ALFALFA COUNTY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

December 2019 / January 2020

http://oces.okstate.edu/alfalfa

Alfalfa County Cooperative Extension News

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Special Points of Interest

- Wheat Pasture For Cows
- Christmas Housing Tour
- OHCE Executive Meeting
- NW District Livestock Judging
- 4-H Change for Change
- 4-H Youth Expo
- 4-H Dates to Remember

Beef Cow Herd Calendar

This Beef Cow Herd Calendar was developed as a production practice and management guide for Oklahoma cattle producers. Local adjustments and adaption in some areas may be necessary due to differences in types of grass and cattle, amount of rainfall, length of growing season or other factor.

December

Fall Calving

1. Continue winter feeding program. Vaccinate cows 30 days before breeding season with Leptospira/ Campylobacter bacterins, IBR, BVD, PI3' BRSV vaccine depending on the local veterinarian's recommendations.
2. Castrate, dehorn, implant, and vaccinate new calves with 7-way Clostridial bacterin and Intranasal IBR, PI3' BRSV vaccine. Don't implant replacement heifers.
3. Treat cows for internal parasites and lice. If needed.
4. For wheat or other small grain pasture:
   a) Limit-graze cows for protein needs.
   b) Provide a special area for calves to creep graze.
5. Watch the herd continuously for health problems. Pay particular attention to cattle grazing fescue for signs of fescue foot.
6. Provide OSU Silver creep for calves.

Spring Calving

1. Continue feeding program which was begun in October and November.
2. Limit-graze dry cows on fescue three to four days per week.
3. Watch the herd continuously for health problems. Pay particular attention to those grazing fescue for signs of fescue foot.
4. Continue to monitor herd for lice infestation. Implement control program as needed.
5. Indentify the purebred herds and test stations at which you want to look for herd sires. Check sale dates and review performance criteria to use.

Calving Management School

December 10, 2019

Alfalfa County Fairgrounds
602 W 5th Street
Cherokee, OK 73728

6:00 PM - Registration
6:30 PM - Meal (Sponsored by **MULTIMIN**)
7:00 PM - Program

Body Condition Scoring _ Dana Zook, OSU Area Livestock Specialist

- Why, when and how to evaluate BCS throughout the year

Calving Management - A.J. Tarpoff, K-State Extension Beef Veterinarian

- Normal calving process
- When to intervene
- How to manage difficult birthing situations
- Developing a system for lifetime health and performance of the calf

RSVP by December 6, 2019

620-886-3971

OR TO: Alfalfa County Extension
580-596-3131
Cherokee OK 73728

This program is brought to you by the Extension Offices of Barber, Alfalfa and Woods Counties

K·STATE Research and Extension

OSU EXTENSION

MULTIMIN 90

Kansas State University is committed to making its services, activities and programs accessible to all participants. If you have special requirements due to a physical, vision, or hearing disability, contact Justin Goodno, 620-886-3971.
Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service
K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Using wheat pasture as a winter supplement for cows

Dr. Glenn Selk, Oklahoma State University Emeritus Extension Animal Scientist

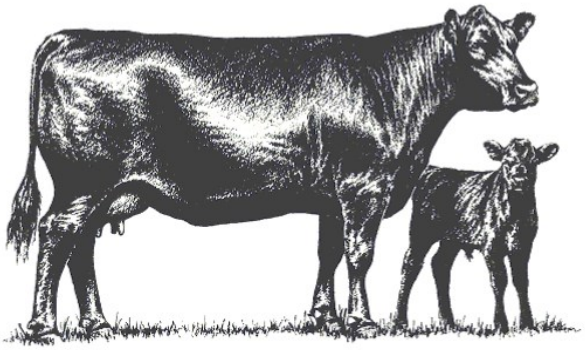
Limited grazing of wheat pasture has proven to be the best and also more efficient approach for utilizing this high-quality forage with mature beef cows. The protein requirements of a dry cow can be met by allowing her to graze on wheat pasture for one day and returning her to dry pasture grass and/or hay for 2 - 3 days. A pattern of one day on wheat and 1 day off, should meet the protein needs of the same cow after calving.

The day on wheat pasture should be defined as that amount of time required for the cow to graze her fill of wheat forage (3 - 5 hours) and not a full 24 hours. This short time on wheat allows the cow to gather adequate amounts of protein to carry her over the ensuing days on dry grass or hay. A 3 - 5 hour grazing limit helps to avoid the unnecessary loss of valuable forage due to trampling, bedding down and manure deposits. Depending on planting date, under normal weather conditions in the fall, enough wheat forage should be accumulated by late November or early December to supply the protein needs of about 1 to 1.5 cows per acre throughout the winter months when limit grazing is practiced.

Producers who decide to use continuous grazing of small-grain pastures, should watch out for the possibility of "grass tetany." Grass tetany will normally strike when older cows are grazing small grain pastures in the early spring and the danger will tend to subside as hot weather arrives. A mineral deficient condition primarily due to calcium, and to a lesser degree to magnesium, is thought to be the major factor that triggers this disorder and normally affects older cows that are nursing calves under two to three months of age. Dry cows are seldom affected.

When conditions for occurrence of tetany are suspected, cows should be provided mineral mixes containing 12 to 15 percent magnesium and be consumed at 3 to 4 ounces per day. It is best for the supplements to be started a couple of months ahead of the period of tetany danger so that proper intake can be established. Because tetany can also occur when calcium is low, calcium supplementation should also be included. Symptoms of tetany from deficiencies of both minerals are indistinguishable without blood tests and the treatment consists of intravenous injections of calcium and magnesium gluconate, which supplies both minerals.

Cows grazing lush small grain pastures should be fed mineral mixes containing both calcium and magnesium.



Mineral Supplementation of Stocker Cattle on Small Grain Forage

Britt Hicks, Ph.D.,

Area Extension Livestock Specialist

The focus of this article will be on the various aspects that need to be considered when planning a mineral program for small grain pastures. Most of the data presented pertains to wheat pasture but is also applicable to other small grains.

Mineral Content of Wheat Pastures: Wheat pasture is typically low in calcium, marginal to sufficient in phosphorus and magnesium, and contains excess potassium for 400 to 600 lb stocker calves. It is also typically low in the trace minerals, copper and zinc. Due to these deficiencies, mineral supplementation on wheat pasture is highly recommended. Calcium is the macro-mineral of primary concern in most wheat pasture-grazing situations.

Wheat Pasture Poisoning: Wheat pasture poisoning (grass tetany) is a complex metabolic disorder of cows grazing on wheat pasture. It occurs most frequently in mature cows that are in the latter stages of pregnancy or are nursing calves, and that have been grazing wheat pasture for 60 days or more. It results from a dietary deficiency of magnesium or from the presence of some factor in the diet which reduces absorption and/or utilization of magnesium. Studies have shown that high levels of potassium and/or nitrogen in the forage result in impaired magnesium uptake by the plant and/or utilization by the animal. Forage dry matter that contains less than 0.2% magnesium and more than 3% potassium and 4% nitrogen (25% CP) is likely to cause grass tetany. Since wheat pasture is typically high in nitrogen and potassium, magnesium utilization is reduced. Research suggests that a potassium level of 3 to 3.5% reduces magnesium absorption by about 30 to 35%. Cows with wheat pasture poisoning have low blood concentrations of both calcium and magnesium. While a similar, tetany-like condition occurs in stocker cattle, its incidence is extremely low.

Frothy Bloat - Causes and Prevention: Frothy bloat is a major cause of death in stocker cattle grazing wheat pasture, and occurs as a result of the entrapment of gases in ruminal fluid froth and/or foam. It is generally thought that frothy bloat is caused by soluble proteins. Soluble proteins contribute to froth or foam formation in the rumen that entraps fermentation gases in the rumen. The chemical composition of wheat forage changes with environmental growing conditions, stage of wheat plant growth or maturity, soil fertility level, etc.; and, therefore, affects the degree or likelihood that a stable ruminal foam will be formed and bloat will occur when wheat is grazed. Oklahoma research has shown that bloat on wheat pasture is more prevalent when plants are low in dry matter and total fiber (neutral detergent fiber, NDF). Thus, bloat is more common when the wheat is actively growing in the fall and spring. Stockers grazing the more fibrous, less succulent wheat forage may secrete more saliva. This saliva may have an anti-foaming effect and thus reduce the incidence of bloat.

Poloxalene is the only product labeled for bloat prevention. It reduces the surface tension of the gas-trapping froth in the rumen. The froth then forms much larger gas bubbles, permitting the normal release of gas; hence, reducing the danger of bloat. Feeding monensin can also help reduce bloat. Although monensin (Rumensin®) is not a true bloat preventive compound like poloxalene, studies have shown that it does decrease the incidence and severity of wheat pasture bloat.

The perception exist in the field that a high-magnesium mineral fed to wheat pasture stockers will reduce bloat. However, there is no evidence to support the suggestion that supplemental magnesium will decrease the incidence and/or severity of bloat of stocker cattle on wheat pasture. There may be a relationship between ruminal motility (and the ability of stocker cattle to eructate gases) and the calcium status of the cattle. Research has shown that ruminal and gut motility is greatly compromised by subclinical deficiencies of calcium.

What Type of Mineral Should be Fed to Stocker Cattle Grazing Wheat Pasture? All of the information presented above indicates that calcium is the mineral of primary concern when developing a wheat pasture mineral program. It is generally recommended that stocker calves on wheat pasture be fed a mineral containing 15 to 20% calcium. Phosphorus may be of some concern but a level of less than 5% is adequate. A low concentration of magnesium may be desirable (~2%) even though the incidence of grass tetany in stocker cattle is extremely low.

OSU research showed that stockers grazing wheat pasture provided a complete mineral without monensin gained 0.27 lb/day more than stockers not fed supplemental mineral. Adding monensin to the mineral increased gains by another 0.24 lb/day. Thus, feeding mineral plus monensin increased gains by 0.51 lb/day. These data illustrate that stocker calves grazing small grain pastures will respond efficiently to mineral supplements and monensin. Consider using these tools in your management program.

Pruning Shrubs

Recently, there have been a number of calls from gardeners wanting to cut back shrubs. Though light pruning and removal of dead wood are fine this time of year, severe pruning should be left until spring. Keep in mind that even light pruning of spring-blooming shrubs such as lilac and forsythia will reduce flowers for next year. We normally recommended that spring-bloomers be pruned after flowering. Shrubs differ in how severely they can be cut back. Junipers do not break bud from within the plant to keep the full shape. Overgrown junipers should be removed. On the other hand, there are certain shrubs that can be pruned back severely during the spring. Rejuvenation is the most sever type of pruning and may be used on multi-stem shrubs that have become too large with too many old branches to justify saving the younger canes. All stems are cut back to 3-5 inch stubs. This works well for spirea, forsythia, pyracantha, ninebark, russian almond, mock orange and shrub roses.

Landscape and Maintenance

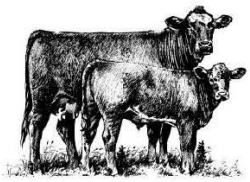
December

- Continue mowing cool-season lawns on a regular basis. (HLA-6420)
- Remove leaves from cool-season grasses or mow with a mulching mower. (HLA-6420)
- Continue to control broadleaf weeds in well established warm or cool-season lawns with a post-emergent broadleaf weed killer. (HLA-6421)
- Irrigate all plantings at least 24 hours before hard-freezing weather if soil is dry. (EPP-6404)

January

- If precipitation has been deficient (1" of snow = ~ 1/10" of water), water lawns, trees, and shrubs, especially broadleaf and narrowleaf evergreens. Double check moisture in protected or raised planters.
- Check on supplies of pesticides. Secure a copy of current recommendations and post them in a convenient place. Dilution and quantity tables would also be useful.
- If you did not treat young pines for tip borers in November, do so before March.

- Check that gardening tools and equipment are in good repair—sharpen, paint, and repair mowers, edgers, sprayers, and dusters.
- Inspect your irrigation system and replace worn or broken parts.
- Control overwintering insects on deciduous trees or shrubs with dormant oil sprays applied when the temperature is above 40°F in late fall and winter. Do not use "dormant" oils on evergreens. (EPP-7306)



Alfalfa County Brand Book Application

The Alfalfa County Brand book will be updated every few years to help aid in identifying livestock in Alfalfa County that are out of place. There is no cost to have your brand or brands printed in the Alfalfa County brand book. The Alfalfa County Brand Book does not replace the Oklahoma Brand Book. If you would like your brand to be state registered you still need to contact the Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association. Individuals may submit brands that are or are not registered through the state. Livestock owners do not have to be Alfalfa County Residents, but this Brand Book is for Cattle/Horses that are located in Alfalfa County. If you have any questions please call the Alfalfa County Cooperative Extension office at (580) 596-3131.

To have your brand published in the next Alfalfa County Brand book, please submit the following information to:

Alfalfa County Cooperative Extension Service
602 West 5th St, Ste 2
Cherokee, OK 73728-2557

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State, Zip_____

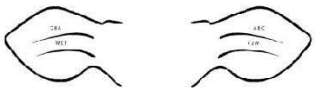
Phone_____ Email_____

Name of brand_____

Location(s) of brand

RSh-Right Shoulder RR- Right Rib RH- Right Hip

LSh- Left Shoulder LR- Left Rib LH- Left Hip

Ear notches 

Cattle Horses

Is this a State registered brand? Yes_____ No_____

Freeze brand_____ Hot Brand_____

Location (s) where stock might be located. North, South, East, West parts of the county:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Drawing of the brand:

Please return form to Alfalfa County Extension Office by February 15, 2020.