Farm-Finished, Direct-Marketed Beef

With our input costs at record high levels, we as producers need to start looking at other ways to market our cattle. There are several options available to us that “add value” to our cattle when we market them, most of which are similar to a more traditional way of marketing. I think there are some opportunities along a different line that could take some of our operations to a new level.

On Thursday, January 15, there will be an educational program for beef producers who are seriously considering converting their cow-calf operation into a pasture-based finishing operation. This educational event will be held at the Mountain Horticultural Crops Research & Extension Center in Mills River. The program will begin at 9:00 am and conclude around 3:00 pm.

This will be an information-packed day with information on:

- Effective Marketing
- Alternative Livestock Production Systems for Finishing Beef (will include all forage-fed, limited-grain finishing and heavy-grain finishing regimes)
- Forage Production Systems
- Risk and Risk Management Strategies
- Economics of Going From a Cow-Calf Operation to Finishing Cattle
- Direct Marketing Beef

Presenters will include Dr. Matt Poore, Dr. Sue Ellen Johnson and Dr. Geoff Benson, Cooperative Extension Specialists at NCSU. There will also be a panel of successful producers on hand to discuss some of the challenges they have faced and to help you with some questions you may have as you diversify your operation.

This is an excellent opportunity available to all Western North Carolina producers, and space is limited. The meeting is free to participants, and a meal and refreshments will be provided. In order to save your seat and assure we have enough food, it is important that you preregister by calling 687-0570, ext. 122.

Persons with disabilities and persons with limited English proficiency may request accommodations to participate in activities mentioned in this newsletter. Please contact Jeff Bradley at 828-255-5522 during business hours at least 3 days prior to the event to discuss accommodations.
Western North Carolina Area Beef Cattle Conference
and Waynesville Performance Tested Bull Sale

Saturday — January 3, 2009
Mountain Research Station and
Haywood County Agricultural Office Building
Waynesville, NC

A Program of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service
In Cooperation With the North Carolina Cattlemen’s Association

Program - Haywood County Agricultural Office Building

9:00 am Registration
9:30 am Welcome and Introductions – Dr. Jim Turner
9:45 am Beef Quality Assurance Chute-side Demonstration – Drs. Jim Turner and Mark Alley
11:00 am Adjourn to Bull Test and Receive Final Results – Danny Hyatt
11:15 am Bull Test Station – Receive Final Results on Individual Performance and View Bulls – Gary Gregory and Danny Hyatt
12:00 noon Sponsored Lunch - Haywood County Agricultural Office Building
1:00 pm 29th Annual Waynesville BCIP Bull Sale – Bryan Blinson

Everyone will have an opportunity to see the bulls at the Mountain Research Station Saturday morning. They will be auctioned Saturday afternoon while viewing a video of the bulls by sale order. The bulls will remain at the Research Station and can be picked up Saturday evening, or between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. the following week. They must be picked up by Friday January 9.

EACH ANIMAL SOLD BECOMES THE PROPERTY OF THE PURCHASER AS SOON AS SOLD BUT WILL NOT BE RELEASED UNTIL SETTLED FOR. ANIMALS WILL BE FED AND CARED FOR THE FOLLOWING WEEK AT THE BUYER’S RISK.

SPEAKERS

Dr. Mark Alley
Dept of Population Health & Pathobiology
Clinical Assistant Professor
NC State University

Mr. Bryan Blinson
Executive Director
NC Cattlemen’s Association
NC State University

Dr. Jim Turner
Western Area Livestock Specialist
NC State University

CONFERENCE SPONSORS

North Carolina Farm Bureau
Sevier Farmers Coop
Pfizer Animal Health
Southern States

For further Information please contact one of the following:
Jim Turner — (828) 456-7520 or
Gary Gregory — (919) 515-4027
North Carolina BCIP Bull Test
Waynesville

FINAL REPORT
NOVEMBER 24, 2008

Page 3

Did you know that you can get this newsletter via email? If you are interested, please contact us either by phone at 828-255-5522 or email at deanna_jordan@ncsu.edu.
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<td>43 BULLS</td>
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**AVERAGES: 43 BULLS**  
Standard Deviation: Weight 697, YRL 101, ADG 3.87, WDA 1.17, HIP 6.0, Frame 36.2
Will My Cow Herd Make It Through the Winter?

I know we may all be tired of hearing about the drought and its effects on our cow herd; but after a recent meeting with Dr. Jim Turner, I feel it is important to cover the topic of winter feeding. I know hay supplies aren’t nearly as scarce as they were this time last year, but some of us are still worried whether or not we will have enough feed to get our cattle through this winter.

It is important for us to realize that our cattle are different from each other, which makes them have different nutritional requirements. If you have 50 cows on a tight calving season and if you sell every calf at weaning, your winter feeding management may be easier than someone who has 50 cows and sells preconditioned calves, replacement heifers, breeding bulls, and freezer beef or someone with a year-round calving season.

Cattle nutritional requirements are based on their stage of production. Young calves are in the “growing” stage because they are actively growing. They are gaining muscle mass and bone mass and require the highest level of nutrition. Weaned calves and replacements are next in line as they are continuing to grow and add muscle and bone mass. Their level of nutrition is similar to the young calves, but at a higher intake rate due to their body size.

Bred heifers and 2-year old cows are grouped in the “breeding” stage of production with younger animals needing a little higher quality nutrition. The bred heifers are still growing themselves, in addition to growing a calf inside, while the 2-year old cows are just trying to maintain their body condition while growing a calf inside. The 2-year old cow may have a little higher intake, but does not require as high quality.

Lactating cows fall into the next category. These animals are also grouped according to age as well as milking ability. Of course, the first-calf heifers and 2-year old cows require a higher level of nutrition than the mature cows, but will have a much lower intake rate. If we analyze the mature cows, a cow that has superior milking ability will require a slightly higher level of nutrition than one with average milking ability, while their intake level will be dramatically higher than the heifers and 2-year olds. This, of course, depends on the mature size of your cows. Mature breeding cattle are not only trying to maintain themselves but are also using nutrients to provide for their offspring.

The last stage of production encompasses everything else on your farm—mature cows in the last third of gestation and mature bulls. These animals are basically at a maintenance level and require lower quality feeds but will require higher intake rates due to their overall size.

The following example will show the different requirements for: Dry Matter Intake (DMI), Total Digestible Nutrients (TDN), and Crude Protein (CP) for different classes of cattle. You can see by looking at this table that the requirements vary quite a bit from one group to the next. It is important that we understand what our cattle need in order to prepare ourselves for winter feeding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class of Cattle</th>
<th>DMI (lbs)</th>
<th>TDN (%)</th>
<th>CP (%)</th>
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<td>1,000 lb First-Calf Heifer</td>
<td>20.68</td>
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<td>1,200 lb Mature Cow</td>
<td>23.32</td>
<td>56.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>700 lb Steer gaining 3lbs/day</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>11.7</td>
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- continued on page 6 -
When we begin to feed our winter hay supplies, it is important to know who needs our best hay and who can get by on the lower quality hay. Again, the class of your cattle will determine who gets the best feed. The following chart can give you an idea of how to allocate your hay this winter.

### Allocation of Hay To Various Classes of Cattle Based on Quality

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<th>Quality of Hay</th>
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<td>Young Calves</td>
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<td>Weaned Calves</td>
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<td>Replacements</td>
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<td>Yearlings</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bred Heifers</td>
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<td>2-year old Cows</td>
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<td>Lactating Cows</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mature Cows, last 1/3 of gestation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mature Bulls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Mature Pregnant Cows, first 2/3 of gestation</td>
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In order to determine the amount of feed your cattle need for the winter, you will need to do some simple calculations. You must first determine the number of animal units in your herd.

**Calculate Animal Units:**

- **Mature Cow/Bull** = 1.00
- **Yearling Cattle** = 0.50
- **Calves** = 0.25

**Figure Feeding For 140 Days**

Each Animal Unit Equals 20 Pounds Needed Per Day

**EXAMPLE**

- 30 Cows X 1.00 = 30
- 10 R. Heifers X .50 = 5
- 24 Calves X .25 = 6
- 1 Bull X 1 = 1

42 Animal Units

42 x 20 lbs/day x 140 days = 117,600 lbs (58.8 Tons)

+ 20% hay wastage (11.7 Tons)

141,120 lbs (70.5 Tons) Total Needed

Hay wastage is due to feeding and/or storage losses.

This figure could be higher or lower, depending on hay feeding/storage management practices.

In order to estimate your feed supplies, you must know how many pounds of hay you have on hand (realistic estimate), how much pasture/winter annuals you have available to graze, and any other types of feed you may have available such as by-products, grain, or crop residues. A typical 4’ x 5” round bale weighs about 800 pounds. You then have to do these calculations and determine if you have enough feed for the number of animal units on your farm or if you have a shortage. If a shortage occurs, you either have to sell animals or buy feed. That is a management decision that you will need to make.

If you need assistance in determining if you have enough feed on hand, winter feeding management practices to stretch feed supplies, or balancing feed rations, give Jeff Bradley a call at 828-255-5522.
The North Carolina Forage and Grassland Council will hold a conference with a theme of managing input costs on **Thursday, January 29, at the Haywood County Center of NC Cooperative Extension**. There will be a tradeshow for producers and featured speakers from NC State University, Clemson University and the University of Georgia.

There will also be presentations from regional producers who have been successful at managing their pastures and hayfields while paying close attention to their input costs. These producers will also be on a panel for a question/answer session. An evening meal will be provided. Below is the agenda and registration form for the meeting.

**Program (planned)**

1:00 Trade Show and Registration
2:00 Welcome – V. Mac Baldwin NCFGC President
2:10 Dr. John Andrae - Clemson University - Input Costs
2:50 Break
3:10 Regional Producer Presentations and Panel
5:10 Extension Updates
5:30 Dinner and Tradeshow
6:30 Dr. Dennis Hancock – U Georgia – Cost Management

**Registration**

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<td>Student</td>
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**NCFGC Conference Registration**

Please register ________________________________ for the
Name(s)

___ Kenansville (Jan 27); ___ Albemarle (Jan 28); ___ Waynesville (Jan 29) conference.

Total number registered________. A check for _____ payable to NCFGC is enclosed.

**Mail to:** NCFGC, 2228 N. Main St, Fuquay-Varina, NC 27695
Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) Certification Training

Beef Quality Assurance is a national program that provides guidelines for beef cattle production. The program raises consumer confidence through offering proper management techniques and a commitment to quality within every segment of the beef industry. Producers have embraced BQA because it is the right thing to do; but they have also gained through increased profitability. As an educating program, BQA helps producers identify management processes that can be improved.

BQA does more than just help beef producers capture more value from their market cattle: BQA also reflects a positive public image and instills consumer confidence in the beef industry. When producers implement the best management practices of a BQA program, they assure their market steers, heifers, cows, and bulls are the best they can be. Today, the stakes are even higher because of increased public attention on animal welfare. BQA is valuable to all beef and dairy producers because it:

- Demonstrates commitment to food safety and quality.
- Safeguards the public image of the dairy industry.
- Upholds consumer confidence in valuable beef products.
- Protects the beef industry from additional and burdensome government regulation.
- Improves sale value of marketed beef cattle.
- Enhances herd profitability through better management.

The Buncombe County Center of NC Cooperative Extension is planning a BQA Certification Training in February. The date has not been set, but we would like to know how many folks to plan for when we schedule a location for the training. If you are interested, please contact Jeff Bradley at 828-255-5522.