color, but if they die from prussic acid, they'll have a bright red blood color. Let's keep our fingers crossed we don't have either one as a problem this fall.

RONNIE'S STORY

Our first stop on the beef tour on September 11 was at Ronnie Veith's, Purdy. I picked his herd as a stop because of his recent success in the Missouri Steer Feedout. He first tried the Feedout in 1996 when we fed the cattle at GM Feedlot, Appleton City, MO. His cattle gained very nicely, but all five steers graded Select. The buyer who put comments on the steers at GM said they would have been valued higher if they'd been all black instead of gray.

Ronnie told the tour folks he does pay a lot of attention to the carcass traits when making bull selections. He said, especially on marbling and feedlot indexes. He tries to make sure they're in the top 25 percentile rank. He also watches docility and is following closely the hair shedding

EPDs that Angus are cooperating with University of Missouri on.

CHERRY'S INPUT

Even though mid-February 2021 was terrible weather that cost him 10 calves, Cherry Warren said after seeing how big the surviving calves were compared to his calves born a month later, he turned the bulls in for February 2022 calving. I agree with Cherry, not only will there more weight per calf, the 2022 calf crop will be larger due to the bull's getting cows bred earlier due to the warm weather later in the breeding season. He realizes the toxins in fescue is a negative due to the elevated body temperature of probably both the bulls and the cows. Shade does help but Cherry has planted some novel fescues like Texoma and he likes it. To wrap up his comments, he thinks about what he should have done when starting out in the 70's.. He said there's no doubt he should have bought better bulls. Of course, in his defense, when he started building his herd, we did not have objective data like EPDs, to effectively make breeding stock selections like we have today. If you're not using that data you will likely not make much progress in developing your herd.

THOUGHTS FROM CIRCLE M

The Mareth's Ed, Alex and David said the small, under 1000 head, feedlot actually started on a napkin in a restaurant. It was at first thought of as a grow yard, but with the new beef packing plan at Pleasant Hope, they decided to offer the lot as a finishing lot. That inspired them to not be big, but to be good. This thinking, they hope, will get local, young producers to add weight economically and get paid for quality beef. They stressed, if you have evidence from your cattle that they have top performing cattle, you should be rewarded.

One of the most striking observations was the lack of flies. They didn't know the exact products that were involved, but they said since a little over a month ago, the flies have just disappeared.

They were asked who and where they bought cattle from. They said they preferred to buy privately so cattle did not go through a sale barn due to disease risks. Of course a lot of cattle producers are not comfortable selling off the farm and may not have facilities and are not willing to pencil shrink their cattle.

All in all, the tour was successful. We'll observe what those who attended picked up as good practices on their farm whether you run 40 cows or 1000.