



# Blaine County Agriculture Newsletter

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2020

Blaine County Cooperative Extension Service  
212 N Weigle—Watonga OK 73772  
Office: 580-623-5195 <http://oces.okstate.edu/blaine>

## New Pesticide Applicator Testing Procedure

The Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry (ODAFF) has changed the way pesticide applicators test to become certified applicators. All testing will now be a proctored computer based exam that is currently only provided in Oklahoma at eight PSI Services LLC test centers. PSI has test centers located close to us are: Enid, Oklahoma City, and Woodward, PSI also has test centers in surrounding states. It is advised to check the PSI website, [psiexams.com](http://psiexams.com), to see which locations might be closer that offer ODAFF examinations.

All pesticide applicators (private, non-commercial, or commercial) must pass the computer exam at a PSI test center to become a certified applicator. Only certified applicators are allowed to purchase and use restricted use pesticides (herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, etc.). Historically private applicators were able to purchase take home test packets and mail in the exam, but after January 1, 2020 even private applicators will have to test at one of the PSI test centers.

All exams will require an appointment to be made via the PSI website ([psiexams.com](http://psiexams.com)) or the reservation phone number (1-800-733-9267). Applicators must make an appointment for each exam they wish to take. For commercial applicators, a separate appointment must be made for the core exam and each specific category exam. Each exam will cost \$95 (**except Private applicators which is \$65**) and is paid when making the appointment using a valid credit card (VISA, MasterCard, American Express, or Discover). Cash or check will not be accepted.

To make an appointment online, go to the [psiexams.com](http://psiexams.com) website and first create an account. The applicator will be asked to put in their email address and other contact information. The applicator's name should be spelled exactly as it is on the identification that will be used at the test center. When finding an available appointment time, select "Government/State Licensing Agencies" for the organization, next select "Oklahoma" as the jurisdiction, then "OK Pesticide" for the account. Finally select the appropriate classification for the category exam you wish to take, such as "OK Private Applicator", "OK Core", or "OK 1a Agriculture Plant". By entering your zip code, the nearest test center will appear.

**Appointments cannot be made or rescheduled at the testing centers. There are no walk-ins accepted at any of the testing centers.** Appointments can be rescheduled or canceled using the PSI web site or reservation phone number. Reservations must be rescheduled or canceled two days before the testing date or the applicator will forfeit their exam fees. Do not leave a voicemail when cancelling a reservation, make sure to speak to customer service at least two days before the exam date.

Applicators must arrive at the PSI test center at least 30 minutes before the exam reservation. These 30 minutes will allow time for sign-in, identification check, and familiarizing the applicator with the testing process. If the applicator shows up later than 30 minutes prior to the reservation, or does not show up at all, the exam fee will be forfeited. **(Continued on Page 2)**

Oklahoma State University, in compliance with Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 11246 as amended, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Higher Education Act), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and other federal and state laws and regulations, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, genetic information, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, or status as a veteran, in any of its policies, practices or procedures. This provision includes, but is not limited to admissions, employment, financial aid, and educational services. The Director of Equal Opportunity, 408 Whitehurst, OSU, Stillwater, OK 74078-1035; Phone 405-744-5371; email: [eco@okstate.edu](mailto:eco@okstate.edu) has been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies. Any person who believes that discriminatory practices have been engaged in based on gender may discuss his or her concerns and file informal or formal complaints of possible violations of Title IX with OSU's Title IX Coordinator 405-744-9154.

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## (Continued from Page 1) - New Pesticide Applicator Testing Procedure

Applicators must provide some form of government issued identification, which includes a state issued driver's license, state issued identification card, US passport, US military ID, or US alien registration card. The ID must be valid (non-expired), signature bearing, and have a photo. The exam fee will be forfeited if the applicator does not provide proper identification.

Study materials will still be available and able to purchase at Blaine C OSU Extension offices. Visit with your local OSU Extension office, the OSU Pesticide Safety Education Program website [pested.okstate.edu](http://pested.okstate.edu), and/or the ODAFF website [ag.ok.gov](http://ag.ok.gov) to find out more information.

## Chisholm Trail Beef Improvement Conference

Cattle producers looking to maximize the efficiency of their operations should register now to attend one of two Chisholm Trail Beef Improvement Conference events set for **Feb. 21** in Fairview at the Fairgrounds located at 808 E. Highland. Sponsored by the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, the conference is a merger of two past successful events: The Cattle Trails Wheat and Stocker Conference and the Northwest Oklahoma Beef Conference.

We will be focusing primarily on herd health this year. There are a variety of options available to vaccinate cattle, but the process can be confusing. Every sector of the beef industry is affected by the added costs of treating animal sickness. This conference is designed to shed some light on this issue.

Cost is \$25 per participant, which will begin at 8:45 a.m. and finish by 2:30 p.m. On-site registration with refreshments will start at 8 a.m. Registration forms are available at the Blaine OSU Cooperative Extension county offices. Pre-register as it is greatly appreciated as to aid in meals, refreshment breaks and conference materials counts.

Dr. Rosslyn Biggs, OSU Cooperative Extension beef cattle specialist and veterinarian, will kick off the conference sessions with an overview of proper vaccine handling and storage techniques, and basic administration protocols. Dr. Bruss Horn, veterinarian and owner of the Verden Veterinary Clinic, will then provide the latest insights about stress and pain management in calves. He also will lead a discussion about the importance and ease of testing procedures relative to persistently infected bovine viral diarrhea calves. The OSU College of Veterinary Medicine's Dr. John Gilliam will lead participants through discussions about the importance of calf vaccinations, including the impact of modified live and killed vaccines. Following the sponsored lunch, John Richeson, associate professor of animal science at West Texas A&M University, will highlight how calf health links to feedyard performance. The final afternoon session will be led by Derrell Peel, OSU Cooperative Extension livestock marketing specialist. Peel will showcase how animal health begins at the ranch.

This newsletter is one way of communicating educational info to the citizens of Blaine County in the Areas of Agriculture & Rural Development. For free subscriptions, contact the Extension Office at 580-623-5195. The information given is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service is implied. This information was produced at a cost of 1 cent per page for a total of \$13.20.

Editor—Becky Bedwell, Extension Educator—Ag/4-H & CED

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## Preventing Cold Stress In Calves

Producers have a tremendous investment in getting a healthy calf on the ground. A well-developed plan to monitor cows and heifers during calving season is crucial, particularly during the weather extremes of the year. Both severe heat and severe cold impact calf survival, and advanced preparation can help address both cow and calf needs. Calves born during the winter have a unique set of requirements.

The first part of a well-developed calving plan begins before calving season. Take a close look at the cows and heifers and evaluate their appropriateness as dams. Age, disposition, history of calving difficulty, ability to maintain body condition and past illnesses are just a few criteria that impact the selection of females.

One way to avoid calf births during extreme weather is to schedule a defined breeding period that leads to a distinct calving season. Plan for calves to hit the ground in months with moderate temperatures if possible.

To help mitigate bad weather, insure that both cows and heifers are well prepared. Ongoing fetal programming research continues to support that maternal health, and in particular, nutrition at all phases of gestation, can have long lasting impacts for calves throughout their lives. Limiting nutrition in the cow or heifer does not decrease the birth size of the calf and does significantly more harm than good. In addition to nutrition, vaccinate dams appropriately and limit stress, especially during the last trimester.

One option to limit stress is to control the environment. Maintain clean, dry calving areas. Consider providing shelters for animals to escape the weather. However, remember that as animals congregate in shelters, there can be an increase in the pathogen load in the area. Additionally, be prepared if a female presents with calving difficulty. Develop a plan to transport to a veterinary clinic or have excellent onsite facilities to address a dystocia. Next, monitor pregnant females closely for signs of calving. A calf that is too large relative to maternal size is the most common cause of calving difficulty followed by incorrect positioning of the calf. Early intervention at the first signs of calving is critical for both calf and dam survival. A calf not delivered in a timely manner will need intervention by a skilled individual. Heifers that labor in Stage 2 of parturition for longer than an hour and cows that labor longer than thirty minutes should be examined immediately.

Remember to discuss your calving plan with your veterinarian. Communicate well before there is a calving problem. Your veterinarian can work with you and your team to develop protocols so everyone is on the same page when a problem occurs. Your veterinarian can also help you develop essentials for a calving kit.

### Items to consider in your calving kit may include:

**Veterinary emergency number in cell phone, Breeding dates with associated sire, Calving Book, Flashlight, Eartags with marker, Tag applicator, Iodine for navel, Catch pen, 5 gallon bucket, Call pullers, obstetrical chains and handles, Calf sled, Syringes and needles, Exam gloves, Bedding, Clean towels, Colostrum or replacer, Medications, Halter, Rope, Sorting stick, Large Trash Bags and Disinfectants..**

Following delivery, the goal is to see the calf up and nursing as soon as possible. Delays in a calf receiving colostrum have both short and long-term impact on the immune system. Ideally, a calf should receive colostrum within the first two hours of life. Administering colostrum to calves without a suckle reflex should be done with extreme caution due to the increased risk of aspiration pneumonia. Milking the dam or maintaining a supply of frozen colostrum are the best options for colostrum replacement. Commercially prepared colostrum replacer is acceptable if a cow-derived source is not available.

Weather impacts a calf's ability to thermoregulate. Calves born in extreme cold quickly utilize all body fat reserves, putting them at risk. Exposure to wind can exacerbate cold temperatures. Assess body temperature if a calf appears stressed. **(Continued on page 4)**

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## Preventing Cold Stress in Calves—continued

The best way to monitor a calf's temperature is with a rectal thermometer. Inexpensive digital thermometers work well and make it easy to evaluate progress when warming the calf. If a calf's temperature falls below 100 degrees F, gradually raise that temperature. Bring the calf indoors and out of the elements if needed. When used appropriately, warm water baths, blankets and warming boxes are all options to rewarm a calf.

Be careful not to damage the skin of the animal by either rubbing too vigorously or placing them too close to heaters. Additionally, do not wash off the odor of amniotic fluid. This helps prevent rejection by the dam. Warm oral or intravenous fluids as advised by a veterinarian can also make a big difference. Once a calf is warm and has been fed colostrum, return it to its mother.

Working with your veterinarian to develop protocols before calving season can reduce stress and lead to more successful outcomes if an emergency arises.

## Blaine County Spring Livestock Show

4-H and FFA members have been working hard on their project for the spring livestock show. Please come out and watch the show, eat in 4-H concession stand and attend the Bonus Auction.

**Saturday, Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup>,**  
8:00 a.m. Goat and Sheep Show  
1:00 p.m. Cattle Show

**Sunday, Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup>**  
2:00 p.m. Swine Show

**Tuesday, Feb. 25<sup>th</sup>**  
6:30 p.m. Bonus Auction.



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## **An update on Australia cattle and beef**

Derrell S. Peel, Oklahoma State University Extension Livestock Marketing Specialist

The ongoing wildfires in Australia represent the latest in nearly a decade of environmental challenges the country has faced. This has prompted questions about the impact of the fires on Australian cattle and beef production and trade. This article was compiled from several Australian reports and other media and data sources.

Wildfires have burned over 15 million acres, an area the size of West Virginia, and are not yet under control as of January 10. Roughly nine percent of the Australian cattle herd is in areas significantly impacted by the fires with another 11 percent in regions partially impacted by the fires.

The majority of the fire impact is in New South Wales (NSW), in the southeast coastal region of the country, with over 12 million acres burned. NSW includes approximately 18 percent of the Australian cattle herd. One recent report indicates that over 6,000 head of livestock have been lost thus far in NSW. The other state heavily impacted is Victoria, just below NSW in far southeast Australia, with about 3 million acres burned. Victoria has about 15 percent of the total Australian cattle inventory, including about two-thirds of the 1.4 million dairy cows in Australia. Victoria and NSW, which include major population centers of Sydney and Melbourne, along with the national capital of Canberra, include most of the Australian dairy industry with as much as one third of total dairy production impacted by the fires.

The wildfires are the result of several years of widespread and prolonged drought in Australia. Drought-forced cattle liquidation is pushing total cattle numbers to thirty-year lows, about 24 million head, in 2020. After peaking in 2014 at 29.3 million head, numbers dropped to 25 million head in 2017, recovering slightly in 2018, before decreasing again in 2019 as drought resumed. Additional cattle losses occurred in Queensland, in northeast Australia, as massive flooding killed over 300,000 head in early 2019. Queensland accounts for roughly 47 percent of total Australian cattle inventories.

Australian beef production and exports in 2019 were higher than previously projected as drought forced additional herd liquidation, with female slaughter reaching record proportions of total cattle slaughter. Beef production is forecast to decrease nearly 15 percent year over year in 2020, to the lowest level since 2010, with Australian exports declining by over 19 percent from 2019 levels. Australia is expected to drop to fourth place among global beef exporting countries behind Brazil (# 1), India (# 2) and (for the first time) the U.S. (#3).

Australia typically exports roughly 70 percent of total beef production and has seen major changes in export destinations recently. Traditional beef exports to Japan, the U.S. and South Korea were surpassed in 2019 by China, which accounted for 24.4 percent of total Australian beef exports in 2019. Japan accounted for 23.3 percent of exports; the U.S. for 20.5 percent and South Korea for 13.2 percent of 2019 Australian beef exports. U.S. imports of Australian beef are up 4.0 percent for the January-November, 2019 period; the second largest import source behind Canada and accounting for 23.2 percent of year to date beef imports.

It is mid-summer now in Australia and the drought continues unabated with severe rainfall deficits and above average temperatures. Additional herd liquidation is likely if conditions do not improve. In any event, Australian cattle and beef production will be reduced for the foreseeable future and rebuilding, whenever it can begin, will take several years.

BLAINE COUNTY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE  
OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY  
212 N WEIGLE  
WATONGA OK 73772

**OSU**  
OKLAHOMA  
STATE  
UNIVERSITY

**Blaine County Cooperative Extension Service**  
Oklahoma State University  
212 N. Weigle (Courthouse)  
Watonga, OK 73772  
(580-623-5195)

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Editor:

Becky Bedwell  
Extension Educator – Ag/4-H  
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