

Pickens County Cattlemen's Association

Newsletter

Volume 11

Apr. 1, 2015

January Meeting on FFA and Herd Health

by RD Morrison

The January 20th meeting was held at the Pickens County Career and Technology Center on Chastain Rd., Liberty, and President David Elias welcomed the many members in attendance. He introduced PCCA Board of Directors member Hannah Wilson (also vice president of the Pickens County FFA) and PCCA member Steve McCannon (also one of the Agriculture teachers in Pickens County).

Hannah and Steve gave an excellent overview of the FFA chapters activities and accomplishments. Their many youth activities brought a smile to the faces of many of the past FFA members in attendance. After their slide show presentation and very informative talk, President Elias assured all that the PCCA will be glad to help the ag youth of Pickens County any way that we can.

President Elias then introduced another PCCA member, Dr. Emily Waggoner, DVM. Dr. Waggoner said that she is from Tennessee, but was an FFA member in Pendleton. Dr. Waggoner began her talk by discussing Body Condition Scoring (BCS), a numerical scale from 1 to 9 that helps assess the nutritional and health status of the cows in the herd. She stated that 5 to 7 is ideal, but the object is to avoid the extremes. 1, or very thin, is not good and 9, or

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obese, is not good.

She then discussed a vaccination protocol. This is important as saving one calf at today's prices can pay for a lot of vaccinations.

- Blackleg, a clostridial disease, comes in a 7 or 8 way vaccine. Blackleg is a soil borne disease and enters into the animal through a wound or by ingestion. It hides out in the body until the animal is stressed and the conditions are right, then sporulates through the body in deep muscles. Calves should be vaccinated at 2 - 3 months of age and boosted at 4 - 6 months. Cows should be vaccinated annually.
- Respiratory and reproductive vaccines are very effective. Respiratory vaccines come in a modified live or a killed form. Modified live vaccines are just that - a live form of the disease that replicates itself in the cow and she will build up resistance. It can cause abortion if used incorrectly. It must be reconstituted and used quickly. It cannot be saved in the refrigerator for later use. Killed vaccines are an inactivated form of the virus or bacteria. Killed vaccines have a longer shelf life and it does require a booster shot. Respiratory diseases include IBR, BVD, PI3, and BSVD. There are 5 strains of Lepto with Lepto hardjo-ovus the most important. Calves should be vaccinated at 4 - 6 months old and boosted 4 - 6 weeks later. Cows, heifers and breeding bulls should be vaccinated 4 - 6 weeks prior to the breeding season.

Other diseases, such as footrot, scours, warts and pinkeye, can be prevented with vaccinations.

- In herds with a pinkeye problem, vaccinations should be given in the spring before the fly season.
- If cattle are being shipped out west, as to a feedlot, a brucellosis vaccination is required.
- Footrot, warts, and scours vaccinations are warranted if

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you are having these types of problems.

President Elias thanked Dr. Waggoner for her very informative talk. Dr. Waggoner can be reached at (864) 356-6858 or at vetemily@gmail.com.

Are You Working Your Pastures “Hard” or “Smart”?

By Hugh Aljoe

With permission of the Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation

The "summer" growing season in our geographical region is usually considered to be from about mid-April through mid-November. Most of the grass growth should occur by early July. In fact, 70 percent of the annual production of summer perennial grasses is expected by the first of July. If you are not purchasing hay to extend the grazing season (i.e., providing all forages for your livestock from your property as standing hay or baled hay), you should be about halfway there by the first of June. Now is the time to make an assessment of your pastures, think about what you are seeing and determine if your forage production is on track. Ask yourself, "Am I working my pastures smart or just hard?"

To determine if you are working your pastures hard or smart, consider your pasture and grazing plan. What was your plan this spring? Were fertilizer and/or weed control measures implemented? What kinds and classes of livestock will be present, how many and for how long? Have you made efficient use of the forage types in your pastures? Do you have the production you planned for by now and what are the prospects of achieving your end-of-season goal?

If your response is: "Whoa, Aljoe! I did not want to get into complicated considerations this time of year. I am just running a few cows," then my gut instinct tells me that

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odds are you're working your pastures hard, not smart.

If your response is: "Fertilizer and herbicide were applied as planned to meet my stocking rate needs. My pastures have responded according to expectations relative to rainfall. The grazing plan is allowing for some accumulation now with excess to be hayed or set aside for winter grazing," I'd suspect that you are working your pastures smart.

Now there are those that get by pretty well without some sort of plan. Some of these folks are just plain lucky, but most are managing their stocking rate at a very conservative number. There is nothing wrong with this method if your revenues are exceeding your costs. You could, however, be leaving extra returns on the table. Without a little planning, your luck might not hold and you will not know if there is a better alternative.

Working smart requires planning before the grazing season begins, conducting regular forage production assessments and making adjustments to the plan throughout the season. It usually starts with knowing your pastures and soils, and their productive capabilities. It requires knowing the grazing requirements of your livestock for the duration they will be grazing on the property. It also helps to know the effect of management practices on soils, pastures and livestock. Of course, plans made during the winter or early spring won't always be your final actions throughout the season, but with appropriate monitoring and adjustments, the outcomes should be very similar. The original plan may not be worth the paper it is written on, but going through the thought process is more than worth the effort.

If your pastures tend to remain short most of the year, your pastures are working harder than optimal. Unfor-

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tunately, there are a lot of pastures that have that overworked appearance most of the year. The good news is that there are professionals at the Noble Foundation, and at county extension and NRCS offices in your state that are willing to assist you in remedying that overworked appearance of your pastures. Remember - even in June, it is not too late to start this year.

We all can work hard, but our goal should be to work hard at working smart. It is usually more productive and certainly leads to better land stewardship. So take a look at your pastures and ask yourself "Am I working my pastures smart or hard - or am I just plain lucky?"

Joint PCCA / OCCA Meeting on Weeds was Very Informative

By RD Morrison

A joint meeting of the PCCA and OCCA was held on March 3, 2015, at the Mountain View Steak and Seafood Restaurant. Josh McMillian, with DOW AgroSciences gave a very informative meeting on weed control.

The first question he raised was why control the weeds? Weeds are more aggressive than forages and steal the fertilizer, moisture and sunlight. Also, some weeds (i.e., perilla mint, etc.) are toxic. A good rule of thumb is that a pound of weeds will displace a pound of forage (maybe more - up to 3 - 4 pounds). They hurt the average daily gain of the cattle and reduce caloric intake. In the cattle business, lost pounds = lost money.

The second question was why not control the weeds by mowing? Mowing is a temporary fix, like getting a haircut. They grow back. It would take 2 - 3 timely mowings per year for several years to control the weeds. Studies have shown that it is much more cost effective to spray than to mow. Also, mowing removes grazeable forage.

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He then talked about some of the products made by DOW AgroSciences to control weeds. GrazonNEXT is a product with a residual, will give season long performance, and does not hurt grass. A good non-ionic surfactant should be used with at least 15 gallons of water per acre. Grazon P+D has pichloram as an ingredient and will not break down. It is restricted use, but GrazonNEXT is safer therefore, it has no restricted use on the label. Hay can be cut 7 days after an application of GrazonNEXT but Grazon P+D has a 30 day hay restriction. Chapparel is another non restricted use product and is safer around row crops if drift is controlled. It will kill weeds and brush. It will control bahai grass in Bermuda fields and will also kill rye grass. It is the best solution for pigweed. Two ounces per acre is recommended but the rate can vary from 1.5 to 3.3 ounces with 15 gallons of water. It can be used on Ky 31 fescue to prevent seed head from forming. This will minimize the toxicity of infected fescue as it prevents the formation of the ergot alkaloid at the seed head. It helps keep the fescue in a vegetative stage rather than a reproductive stage. PastureGuard also is not restricted use. It has no residual and no grazing restrictions except for lactating dairy cows. It works very well on dog fennel. It can be used on weeds and brush. Remedy Ultra is another really good brush control product. It can be used on stumps or as a basal treatment. One part Remedy Ultra to three parts diesel fuel or crop oil will control brush and should be applied after full leaf development.

Do not mow the brush prior to spraying. Although herbicides can be applied anytime in the year except when there is snow on the ground, broadleaves should be sprayed before flowering. Briars should be sprayed after the fruit drops in order to get a good kill. When spraying waxy leaves, wet the leaf until it glistens - do not soak until the spray runs off.

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www.dowagro.com.

Dr. Andrae Delivers Pasture Ecology Information at March 19 Meeting

By RD Morrison

PCCA Vice President Amy Wilson welcomed a good crowd to this meeting at the Career & Technology Center. She introduced Dr. John Andrae, our speaker for the evening.

Dr. Andrae gave an overview of the 3 day pasture ecology workshop. He stated that we are in the business of producing beef through the conversion of sunlight into food and fiber and managing the plants to optimize the solar harvest. The animals transfer the energy into tissue. This system recycles nutrients to the landscape and must be socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable. We must manage the ecosystem and the ecology.

There are several elements to pasture ecology - some we can't manage, but some we can. We can't control the climate or the weather, but we can manage the plants, the grazing animals, the soil (a living thing), and human behavior. For example, the plants capture and convert solar energy through photosynthesis. Some fix nitrogen from the air (legumes). They cycle minerals from the soil profile and provide sugar and carbohydrates. Forage quality not only affects the animals, but also the soil. Multiple species of plants in the pasture benefits the soil. The grazing animals (cows, sheep, goats, etc.) are the primary consumers of the forage. Age and production stage influences the forage requirement (growth, lactation, maintenance). Also, different animals have different grazing preferences. We cannot alter the parent material or the landscape nor the depth and texture of the soil. We can, however, change the surface and

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internal drainage. We can leave some residue to increase the organic matter. He stated that plowing increases moisture penetration rates in the short term but destroys tunnels from dung beetles and earthworms and, therefore, lowers moisture penetration rates over the long term. By using a diverse mixture, like Ray's Crazy Mix, soil health is improved because a lot of biomass is left to rebuild the soil.

Although the grazing animals are what is seen, below ground are many 'grazing animals'. Fungi, nematodes, arthropods, worms, bacteria, protozoa, and animals graze just below the surface. According to studies, there is 600 pounds of earthworms to the acre. Soil microbes control how fast nutrients turnover and pesticides breakdown. They live close to the surface and benefit from leaving some residue to provide some cool shade during the summer. The dung beetle is a wonderful recycler. Some are dwellers and live in the cow manure. Others are tunnellers that dig below the manure, move dung into the tunnels and lay their eggs. Others are the classic 'National Geographic' type - rollers that roll a ball of manure away from the cow pie. The benefits of dung beetles are obvious: they bury manure to fertilize the plants, they produce macropores to aerate the ground and, in so doing, they allow water to penetrate the soil.

There are some human influences on pasture ecology. One is fences. Fences can be used to rotational graze. The stocking rate (cows in the pasture for a long term) and the stocking density (cows in a paddock for a short term) are human controlled influences on the system. The timing and frequency of grazing along with monitoring how much forage is removed is another human controlled influence. Humans can also manage the seed, fertilizer and herbicides applied.. Healthy soil ecology is a balance of:

- The food supply in the soil (organic matter)
- The physical environment (cover and habitat)
- A healthy population of invertebrates
- Proper chemistry (oxygen, pH, fertility)

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• Appropriate temperature and moisture in the soil
Therefore, management to achieve this balance is important.

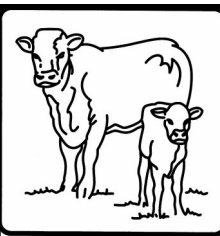
This is achieved by:

- Maintain the proper pH
- Adequate P and K
- Healthy legumes
- Active root system
- Manage the nutrient flow from the grazers
- Proper grazing management

Dr. Andrae delivered a few final thoughts. We should manage the plants with grazing animals to maximize solar capture and optimize root mass. Waste is not always waste. Residue will feed the soil by building organic matter. We should minimize / eliminate tillage to maintain and improve the physical soil structure and organic matter. Understanding the impacts of animals will help to improve the soil structure.

Dr. Andrae informed the crowd of an upcoming 3 day pasture ecology workshop at the Edisto REC in Blackville, SC, on May 12 - 14. The cost is \$100. Contact the Pickens County Extension if interested. He said that they would try to have another at Clemson in the fall.

Vice President Wilson thanked Dr. Andrae for this very informative program. She reminded everyone of the upcoming 4-H Livestock Fair to be held at the PCC&TC on May 8-9. The PCCA supports this program and encourages all to bring their kids and grandkids to this event.



These meetings, and several years worth of available for member checkout at the Moore company on Shady Grove Road, right off of ns. If you missed a meeting or just did not heaker was saying, check it out in the com-ner. This is a service of the Pickens County Cattlemen's Association.

Agricultural Safety - Strokes

From www.medicalnewstoday.com, and www.strokeassociation.org

Stroke is the 4th leading cause of death in the US, with one person dying every 4 minutes as a result. Approximately 800,000 people have a stroke each year; about one every 4 seconds. Only heart disease, cancer and chronic lower respiratory diseases are more deadly. Strokes occur due to problems with the blood flow to the brain; either the blood supply is blocked or a blood vessel within the brain ruptures. A stroke is a medical emergency, and treatment must be sought as quickly as possible.

F.A.S.T. is an easy way to remember the sudden signs of stroke. When you spot these signs, you'll know that you need to call 9-1-1 for help right away. F.A.S.T is :

- F - Face drooping. Does one side of the face droop or is numb? Ask the person to smile. Is their face uneven?
- A - Arm Weakness. Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift down?
- S - Speech Difficulty. Is speech slurred? Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence, like "The sky is blue." Is the sentence repeated correctly.
- T - Time to call 9-1-1. If someone shows any of these symptoms, even if the symptoms go away, call 9-1-1 and get the person to the hospital immediately. Check the time so you'll know when the first symptoms appeared.

*Thoughts from the President -
David Elias*



Hello to all and I hope everyone is doing fine. Spring is finally here and it really shows. It is my favorite time of year.

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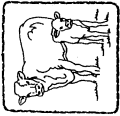
Everything seems to come back to life: grass, trees, birds, and all animal. Everyone seems to be happy. Just hope all of the cold weather is behind us until fall. Along with spring comes the start of a very busy season. With our normal daily activities, we have spring cleaning, gardening, other planting, fertilizing, mowing and cattle care.

How's all your equipment? There's nothing worse than hooking up to a piece of equipment and something is wrong, or you forgot to change the oil in your tractor or tractors. Before long, we will be cutting and baling hay. All the blades sharp, No missing teeth from the rake, drive shafts in working order, and everything nicely greased? How about all the hydraulic hoses? Make sure. For all your needs, try to use our advertisers in the directory.

With an increased cattle herd, I am currently planning all my hay needs for the upcoming feeding season. Once secured, I will continue to cut all the hay that I can find. Before you sacrifice a hay field, get with your fellow cattlemen to see if their needs are met. If you know of anyone with a field they just want cut and kept clean but you do not want to mess with it, pass it along to another cattleman that might. Helping our fellow cattlemen is what it is about.

Be safe with your daily activities and hope to see you at the next cattlemen's meeting.

PCCA Synopsis Report	Donation	\$550.90
for period as of 3/23/15 -	Sam's Club	\$45.00
PCCA Balance as of 1/23/15:	Postage	\$234.00
\$13404.97	Printing	\$55.22
INCOME:	Azalea Festival	\$35.00
Ads	Meals	\$750.92
Dues	Website	\$600.00
Reimbursed	Office Supplies	\$211.93
EXPENSES:	Computer	\$400.00
SCCA dues	Squeeze chute	\$119.90



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