

Pickens County Cattlemen's Association

222 West Main St., Pickens, SC 29671

Newsletter

Volume 12

April 1, 2016

Dr. Hupp Discusses EPD's At January Meeting

by RD Morrison

A good crowd of PCCA members gathered at the Farm Bureau building on January 27th to hear Dr. Harold Hupp talk about EPD's (Estimated Progeny Differences). He explained what they do, what they don't do and what they should tell you.

EPD's are a measure of genetic value based on records gathered over many generations and offspring. They predict average performance of future progeny of individuals. Expressed in pounds, EPD's give an indication of how the progeny is expected to perform. While it is the best method available to us, it is not perfect. They consider the genetic trends in order to compare animals of different ages.

Phenotype was defined as what an animal appears to be. There is a genetic component and an environmental component. For example, a donkey does not have the genetic potential to win the triple crown. A thoroughbred does have the genetic potential but, if he is sick or hurt (environmental factors), he will not reach his true potential of winning the triple crown.

The more information that we have, the better the EPD information will be. Breed associations compute EPD's

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2 or 3 times a year because additional information has come in, thus making the information better. Information such as birth weight (BW), weaning weight (WW), milk, and yearling weight (YW). All of this is in pounds based on the breed average. Breed associations are starting to list more EPD's such as calving ease, carcass information and disposition. Although the EPD's are given for one breed (i.e., Angus, Charolais, Hereford, etc.), some associations (Simmental) are starting to compute cross bred EPD's.

EPD's are a tool for making better decisions for your operation. They do assist in making sound breeding decisions. Because they are a measure against the breed average, they may help determine how this bull or that bull will impact the calf crop.

While EPD's are a tool, they do not tell what the actual birth weight will be - only the expected difference from the breed average by using this bull or that bull. Because the breed associations recompute EPD's several times a year, a bull with an BW EPD of zero may change to a BW EPD of 1 or 2 because the addition progeny information received may change the average actual birth weight of the breed. EPD's do not compensate for a poor environment. They do not evaluate structural soundness. They do not evaluate semen quality.

Now that we have access to all of this information, how good is it? The old adage "garbage in - garbage out" comes to mind. In other words, a young bull does not have a lot of data to back up his EPD story. Therefore, there is an accuracy (from 0 to 1) data point that can be used. Accuracies at 0.3 or less is a young sire and the EPD's and the accuracy is going to change as more information comes to the breed association. Accuracies of 0.4 to 0.7 indicates a moderate accuracy, but will change some, as there are some progeny that have been reported. Accuracies of 0.7 to 0.99

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are usually an older sire and will not change very much as more data is received.

Dr. Hupp discussed how to use this informational tool. He stated that the producer should group his cattle by their strengths and weaknesses (i.e., heifers vs. mature cattle). The heifers will require a low BW bull and would, therefore, give up a little growth (WW, YW). The mature cows can handle a higher BW and, therefore, get a higher WW and YW. If your marketing includes freezer beef, you might want to check into the carcass data. There are tradeoffs to be considered - do your homework. Keep records on the calves. Look at the average EPD's for the breed. Remember 1/2 of the calf crop is from the cow and 1/2 is from the bull. If you are a commercial producer, heterosis should be considered. He stressed that EPD's should be interpreted with a heavy dose of common sense. The most economically important trait is that the cow produce a live calf.

OCCA/PCCA Joint Meeting on Fertilizer and Lime

By RD Morrison

Approximately 125 members from Oconee and Pickens Counties met at the Mountain View Seafood and Steak Restaurant to hear discussions on fertilizer, lime and interpreting soil samples. Coastal Agribusiness and DOW Agrisciences sponsored the meal.

Coastal reported that GRAZON™ P+D will not be available next year as it will be replaced with a product called Grassland™, also restricted use. He said that Coastal can blend whatever kind of fertilizer that is needed and can package it as bulk, 1,000 lb bags, 1 ton bags or 50 lb bags. Fertilizer prices are down a little from last year.

Livestock agent Morris Warner gave a really good talk on the results of soil samples. He said that the analysis page tells you the condition of the soil now - it does not tell you what to put out. One of the most important pieces of information is the soil pH. Native soils have a pH of 4.5 -

5.3. Grasses like a pH of 6.0 - 6.5. If the pH is low, the phosphorous is tied up in the soil by iron (Fe) and aluminum (Al) so any nutrients that are there are not available for the plant to take up.

He stated that if there are limited funds available for fertilizer / lime and your soil sample indicates a need for lime - buy the lime. Because of low pH, the fertilizer that is applied in this situation is tied up and the producer is not getting the bang for the buck from the fertilizer. The best time to apply lime is when your soil sample indicates that you need it. Lime takes about 6 months to a year to leach into the soil. This is due to the fact that, because lime has to have a chemical reaction with the soil, it is not readily available. If the lime is plowed in, the reaction is faster, but it still takes time.

Clemson does not test for nitrogen (N₂) because it is very volatile and leachable. Research is the basis for the amount of nitrogen in the standard recommendation on the soil sample data.

The methodology of soil sampling was discussed. It is the best \$6 that a producer can spend. List all crops in the sampled area as recommendations are based on the crop. He stated that the sample should include no more than 20 acres, but hills and bottom land should be sampled separately as combining them will skew the sample.

Potassium (K₂O) and Phosphorous (P₂O₅) should be applied to fescue in the fall. Fescue is a cool season grass and is growing in the fall; therefore, that is the time that it needs nutrients. The new tillers develop in the fall and only live 2 - 3 years. The plant must constantly replenish these tillers. If the tillers die and are not replenished, the fescue (a bunch grass) bunch will decrease and weeds and other grasses will increase.

SCCA / SCBC Executive Director Roy Copelan greeted the crowd. He gave several door prizes to members that answered his quizzes correctly.

The DVD of this meeting is available at Moore Bal-
liew Oil Co in Pickens to PCCA members.

Livestock Agent Discusses Weeds at March Meeting

By RD Morrison

Vice President Amy Wilson welcomed a good crowd to hear Area Livestock Agent Lindsey Craig discuss pastures and weeds. Vice President Wilson informed the crowd of the chainsaw raffle the PCCA is holding. She then turned the meeting over to Lindsey Craig.

Lindsey informed the members of a survey for a 319 grant along the 12 Mile, 18 Mile and Golden Creek watersheds. This is a voluntary survey and, if interested, to contact her at the Extension office.

Her weed program started with a simple statement: You cannot manage weeds without managing the pasture. A \$6 soil sample, which covers up to 20 acres of similar land, will tell you what is in your soil and what to add. The results of the soil sample is tailored to what you want to grow (what type of grass). It will tell you what to do, when to do it and how much to put out. When hay is cut and moved to storage, nutrients are removed, so it is very important to sample hay fields annually. Grazing, however, results in nutrients being redeposited back in the pasture. Most grasses grow best in soil with a pH of 5.8 to 6.5. Keep in mind that lime takes 6 months to a year to work. Nitrogen results are not listed on the soil sample as nitrogen moves freely through the soil and the different section of a field would have different nitrogen contents. Therefore, nitrogen recommendations are based on years of research based on what type of grass the sample is for (i.e., N2 for fescue is different from N2 for Bermuda). Be sure to read the comment section at the end of the report. Phosphorous (P2O5) and Potassium (K2O) will not be available to the plants if the pH is low.

She then discussed weeds. Clemson has an online resource called the SC Pest Management Handbook that gives the weed response to different herbicides registered in South Carolina. Some weeds are indicators (broomstraw is

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an indicator of low pH). Some weeds are toxic as a function of amount eaten versus body weight. An example is horsenettle. Weeds can be managed in three different ways:

- Mechanically - bush hog or hand pull before the seed head appears.
- Chemically - spray herbicide
- Naturally - the best way to naturally control weeds is to have real good grass.

She stress that no matter what herbicide is selected to control weeds, ALWAYS READ THE LABEL. It is illegal to store or buy herbicide in unlabelled jars or jugs. The first step is to identify the weed to be controlled. Then, make sure that the herbicide is safe for the grass (i.e., Cimmaron™ will hurt fescue but it will kill some weeds). The applicator should know the restrictions, such as how long to keep animals off of a sprayed field and how long to wait before hay can be cut. Also, GRAZON™ and GRAZON NEXT™ treated field cannot be sold as hay - it can be used to feed your cows, but not sold to others. The weed killer goes through the animal and when that manure is used on a garden, the garden is toast.

Lindsey listed several common chemicals, including:

- 2-4D - broadleaf killer
- Trichlorpyr - Remedy™ - woody plants and broadleaf
- Glyphosate - Roundup™ - kills everything
- Sulfosulfane - Outrider™ - Johnsongrass in Bermuda
- Crossbow - a mix of 2-4D + Remedy™
- Aminopyralid + 2-4D - GRAZON NEXT™
- 2-4D + dicambria - Weedmaster™ - works best late spring / early summer.

Weeds should be sprayed when they are actively growing. Lindsey went through an exercise of 'Name that Weed'. Different weeds were presented and the members went to the manual to determine what to use to control it. Herbicides with excellent results on curly dock include Chaparral™, Remedy™, Weedmaster™, and Cimmaron™. Dogfennel controlling herbicides include Pasturegard™ and

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Crossbow™. Horsenettle can be controlled with Chaparral™, GRAZON™, GRAZON NEXT™, and Surmount™. Johnsongrass in Bermuda can be controlled with Pastora™ of Outrider™. Roundup™ will kill the Johnsongrass, but it will also kill the other grass. If the johnsongrass is in the pasture, the cows will eat it. The concern is if the johnsongrass is drought stressed (nitrate poisoning) or frost (prussic acid). Thistles can be controlled with Chaparral™, Crossbow™, GRAZON™, GRAZON NEXT™, or Remedy™.

Natural control is to promote an environment for grass to thrive. This means no overstocking, no overgrazing and using rotational grazing. Weeds are opportunistic. She said a grazing stic (basically a yardstick) can be used to indicate when to move the animals. We should be grass farmers first. The grasses come in different types - annual (replant every year) and perennial (comes back every year). Cool season perennials include fescue, Max Q, and orchard grass. Cool season annuals include rye, rye grass, wheat and oats. Warm season perennials include Bermuda, bahai, and dallies grass. Warm season annuals include millet, crabgrass, sorghum and sudan.

This was an excellent program and thanks goes out to Lindsey Craig. By the way, Lindsey was awarded the SC Cattleman's Association Educator of the Year award at the SCCA annual meeting. It was well deserved.

The **PCCA Directory will be issued soon.** The Directory gives us a chance to get to know one another a little better, and has numbers of interest to all members. It has contact information on elected officials serving Pickens County and advertisements of PCCA supporters. It also has a place for notes and calving records. Most members keep it in the truck for easy access. They will be handed out at the May 5 meeting. Please put this date on your calendar. We request every PCCA member to come and meet our supporters - They support us, we should support them.

Knock Down Machinery Fire Potential

By Jeff Caldwell

Www.agriculture.com

Though they're more common during fall harvest when fields are dry and full of fuel, field and equipment fires can happen anytime. But, there are a few things you can do to help keep it from happening on your farm, according to a specialist with the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA).

Even though they've been out there since last fall, the stalks, leaves and other fuel sources in the field hold just as much potential to spark a blaze than ever, says NCGA production and stewardship action team chair Dean Taylor. And, even though the planting timeframe's been fairly wide this spring, a fire at the wrong time can not only be costly in terms of machinery and crop losses, but can also cost you valuable minutes and hours during the busiest time of the year.

"Equipment fires are not only dangerous but are often extremely costly for farmers," Taylor says. "During this busy season, a fire can halt work in an instant causing property damage and consuming valuable time. Building risk management practices into your schedule could end up saving both time and money."

Taylor offers these tips to minimize the fire potential before you enter the field to plant, conduct tillage or apply chemical this spring:

- **Clean up machinery.** Seventy-five percent of all machinery fires start in the engine compartment. Make sure that and all other areas and components of your iron is cleaned up before entering the field. "Cleaning the engine thoroughly will allow it to run cooler, operate more efficiently and will greatly reduce the risk of a fire," Taylor says.
- **Keep it clean.** Cleaning your machinery before entering the field isn't enough; keep it clean while you're working, not just beforehand. "Frequently blow dry chaff, leaves or other material off of the machine with compressed air or a portable leaf blower," Taylor says. "Then, remove wrapped plant materials on or near bearings, belts and any other

moving parts."

- **Check fluid levels regularly.** Taylor advises doing this every morning. While doing so, check for any loose connections or leaks where fluids -- especially combustible ones -- could escape. "look for any possible leaking fuel or oil hoses, fittings or metal lines," he says. "Often, areas that may rub from wear, such as the pressurized oil supply line, may breach causing an oil leak." If you discover an issue, fix it immediately.
- **Check other heat sources.** This includes exhaust system surfaces like the manifold, muffler and turbocharger. Repair any leaks immediately. And, make sure your wiring's all clean and free of shorts. While you're at it, check your bearings. "Worn bearings can also reach extremely high temperatures which can cause any rubber belt coming into contact with this intense heat to ignite," Taylor says. "Make sure to inspect for worn bearings, belts and chains frequently."

Sometimes, though, field fires are just inevitable. In the event it happens, you want to be prepared. That includes having a fully-charged fire extinguisher in your tractor, sprayer or combine cab. And, quick communication is important too. Keep your cell phone or 2-way radio handy, Taylor says.

Extension Office Address Change

The Clemson Extension office in Pickens will no longer use the post office box for receiving mail. The old PO Box 995 will no longer work. The post office will forward mail to the new address for a month. **The new mailing address is 222 West Main Street, Pickens, SC 29671.** All other contact information will remain the same.

Clemson Extension apologizes for any inconvenience that this change will cause.

Remember, all mail to Clemson or the PCCA now must be mailed to:

222 West Main Street, Pickens, SC 29671

Thank you for your help during this transition.



PCCA Vice President Amy Wilson holding the Stihl MS180 chainsaw that the PCCA is raffling off to benefit the Pickens County 4-H and FFA. Tickets are \$5 for one, \$20 for five. Tickets are available at PCCA meetings and the Azalea Festival on April 16. Drawing to be held at the Advertisers Appreciation Dinner on May 5th.

*Thoughts from the President -
David Elias*



Due to personal reasons, I deeply regret to announce my resignation as President of the Pickens County Cattlemen's Association. I have felt "Honored" to hold this position this past year, and hope the very best for the Future of the PCCA. All the members are the best around, and that makes for a "Great Association".

Thanks,
David Elias

Welcome Spring!

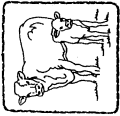
With the Cattle Association, this Spring has brought

about a new change. Our president, David Elias, has regretfully resigned his position due to personal reasons. While we all hate to see this change, we sincerely thank him for his time and talent he has given as a director and we wish him the best for the future. President David Elias showed up and helped make this association what it is today. Everyone knows the quote, "The world is run by those that show up." I would ask the same of every member. Our organization is only as good as the people in it and we have a wealth of knowledge and experience that we should share with each other, especially our newer members and farmers. Let's all make an effort to reach out to each other in order to support and develop our local farming community.

Thank goodness Spring is here! While I appreciate every season and their respective benefits, Spring is my favorite. No matter what has happened in our lives, Spring gives us new chance to begin again. It gives me a sense of hope and anticipation for the year ahead.

I look forward to working with our board and our members to make this a great year. The next two major events coming up are the Azalea Festival in April and the Advertisers Appreciation / Trade-Show in May. Please let us know how you can participate! Amy Finley Wilson

PCCA Synopsis Report	SCCA dues	\$520.00
for period as of 3/28/16 -	Donation	\$212.35
PCCA Balance as of 3/28/16:	Sam's Club	\$45.00
\$11552.88	Postage	\$70.00
INCOME:	Printing	\$10.62
Ads	Azalea Festival	\$55.00
Dues	Meals	\$698.27
Reimbursed	Website	\$945.00
Raffle	Raffle	\$224.27
EXPENSES:		
\$3175.84		



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