Beef/Forage Update

Well, I guess it’s time for another Beef/Forage Update. First, I will update everyone on my health. Since July, I have been battling extreme fluctuations in my blood pressure and severe headaches. I have been diagnosed with stress-induced migraine headaches leading to labile hypertension. I am on medication but an effective dose has not yet been found. Hopefully, the medication will get things right and I will be able to get back to normal or at least as normal as I was before!

My original plan was to publish a monthly Beef/Forage Update. The new plan is to publish quarterly. My next issue will be in January, 2005. If you have any suggestions on content feel free to contact me.

IRM: In September, the IRM committee organized and conducted the IRM Beef Summit. Participants in the Beef Summit included producer-leaders from the Master Cattleman and Cow College programs, UK Agricultural Agents, UK Beef/Forage/Econ Extension Specialists, and representatives from the Kentucky Department of Agriculture and Kentucky Farm Bureau. This group spent two days identifying critical issues hindering growth of the beef industry in Kentucky, developing mission statements and goals to address these issues, and developing a Plan-of-Action. The Plan-of-Action included ideas and programs to enhance the participation in CPH, ideas for the development of a Kentucky branded beef product, and thoughts on available funding sources. This Plan-of-Action is currently being refined and will be available to everyone soon. For more information, contact either Les Anderson (859-257-2856; landerso@uky.edu) or Roy Burris (270-365-7541 ext 208; rburris@uky.edu).

Cow College: Last month we graduated another 32 producers from Cow College. The interest, enthusiasm, and interaction made this one of my favorite classes. If you have producers that are looking for more after Master Cattleman, please encourage them to attend Cow College. Cow College gets better every year and has really become an incredible opportunity for producers to increase their knowledge, organize their farming operation, and get exposure to the latest developments in the beef cattle industry. For more information, contact either Les Anderson (859-257-2856; landerso@uky.edu) or Jim Akers (859-278-0899; jakers@uky.edu).

Master Cattleman Program: The Master Cattleman program is wrapping up the 2004 sessions and getting ready for 2005. Only a handful of sessions remain, so if you have any producers that still need to make one up, please contact Jerene Kunkler at (859) 278-0899 as soon as possible to obtain the dates and times. Please remind producers that they must complete BQA certification to successfully conclude the Master Cattleman program. Twelve proposals have been received for 2005 programs so far and the due date is November 12. Please visit: http://fp1.ca.uky.edu/BeefIRM/ to submit a proposal if you have not yet done so. For information regarding the Master Cattleman Program contact Jerene Kunkler (859-278-0899; Jerene.kunkler@uky.edu).
**Record Keeping:** We currently have 384 CHAPS program users; this is excluding the 92 EID herds that have access to the software or the crossbreeding project participants. We also custom process production records for 43 herds and most of these herds have multiple years of data processed through the University of Kentucky and KBN. These 43 herds represent just over 2500 head of active cows. Agents should encourage CHAPS users in their area to constantly back their herd data up to a CD or disk and send it in to the KCA office, not only for use of these numbers in the statewide database but also for safe keeping in another location. The SPA program is moving forward and with the help of the KFBM group we now have 8 books for the year 2003. Soon, a meaningful state database will be available and several educational opportunities will be available for agents and producers. For more information contact Laurentia Van Rensburg (859-278-0899; ljvanr2@uky.edu).

**Animal Health:** The Diagnostic lab saw an increase in Anaplasmosis cases this fall, compared to previous years. Dr. Scharko received several phone calls from producers and agents about deaths that were attributed to this. A commercial vaccine is not available. Feeding chlortetracycline *continuous* in the summer for 120 days should eliminate any carriers and deaths in the fall. For more information contact Dr. Patty Scharko (859-253-0571; pscharko@uky.edu).

**BQA:** A new BQA video tape has been produced to replace the 2001 video and sent to each county office. It includes the why, how, and what of BQA to certify or re-certify producers. Remember that certification is good for 3 years. BQA producer certification is required for CPH sales and it is simply a good idea to participate! For more information contact Dr. Patty Scharko (859-253-0571; pscharko@uky.edu).

**Genetics:** We are once again co-sponsoring a Performance Bull Sale with the Kentucky Beef Improvement Association. These bulls will be developed on-farm and must meet certain health and performance requirements. The sale will be March 28, 2005 at the Barren River Regional Livestock Center in Bowling Green. Consignment information and forms are available on the Animal Sciences homepage or contact Darrh Bullock (859-257-7514; dbullock@uky.edu).

**Ag Econ/Marketing:** The Value Added Targeted Marketing program is building numbers, with cattle being tagged and followed through to slaughter. Agents should remind producers about this program, especially since it is a 50% cost share program, with an added 25% for producers who are doing the CHAPS and SPA records. This is an excellent way for producers to get no-risk, low-cost experience with animal ID before the industry-wide system goes into effect.

We have received carcass data on 363 head so far, with more data expected on cattle sold out of Paris and Hopkinsville. We still need more individual producers to boost numbers and effectiveness from the program; i.e. 66 of those carcass data reports are for one producer's cattle which were custom fed. We will continue to track several of the larger lots sold at CPH sales. For more information on the VATM program, please contact Dr. Lee Meyer (859-257-7272 ext 228; lmeyer@uky.edu) or Kenny Burdine (859-257-7272 ext 229; kburdine@uky.edu).

**Forage:** Dr. Ray Smith has accepted the Forage Extension Position at Lexington. Dr. Smith is a native of Georgia and received his B.S. degree at Asbury College in Wilmore, Kentucky. He
received the M.S. and Ph.D. at the University of Georgia. Following his graduate work in Georgia, he worked at the University of Manitoba in Canada. In 1996, he accepted the position of Extension Forage Specialist at Virginia Tech. Ray will be a valuable asset to our Kentucky Team. He and his family will be arriving in Kentucky by January 1.

The 25th Kentucky Alfalfa Conference will be held February 24, 2005 at the Cave City Convention Center. Our keynote speaker will be Mr. Warren Thompson who has been “Mr. Alfalfa” in Kentucky for the past 63 years. Featured out-of-state speakers include: Dr. Neal Martin, Director of the Dairy Forage Research Center in Madison, Wisconsin; Dr. Mark McCaslin, President, Forage Genetics Research Station, West Salem, Wisconsin; and Dr. Don Ball, Extension Agronomist, Auburn University. Mr. Lee Robey, Robey Farms in Logan County will discuss the role of alfalfa in their dairy operation. In addition to the above five additional speakers will present the latest information on alfalfa diseases, alfalfa impact, alfalfa hay for horses, and advances in alfalfa seed coating. Since this is our 25th Anniversary Program, I expect a full house in the exhibit area along with our largest silent auction and a wonderful meal provided by the Cave City staff. Alfalfa Awards will be presented at noon. For further information, visit our website at http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage.

The Beef/Forage Update is organized and distributed by Dr. Les Anderson. To include material in the next issue of the Beef/Forage Update, feel free to contact him by phone (859-257-2856) or email (landerso@uky.edu).

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