

Cattle Newsletter

North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Ashe County Center

Summer 2020



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Keeping the Cow Herd Healthy

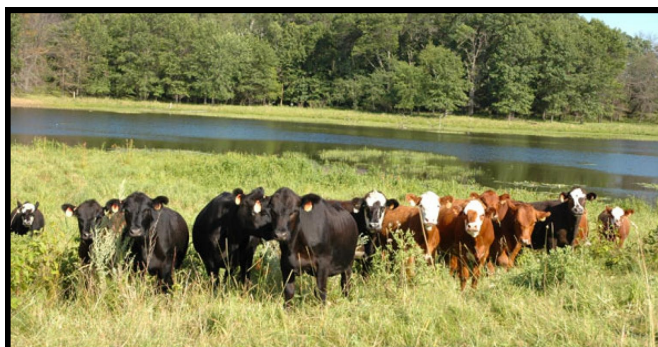
As summer continues, don't forget the vaccines for your herd. It is important to vaccinate the cows, bulls and calves. Vaccinate the calves to ensure they are healthy while on your farm and as the calf moves on to the next stage of their life. As they intermingle with other calves, their immune systems may be introduced to new illnesses. The beef industry faces many challenges, but they could be minimized if farmers work together to vaccinate, castrate and improve quality. Recommended vaccines are Leptospirosis and a respiratory vaccine that includes IBR, BVD, PI3, BRSV.

Leptospirosis is commonly shed through the urine of an infected animal and can be carried by wildlife including deer. It can also be transmitted through breeding animals. Leptospirosis can infect cattle at any age and can cause infertility in breeding stock. Older cattle can experience retained placentas if they are bred and able to deliver the calf. The calf may be born too early, stillborn, or weak at birth. Calves infected with Leptospirosis may have a high fever, anemia, and could die within a few days.

Respiratory vaccines such as Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis (IBR), Bovine Viral Diarrhea (BVD), Parainfluenza 3 (PI3), and Bovine Respiratory Syncytial Virus (BRSV) will improve herd and reproductive health if cattle are vaccinated prior to breeding. IBR and BVD can cause costly abortions in cattle. Vaccinate at least 30 days before turning the bull in with the cows.

Choosing a vaccine type for your farm is important. Regardless if you choose a modified live vaccine or a killed vaccine, remember to follow the instructions on the label. Booster vaccines need to be given if required on the label. If you are unsure if a modified live vaccine will work for your farm, Cooperative Extension will be happy to assist you with modified live vaccine labels. Prevention doesn't cost as much as treatment. Treat your vaccines with care, not carelessness.

Lastly, while you are vaccinating don't forget to deworm and utilize a fly control.



Sincerely,

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Fly Control and Pinkeye

What warm weather means to a farmer:

- Hay
- Weed Control
- Minerals
- Pinkeye Remedy
- Fly Control

Pinkeye is painful and needs to be treated promptly. If not treated, a calf with one eye affected with pinkeye will weigh 30 pounds less at weaning. For example, your average herd of steers at weaning will weigh 550 pounds and if sold for \$1.45 would total \$797.50 per calf. The calf with pinkeye will weigh 520 pounds and sold for \$1.45 which totals \$754.00 for a loss of \$43.50. There are times when both eyes will become affected with pinkeye causing the calf to weigh 60 pounds less at weaning resulting in a loss of \$87.00.

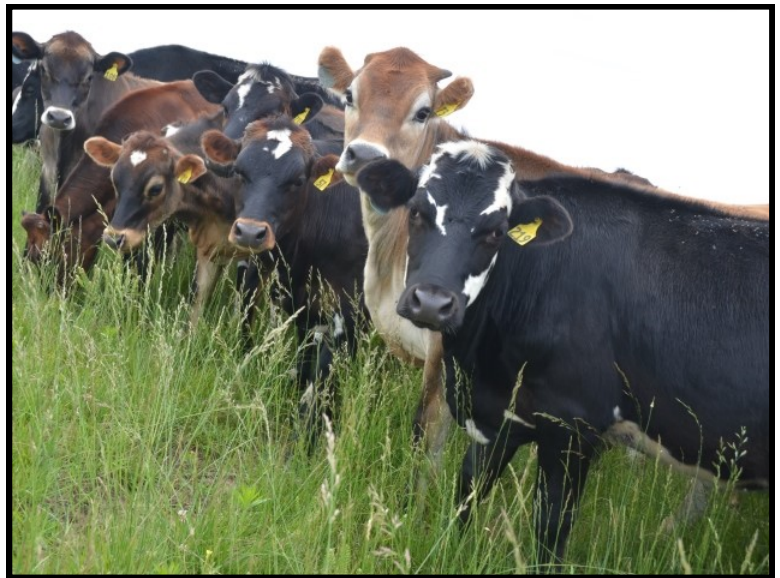
Practice pinkeye prevention by boosting the pinkeye vaccine if you administer it, using fly control and ensuring your cattle have adequate nutrition and a mineral supplement at all times. Also, control tall grass and weeds. These seem like small steps, but with everything else going on it isn't always easy. Even with the best management pinkeye can still sneak into the farm.

To treat pinkeye you have several options:

- Injectable Antibiotics
 - ⇒ LA 200 (4.5cc/100lbs, repeat 72 hours)
 - ⇒ Draxxin (1.1cc/100lbs)
 - ⇒ Nuflor (3cc/100lbs, repeat 24 hours)
- Subconjunctival Antibiotics (Penicillin)
- Pain Control (Banamine)
- Cover the eye
- Can do all together

Fly control options include:

- Vaccines (Booster)
- Fly Tags (Rotate between Seasons)
(Remove at the end of Season)
- Feed (IGR, Altosid)
- Rubs, Dusters
- Sprays



The small steps can help keep your cattle comfortable and healthy. Flies are a nuisance to cattle and cost the cattle industry \$1 billion each year. Flies can lower weaning weights by 4-15 percent which can total 22-82.50 pounds on a 550 pound weaning weight herd.

Don't let pinkeye and flies keep you from the premiums you have worked hard for.

Pastures and Spray Rates

To help combat weedy pastures farmers often rely on pesticides. Pesticides have proven to be an effective tool in pasture management. However, if the proper rate is not followed or the sprayer isn't calibrated it may not be economical.

Why should you calibrate your sprayer? The answer is simple: to ensure the rate of pesticide you are using is what is coming from the nozzle. It is against the label to use more than the recommended rate and it's expensive. There is a step by step calibration sheet at the end of this article to assist you while you calibrate prior to spraying. It is a simple process to complete and is available here for Backpack or Boom sprayers. If you need assistance please give Cooperative Extension a call.

How much pesticide do you add to your sprayer? Labels can be difficult to read and interpret. Don't let this stop you from reading and understanding the label before application. Following the label is a very important step and is required by law. Applying more pesticide than recommended is illegal and an expensive practice. Applying less pesticide than recommended is not a suggested practice without consulting an Extension Agent as it can cause herbicide resistance in weeds.

What herbicides are commonly used in livestock pastures in Ashe County?

- Grazon Next HL (2,4-D + Aminopyralid)
- Remedy (Triclopyr)
- Crossbow (2,4-D + Triclopyr)
- Cimarron Plus (Metsulfuron + Chlorsulfuron)
- Cimarron Max (2,4-D + Metsulfuron + Dicamba)

The labels typically discuss gallons per acre (gpa) and how many ounces/pints per acre. The calibration sheet provided with this article will help determine how many gallons per acre your sprayer will provide. Once you have this information, it will make the decision of how much pesticide to add to your sprayer much easier. Take the time to read the label and calibrate your sprayer so that you can be successful in controlling weeds this season. Rainy days are a great time to understand the labels and calibrate your sprayer so that you can take full advantage of the sunny days!



Vaccine Disposal

In March 2019, the first Pesticide Disposal Day in over nine years was held in Ashe County. Over 5000 pounds of unused or expired pesticides were collected. It was a huge success, and also gave an opportunity to expand.

North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Ashe County Center will provide a container to place at your farm to dispose of used, expired, or empty vaccine and antibiotic bottles. Once you are ready to exchange the container for an empty one, please bring it to the Cooperative Extension Office. From there, Cooperative Extension will take the containers to Stericycle, a company specializing in medical waste and disposal.

We take this extra step because we are stewards of this land. If not disposed of properly livestock medication can cause resistant bacteria, such as E.Coli, that can be hard to control. It can also end up in the water, as treatment systems cannot remove medications and vaccines from wastewater. Vaccines and medications can kill fish and other aquatic species and hormones may interfere with reproduction and normal growth.

Medications ending up in the soil can affect soil bacteria. The bacteria is unable to process nitrates and nitrites, affecting the soil fertility and causing issues with pastures or hay fields.

We properly dispose of our pesticides and our medications. Now it's time to take the next step and do the same with our livestock medications.

Don't Forget How Important It Is!

Our bodies require nutrition to grow and be healthy. The summer months are spent fertilizing our gardens so they will grow and be bountiful. Livestock require good nutrition to grow and produce. The cool season grass grown in Ashe County provides the nutrition livestock needs when it is able to be nurtured by the soil. Grass uses nutrients in the soil leaving the soil depleted. Livestock pastures are able to maintain some of the nutrients from the manure the livestock leave behind, but it isn't enough. Fertilizing can be expensive. However, is it as expensive as a herd of unproductive livestock? Soil samples will allow you to know what nutrients are lacking and your Extension Agent can help determine how much fertilizer to add. If you can't afford it all at once, do one field at a time.

Do not wait to control weeds in the pastures and hay fields. Weeds don't go away on their own and if left untreated can get out of hand quickly. Spray early and spray again if needed.

Grass takes up nutrients from the soil and begins to lose nutrients as it matures and is cut. Hay baled with a moisture content higher than twenty percent will lose more nutrients. These factors play a part in the nutrient content of your hay. The nutrition in your hay will change from year to year so it is important to have each cutting in all fields analyzed every year. Once you know the nutrient content of your hay then you will know how to feed your livestock to be more profitable.

Keep records of births, deaths, vaccinations and sickness, along with where, when and what herbicide you sprayed on your field. It is hard to remember everything from year to year and these are important items to keep up with as you farm. These records will be valuable to have when applying for loans or disaster assistance. They are also beneficial in case someone has to help you in an emergency if you can't be on your farm.

Take time to enjoy.