

Livestock Links

Winter 2006

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Livestock Links is a publication of the Chatham County Center to provide information to the livestock producers of Chatham County. Recommendations of specific products are made as convenience to the reader. The use of brand names and any mention or listing of commercial products or services does not imply endorsement or discrimination by North Carolina State University.



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Beef Quality Assurance (BQA)

Many of you will remember during 1997-98 there was the initiative called the North Carolina Certified Beef Producer Program also called Southeast Pride, which encouraged producers to not only vaccinate and more actively manage their animals, but also the proper methods for doing this. Unfortunately, this program never really got off the ground the way that the organizers had hoped it would have.

As a part of a national initiative North Carolina has decided to revive this program, but with not only a new name, but new information and new practices, partly brought on from the foreign animal disease threats that we now face and the changing global markets in the beef industry. The North Carolina Beef Quality Assurance Program is a voluntary program designed to educate and certify producers about those issues surrounding production and marketing that are vital in today's markets. As far as I know this program will continue to be a voluntary program, however, in the near future there will probably be some special sales that require certification to participate in those sales and other markets will become available to those producers who are certified. The new training program will not only allow you to earn your certification, but will also provide you with some excellent resource materials to use in your operation.

There will be North Carolina Beef Quality Assurance Program training held in Chatham County on Tuesday, March 7, 2006, at Dry Dock Seafood Restaurant in Siler City and on Monday, April 3, 2006, at the Chatham County Agriculture Building.

See BQA on page 2

BQA *(continued from page 1)*

The training program will last for 1½ hours. Following the training producers who wish to be certified will be required to take a 20 question test from material covered in the training. Producers will be required to pass the test with a minimum of 80%. The cost of membership in the program will be \$15.00 for a three-year period of time if you are a member of the North Carolina Cattlemen's Association. If you are not a member of the North Carolina Cattlemen's Association the cost of membership in the BQA program will be \$40.00. Every three years a certified member of the BQA program will be required to take a recertification training to keep their membership active.

The Tuesday March 7, 2006, training at Dry Dock in Siler City will begin at 7:00 p.m. Producers may come and eat at 6:00 p.m., but please note that the meal will be dutch treat. Training should end by 9:00 p.m. Preregistration required by Friday, March 3, 2006.

The Monday, April 3, 2006, training will be at the Chatham County Agriculture Building in the auditorium at 7:00 p.m. There will not be any type of meal with this meeting. The training should end by 9:00 p.m. Preregistration required by Thursday, March 30, 2006.

In order to have the training materials on hand that are needed, please call the Chatham Center at **919.542.8202** or e-mail jane_tripp@ncsu.edu by the pre-registration date for the class that you desire to attend. I hope that you will give serious consideration to this program. Even though this program is completely voluntary, it will have future benefits to you as a producer that will make this program worthwhile.

**Japan lifts Embargo on U.S. Beef**

It was announced on December 12, 2005 that Japan would lift the embargo on U.S. beef. However, limitations will be in place for which beef and beef products can be marketed in Japan. All beef must come from cattle that are verified to be 20 months of age or less. All cattle entering this chain will be subject to a verification that will go from the farm of origin through the packer. Cattlemen wishing to market their cattle in this manner must enroll in one of the approved age verification programs, listed online at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/lsg/arc/qsap.htm> or <http://processverified.usda.gov> or they can apply for approval of their own USDA QSA Program for age verification. These programs provide both source and age verification of cattle. The embargo resulted in a \$3.14 billion loss for the U.S. cattle industry per year according to NCBA. More details on the Japanese trade issue can be found on the web at <http://hill.beef.org/japan>.

Beef Management

January is a busy time for the beef herd. New bulls are being purchased in many spring calving herds, breeding is well under way for fall calving herds and we have the weather to contend with. *Table 2* lists the recommended management practices for beef herd management in January.

Table 2.

General	Spring calving	Fall Calving
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan to attend a cow/calf management, feeding & marketing educational program. • Body condition score entire herd; target cows to calve in BCS 5 and first-calf-heifers in BCS 6. • Vaccinate pregnant yearling heifers: with enterotoxemia C & D toxoid if enterotoxemia has been a problem and with Scours vaccine if virus diarrhea has been a problem. Consult your veterinarian • Retreat for lice. Cows should be treated twice 2-3 weeks apart during late December and early January. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather and clean your calving supplies. Be ready to assist with calving difficulties and to castrate, implant and deworm calves at birth. • Keep yearling heifers gaining weight. They need to weigh about 2/3 of mature weight at breeding. • Bulls will be turned in with heifers 3 weeks earlier than with the cows. Turnout will be sometime between April 1st and June 20th depending on desired calving dates. Evaluate bulls, trim feet, and line up breeding soundness exams and decide on buying new bulls. • Order calf and cow vaccines. • Prepare calving quarters-clean sodded area. • Feed cows on ration developed for last 1/3 of gestation. • Feed bulls same ration as cows but feed to appetite - if too thin, feed some grain. • Replenish equipment and supplies needed for calving season. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breed cows. Cows bred January 1 should calve October 13. • Be prepared to remove bulls after a 45-90 day breeding season. Spot check heifers for activity now to see if they are breeding. Remove bull from heifers after a 45-60 day breeding season. • Cows need to be in moderate to good condition to rebreed. Maintain a BCS of 5.0 • Make final selection of replacement heifers. • Market cull replacement heifers. • Evaluate profit potential for creep feeding. • Use your best feeds now. With average quality hay, a lactating cow needs 4 to 5 lbs of whole cottonseed, 1 1/2 lbs of cottonseed meal plus 2 lbs of corn or free choice liquid supplement or block plus 2 lbs of corn. A forage analysis permits you to supplement your cows more precisely. • Limit grazing on winter annuals. Two hours of grazing per day and free choice hay stretches grazing and is a substitute for concentrate supplements.

Beef News

The US cattle herd grew in 2005, ending an historic eight-year decline to the smallest supply in 30 years. The rate of growth picked up in the second half of last year. 2005 cow slaughter fell almost 5.8% short of the 2004 figure and 20.7% below the 2003 total, thereby implying US farmers and ranchers are holding back large numbers of females for the breeding herd. This could be evidence that the industry plans to increase cattle numbers during the years ahead. *(From Agribusiness Update 01/30/06)*

Chatham County Livestock Association

Do you want to learn about the latest trends in the livestock industry? Do you want to hear about the latest news that will affect your operation? Do you desire to become a better producer? Do you like to associate with fellow livestock producers? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then the Chatham County Livestock Association is for you. Our association meets nine times per year: January thru May and August thru November. The meetings are always held on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. and are usually conducted at Carolina Stockyards in Siler City. Dues for the Chatham County Livestock Association are \$15.00 per year and are fully tax deductible for active farmers as dues for a professional organization. Members are also encouraged to join the North Carolina Cattlemen's Association and those dues are \$25.00 per year. County and state dues can be paid to locally and we will send in those state dues for you. For more information contact the Chatham County Center of the NCCES. ●—————●

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