

Pickens County  
Cattlemen's  
Association

222 West Main St., Pickens, SC 29671

# Newsletter

Volume 16

January 1, 2021

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## **2020 Brought Different Times... And a new Author**

by H. David Cook

With the prominence of COVID-19 in the upstate, the PCCA decided to suspend meetings for the remainder of 2020. Hopefully 2021 will yield much better than 2020 and hopefully we can get back to life as we once knew it. In other words, with no meetings to report on, this leaves a bit of a blank spot for the beginning of the newsletter. As the new author of the PCCA Newsletter I figured I would introduce myself.

With RD retiring from Secretary, his responsibilities had to be distributed and I chose to overtake the newsletter for the time being. I am David Cook, a new PCCA board member, representing Clemson Block & Bridle. I am a Senior at Clemson, majoring in Agricultural Mechanization & Business with a minor in Animal Veterinary Science. I grew up in West Columbia, SC and thought I wanted to be an engineer, but once I graduated high school and came to Clemson I realized I wanted a career in agriculture. I currently work at Clemson's Beef Cattle Farm and have spent the last two summers running the sweet corn operation at Walter P. Rawl in Pelion, SC.

I'm glad for this opportunity and am happy to serve this cattleman's association as best I can. Happy New Year!

# 10 Safety Tips to Remember About Farm Equipment

By Rural Mutual Insurance Company

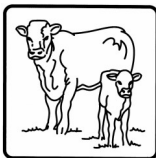
**1. Read and comply with the manual.** Always thoroughly read the manual for each piece of equipment. Your new tractor may function differently than your old one, for example. Then, comply with the instructions and rules.

**2. Follow and keep up with federal and state laws.** These laws are in place to protect both you and the citizens around you, and it's best to make sure you're keeping up with changes to avoid fines. For instance, Wisconsin recently changed its lighting and marking requirements for all Implements of Husbandry (IoH) to further protect both operators and drivers on public roads.

**3. Always keep your slow-moving-emblem (SMV) clean, visible and properly mounted.** This is an important law. Following it can prevent rear-end collisions while transporting and potentially save a life. Road safety is so important.

**4. Dress appropriately.** An untied shoelace, flowing long hair and stray threads from an old shirt have, in the past, led to horrendous injuries when operating farm equipment. Dressing appropriately can mean reducing risk of such injuries.

**5. Ensure you're well rested.** Feeling fatigued when operating machinery can be dangerous. Make sure you're taking breaks from work when you need rest.



**Members are reminded to call the  
Clemson Extension office  
(864-878-1394 x 0) if you are  
attending a meeting.**

**6. Avoid alcohol.** Even one drink can affect your ability to operate machinery. Keep alcohol out of the picture until you're done for the day.

**7. Maintain awareness.** Stay focused. Be aware of what you are doing and where you are going.

**8. Adjust equipment accordingly.** This means keeping all guards, shields and access doors in place when operating equipment, and making necessary alterations to equipment to fit operational conditions. Make sure whoever is using the equipment is properly trained to know basic procedures and safety precautions.

**9. Keep children and animals away from working areas.** Farms offer a world of adventure for curious kids. To avoid any disastrous accidents, keep your child's play area separate from your work area. Know where your children are even when you are mowing the lawn. Don't let a split-second accident impact your child forever.

**10. Read up about planter equipment safety.** Although operators should bear in mind similar safety precautions when using planter equipment, it's good to read up about the specifics.

*Remember: farm equipment safety starts with you! Know how to properly use your equipment and keep your farm buildings safe.*

# Preparing for Spring Calving

By Southern States Co-Op

Benjamin Franklin said, "By failing to prepare you are preparing to fail." When it comes to calving the time to prepare isn't when the first cow starts calving, but rather weeks or months before the first calf is born. The more preparation put in prior to calving, the easier your calving season should be. Now is the time to make sure your spring calving herd is in good body condition, you have the right equipment on hand, and calving areas are prepared..

## **BROOD COW PREPARATION**

Of course the best way to prepare your brood cow for the upcoming calving season is through a comprehensive nutrition plan.; Organic trace minerals are an important component to any feed program.

Peacock comments, "They are the key components to aid digestion of coarse forages, the building blocks required for immunity, production of milk and required for ovulation, resulting in breed back."

Vaccinations are another critical aspect of any breeding operation. The goal of your vaccination program should be to utilize the cow's immune system, via colostrum, to protect the calf. As the calf is born without antibodies to protect against infections, colostrum is the source of antibodies for the calf. Consult with your vet and follow label recommendations to ensure your cows are on an appropriate vaccination schedule.

## **FARM PREPARATION**

Now is the time to do a pre-calving walk-through of your pens, chutes and calving stalls if you use them. All equip-

ment and calving areas should be clean and ready to use. It's always better to prepare these items in the light of day rather than scrambling to make them right at night when the first calf is on its way out.

Every cattle farmer needs the following supplies on hand during calving season: disposable obstetrical sleeves, obstetrical chains and handles, mechanical calf pullers, injectable antibiotics, lubricant, and disinfectant (Novalsan® or Betadine®). Other helpful items to have around are flashlights, old towels and even a bucket of non detergent soap and warm water. If possible, make up a portable kit so you can quickly move your supplies to wherever your cow is calving.

## **PREPARATION IS KEY!**

Spending a little time preparing for calving now can pay dividends later. By ensuring your brood cows are at the appropriate BCS and have been vaccinated will help reduce calf mortality, calving difficulties and outbreak of diseases in calves.

# Winter Cow Supplementation: Protein and Energy Explained

By Caitlin Hebbert and Ryon Walker  
Livestock Consultants

With permission of the Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation

## **NUTRITIONAL NEEDS FOR SPRING- VS. FALL-CALVING COWS**

In a spring-calving system in the southern Great Plains, if warm-season forages are managed for grazing through the early part of the dormant season (stockpiling), cow maintenance requirements after weaning can be met going into December. Keep in mind forage type and maturity typically affect forage quality. In fall-calving cows, protein and energy requirements for lactation and maintenance are typically not met by warm-season stockpiled forages as they transition into dormancy. At this point, lactating cows will start to lose body condition. It's not unusual to hear someone talk about how their cows look a little "hard" after coming through winter, even though they fed a supplement. Nine times out of 10, this is because they were protein-forward in supplementation all the way through winter.

## **ENERGY (TDN) DROPS IN FORAGE WHEN COW NEEDS IT MOST**

As fall transitions into winter, the nutrients available in most forages begin to decline, particularly energy. Good quality native pasture will usually hold CP fairly well during the dormant season and can meet much of a dry cow's CP requirements through fall and maybe early winter. Even well-managed bermudagrass can hold CP levels through December, depending on how wet the winter is.

However, it's important to remember that the dry cow is also the gestating cow and approximately 67% of fetal weight occurs during the last three months of gestation. This requires a significant amount of nutrients, specifically energy. Not only is the cow requirement now steadily increasing starting around December (again, considering calving season begins in February), but the fetus is starting to impose on rumen capacity as it grows, reducing her dry matter intake. Therein lies the conundrum: she is eating less but needs more. And while she may be lacking in protein, the initiation of that latter trimester initiates a switch in the limiting nutrient — energy, which is now a priority.

## **KNOW CATTLE SIZE AND FORAGE QUALITY**

There is no graph or chart that can be made to point you to the perfect supplement for the winter months. It all relies heavily on two things: cow type (size, age, stage of production and lactation potential) and forage (both quality and availability). It is critical to know the size of your cattle rather than just guessing and to test your forage in order to meet requirements without overspending and underfeeding one nutrient or both. In December:

A 1,400-pound cow with 20-pound peak lactation and a February calving date requires 1.5 pounds more TDN per day (14.2 pounds vs. 12.6 pounds) and 0.15 pounds more CP per day (2.1 pounds vs. 1.86 pounds) than a 1,200-pound cow with the same lactation potential.

A 1,200-pound non-lactating cow that is seven months pregnant with a February calving date requires 4.5 pounds less TDN per day (11.8 pounds versus 16.3 pounds) and 1.2 pounds less CP per day (1.6 pounds versus 2.8 pounds) than a 1,200-pound lactating cow three months

*“First let me say that these are some different, and somewhat difficult times we are in right now. COVID-19 has made an impact on, not only the Pickens County Cattlemen’s Association meetings, but us as a whole. I understand the importance of precautionary measures, and am thankful that we have taken this seriously, and we haven’t had to read in the local news “PCCA Meetings Turns Deadly”, is this a little over the top, maybe, but perspective is typically reality with most.”*



My opening goes unchanged from the last letter, we have continued to hold off meeting after meeting keeping YOU in mind. Jenny (our Treasurer and my wife) and I were hit pretty hard with Covid-19 sometime during the Christmas Vacation we took to visit family in Chattanooga. We took a lot of precautions, and in the end, it was not enough.

We have made some tough decisions with regards to the Meetings / Get togethers, but trust me when I say this, I would rather not meet, and keep everyone happy and healthy, than to meet and lose someone to this. I do not think anyone on the Board wants to see anyone succumb to Covid-19 just so that we can have a meeting, we all feel it is in our best interest, to not meet until there is certainty. We have all heard the statistics, we know both sides of the coin, and have decided to lean on the majority vote of the board (which was unanimous) no group meetings until there is a resolution for this matter.

These are trying times, we are currently living in, and I know that some of you have gone through worse times, thank you all for your understanding and if you happen to pray, pray for those that are trying to find a resolution to this, but most of all Pray for our Country, and its instability.

Thank you,  
Drew Adams



## **How to Keep Batteries Alive Through Winter**

By Dave Mowitz

### **IDLE LIFE LEADS TO DEATH**

Idle batteries, especially those sitting in tractors during long winter months of storage, slowly lose their charge to parasitic drain. When this occurs, sulfur molecules in the sulfuric acid that constitutes a battery's electrolyte solution attach themselves to a battery's lead plates. That sulfur can coat the plates so thoroughly that in a surprisingly short time (often less than a couple of months) it prevents the battery from being recharged. This process is called sulfation and is the number one cause of battery failure. Certainly, disconnecting the cables from a battery of a tractor going into storage is a good start. Even then, a fully charged battery in storage will deplete itself at a rate of 1% discharge per day.

### **STORE THEM FOR THE WINTER**

So your best bet is to remove the battery from the tractor and keep it charged in storage. By the way, storing batteries on concrete floors does not cause them to discharge any faster than if they are sitting on a wooden shelf. This myth was perpetuated in the early 1900s when battery cases were made of porous material. Today's polypropylene or hard rubber-encased batteries are sealed better, so external leakage discharge is no longer a problem.

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### **Synopsis Treasurer's Report—12/30/20**

Beginning Balance: \$8701.46

Ending Balance: \$9500.43



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