Inside This Issue
- Winter Management Considerations, p.2
- AI Clinic, p.2
- Structure Maintenance for Winter, p.3
- NC Forage & Grassland Council Winter Conference, p.3
- Present Use Value Taxation Program, p.4
- Business Side of Agritourism Workshop, p.5
- WNC Beef Cattle 101, p.6
- Coming Events, p.6

Contact Us
Jeffrey K. Bradley
Extension Area Agent
Agriculture-Livestock, Dairy, Horses, Forages & Row Crops
Buncombe, Henderson and Transylvania Counties
North Carolina Cooperative Extension
Buncombe County Center
94 Coxe Avenue
Asheville, NC 28801-3620
828) 255-5522 Phone
(828) 255-5202 Fax
http://buncombe.ces.ncsu.edu

Soil Sample NOW
Good pasture growth and hay yields require the addition of fertilizer and lime. In Western North Carolina we typically make our lime applications in the fall and our fertilizer applications in late February and early March to boost spring growth. Soil testing is the best way to determine how much fertilizer and lime to apply based on the crop and exiting field conditions. Purchasing lime and fertilizer is an economic decision; and prices, which have increased dramatically in recent years, are likely to remain high. Soil testing minimizes risk of unnecessary expenditure because it tells you exactly what you need for your crop. If your pasture only needs nitrogen, there is no point in buying a fertilizer that contains phosphorous and potassium.

Delays are common at the soil lab during the winter months due to the high volume of samples they receive. If you plan to fertilize this spring based on a soil test report, you should sample your pastures and fields as soon as possible in order to receive your results in time for that spring application. Reports will no longer be mailed and will be available on-line. If you need soil sample boxes and forms, or if you have questions about soil sampling, call Jeff Bradley at 828-255-5522.

Pasture Walks Scheduled
This is a follow-up reminder of the two “Pasture Walks” we have scheduled in January. The first pasture walk will be held on Monday, January 11, at Everett Farm in Pisgah Forest. The second pasture walk will be held on Wednesday, January 13, at the T.K. Brown Farm in Black Mountain. Both meetings will begin at 3:00 pm in order to have enough daylight to see the demonstrations. The purpose of these meetings is to allow producers to see how grazing stockpiled forage works. If you have any questions regarding these pasture walks, call Jeff Bradley at 828-255-5522. See directions to each farm below.

Directions to Everett Farm – 1636 Everett Road:
Take Hwy 64 to Crab Creek Road in Pisgah Forest. Take Crab Creek Road about 1.5 miles to Everett Rd. Turn right on Everett Road &continue 1.5 miles to 1636 Everett Rd.

Directions to T.K. Brown’s Farm – 641 North Fork Road:
Take I-40 East from Asheville. Take Exit 59 toward Swannanoa. Turn left at Patton Cove Rd (at end of exit ramp). Turn right onto US-70. Travel 2.4 miles; turn left onto Grovestone Rd and travel -.3 mile. Grovestone Rd becomes North Fork Rd. Travel 2.4 miles to 641 North Fork Road.

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.
Winter Management Considerations

Winter has arrived! Cold wet weather and snow cover can make cattle management particularly difficult. It is important to remember several key considerations if you want to get through the next few months without complications.

When cold wet weather occurs, animals’ energy needs will increase. Cows become “hay burners” during periods of extreme weather; and if extra feed is not provided, production will decline. Hay and feed supplementation are generally items that decrease your bottom line because they are relatively expensive. With high input costs and low cattle prices, we need to be cost-conscious in our operations; but feed and energy during inclement weather cannot be overlooked. It is important to know the quality of hay you are feeding during the winter months and what your animals’ requirements are. You should recognize that nutritional requirements vary from animal to animal and will be determined by the animal’s stage of production.

With all of the rain this past spring and summer, our hay quantity was up; but quality was more than likely lower due to the fact that it was hard to get a crop up without it getting rained on or after it was too mature. It is important to have your hay tested through the NCDA Forage Lab so you know what kind of supplemental feed you need and how much you should feed your animals. Believing that “keeping hay in front of them” will solve the problem is not always true. If you have good quality hay, your cattle could make it though the winter in decent shape. If you are feeding them low quality hay, then supplementation with an additional energy source is imperative to protect your cattle both short term and long term. If they aren’t fed enough protein and energy during cold weather, they can become unproductive quickly. We have the forage analysis forms available at our office and can help you determine needs based on the forage analysis report.

If you have areas of pasture that have been stockpiled for winter grazing, it is also important to make sure your animals have feed when this grass gets covered with snow. These animals cannot dig through a deep snow to graze and will need hay and/or feed supplementation.

Water is always a critical consideration, but especially during the winter. Ponds and water sources will freeze making it unavailable. You need to check your water sources on a daily basis to insure your animals are getting enough to drink. It is also important to remember to check for stray voltage on automatic waterers equipped with heaters, as the cattle will avoid a waterer if they receive an electrical shock while drinking.

If you are on a winter calving season, it is important to remember to pay close attention to your animals. If they are showing signs of labor, know when to assist the animal and when to call a veterinarian. Always have the telephone number of a vet handy during calving season because that could be the difference in saving a calf and more importantly saving your cow. You should also remember to keep calving areas as clean as possible. Winter is generally a muddy mess, but unsanitary conditions can result in scours and pneumonia. Additionally, cold mud stuck to cattle will lower body temperatures and draw down energy reserves.

If you have any questions regarding winter management, feel free to contact Jeff Bradley at 828-255-5522.

AI Clinic

An artificial insemination clinic will be held at the Mountain Research Station in Waynesville, NC on January 19-21. The clinic will be taught by Dr. Gary Hansen from the NCSU Department of Animal Science. The cost of clinic will be $100. The first two days will consist of a half-day of classroom activities and a half-day working with cows. The final day will be a half-day working with cows.

The clinic will be limited to the first 20 registrants. Please contact Dr. Jim Turner at 828-246-4466 or e-mail at jim_turner@ncsu.edu to register.
Structure Maintenance for Winter

Do you have an old barn? Winter can be rough on old structures. After our recent snow, I heard of a few farms losing structures due to the heavy snow loads. Our winter is projected to be colder and wetter than normal, and so far that has been true. Below are some key points to remember as we go into winter that will help you keep your farm structures from falling in:

• The best time to inspect your barn is during rain or inclement weather. Moisture is usually the cause of all structural problems in a barn. Check for evidence of moisture along the support frame of your barn—mainly along the rafters, walls, and at the base of posts. If these areas get wet and remain wet, they can rot which will weaken the load-bearing capacity of your structure. If problems are found, make a note of these areas so repair can be made when weather is suitable.

• If you have floors in your barn, make sure they are free from debris to prevent moisture buildup. Always maintain good ventilation in your barn to keep air moving and moisture dried out.

• If possible, rake or sweep away heavily accumulated snow from low-pitched roofs and side sheds. These areas aren’t able to shed snow as easily as steep roofs and will cave in fairly quickly with a heavy, wet snow. This procedure is dangerous, so be careful.

• If your barn has brushy vegetation or trees growing around it, remove these during late winter or early spring. This vegetation holds moisture and will rot away the sides and foundation posts of your barn. Large trees can cause abrasions to a barn roof which will also negatively affect the moisture-shedding ability of your barn.

• If you had a barn or farm structure go down during our last snow storm, it is important that you document this. Take pictures of the damage, call your FSA office and also call our local Cooperative Extension Center so there is some record of your damage. If any programs become available to help offset these losses, you will be prepared to plead your case.

NC Forage and Grassland Council Winter Conference

The NC Forage and Grassland Council is planning a winter conference in our area. This conference is focusing on efficiently managing grazing systems for cattle, equine, and wildlife. There will be a panel of local producers from Western North Carolina who will be discussing their grazing systems and how they manage them. The guest speaker will be Dr. Fred Provenza who is an expert on animal behavior and forage choices. He is a world authority on understanding the behavior of grazing livestock, how they interact with their environment and implications for management.

The meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 21, at the Mountain Horticultural Crops Research & Extension Center in Mills River and will begin with a trade show and registration at 1:00 pm. The program will begin at 1:45 pm and will conclude at 7:30 pm.

Dinner will be provided, so it is important that you preregister by calling 800-896-4857. There will be a fee of $15 for NCFGC members and $25 for nonmembers.

Did you know that you can receive 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.
Present-Use Value Taxation Program

The North Carolina General Assembly enacted the Present-Use Value Program, which allows reduced tax assessments for individually owned property used for agriculture, horticulture or forestry. Property accepted into this program is taxed at its “present use value” as a farm. This value is usually less than the market value of the property. The difference between the market value and the present use value is “deferred”. When the property or a portion of the property is removed from the program for any reason, the deferred taxes for the current year and the previous three years plus interest becomes due. Present Use Value applications are taken only during the month of January, so any agriculture, horticulture or forestry land owner that wish to participate in this tax deferment program should contact their local tax assessor before January 31st. Please see the information below to determine if this program is right for your business.

Basic eligibility requirements follow:

**Agricultural**

Agricultural use is land that is a part of a farm unit actively engaged in the commercial production or growing of crops, plants, or animals under a sound management program. The requirements for an agricultural deferment are as follows:

- One tract must consist of at least 10 acres that are in actual production of agricultural products.
- May consist of more than one tract of agricultural land, but at least one of the tracts must meet the requirements and each tract must be under a sound management program.
- Must have produced an average gross income from agricultural products of at least one thousand dollars ($1,000) per year for the three years preceding January 1 of the year in which this benefit is claimed. Gross income includes income from the sale of the agricultural products produced from the land and any payments received under a governmental soil conservation or land retirement program.
- If individually owned, the property must be the owner's residence or have been owned by the current owner or a relative of the current owner for four years preceding January 1 of the year in which this benefit is claimed.
- If property loses its eligibility for any reason, deferred taxes become due for the current year plus three previous years, plus interest for all prior years. If only a part of the qualifying tract loses its eligibility, a determination shall be made of the amount of deferred taxes applicable to that part, and that amount shall become payable with interest.

**Forestland**

Forestland use is land that is part of a forest unit that is actively engaged in the commercial growing of trees under a sound management program. The requirements for a forestland deferment are as follows:

- One tract must consist of at least 20 acres that are in actual production of trees.
- May consist of more than one tract of forestland, but at least one of the tracts must meet the requirements and each tract must be under a sound management program.
- If individually owned, the property must be the owner's residence or have been owned by the current owner or a relative of the current owner for four years preceding January 1 of the year in which the benefit is claimed.
- If property loses its eligibility for any reason, deferred taxes become due for the current year plus three previous years, plus interest for all prior years. If only a part of the qualifying tract loses its eligibility, a determination shall be made of the amount of deferred taxes applicable to that part, and that amount shall become payable with interest.

**Horticultural**

Horticultural land means land that is a part of a horticultural unit that is actively engaged in the commercial production or growing of fruits or vegetables or nursery or floral products under a sound management program. The requirements for a horticultural deferment are as follows:
Present-Use Value Taxation Program (continued)

- One tract must consist of at least 5 acres that are in actual production of horticultural products.
- May consist of more than one tract of horticultural land, but at least one of the tracts must meet the requirements and each tract must be under a sound management program.
- Must have produced an average gross income from horticultural products of at least one thousand dollars ($1,000) per year for the three years preceding January 1 of the year in which this benefit is claimed. Gross income includes income from the sale of the horticultural products produced from the land and any payments received under a governmental soil conservation or land retirement program.
- If individually owned, the property must be the owner's residence or have been owned by the current owner or a relative of the current owner for four years preceding January 1 of the year in which the benefit is claimed.

Business Side of Agritourism Workshop Jan. 28

The Business Side of Agritourism workshop will take place on January 28 at the Lake Logan Episcopal Center located just outside of Waynesville, (www.lakelogan.org). The cost for the full-day workshop is $25 per person ($35 after January 8) and includes lunch and resource materials. On Wednesday, January 27, a field trip to a local agritourism business, followed by dinner and a grower social featuring local products will be provided for overnight guests. Accommodations are available at the Lake Logan Episcopal Center for folks who would like to spend the night. Accommodations are also available in nearby downtown Waynesville.

The Business Side of Agritourism workshop is FIRST COME FIRST SERVED. If you are thinking of incorporating agritourism activities into your farm operation or looking to expand and improve your agritourism business, then this conference is for you. Come spend the day with us and learn what you need to know about The Business Side of Agritourism.

To learn more about this event or to register, contact Sue Colucci at 828.697.4891 or sue_colucci@ncsu.edu.

Topics to be covered include:

- Experience in an Agritourism Business in Tennessee with Bob Schmidt, Owner of Maple Lane Farms
- Self and Market Assessment
- Understanding Sales Tax on Value-Added Products
- Types of Agritourism Enterprises
- Minimizing On-Farm Risk and Liability
- Rules and Regulations for Food and Activities for Agritourism Businesses
- Using Your Chamber of Commerce and Travel and Tourism Department
- Collaborations and Collective Marketing
- Social Networking and Websites
- How to Incorporate Education into Your Agritourism Business

Sponsored by NC Cooperative Extension and the Southern Region Risk Management Education Center
WNC Beef Cattle 101

A beef short course is currently being developed for Western North Carolina. WNC Beef Cattle 101 will take place over a seven-week period with a session one night each week. The course will begin in late February or early March.

Topics will include farm business management, genetic selection and carcass merit, facilities design and cattle handling, marketing, nutrition of the beef herd, forage production and management, environmental concerns, reproduction, and herd health. The course will be taught by NC Cooperative Extension field faculty and Animal Science Specialists.

The locations of the course will depend on the makeup of the attendees. A $50.00 fee will be charged for this short course to help cover the costs of manual. The class size will be limited to 25 people. If you are interested in signing up for Beef 101, please contact your local Cooperative Extension Livestock Agent to register.

### Coming Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 11</td>
<td>Pasture Walk</td>
<td>Everett Farm, 1636 Everett Road, Pisgah Forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 13</td>
<td>Pasture Walk</td>
<td>T.K. Brown Farm, 641 North Fork Road, Swannanoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 19-21</td>
<td>Al Clinic</td>
<td>Mountain Research Station, Waynesville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 21</td>
<td>NC Forage &amp; Grassland Council Winter Conference</td>
<td>MHCR&amp;EC, Mills River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 28</td>
<td>The Business Side of Agritourism Workshop</td>
<td>Lake Logan Episcopal Center, Waynesville</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>