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The Noble County Courthouse & Fairgrounds are closed to the public practicing social distancing. We continue to be open during normal business hours to provide aid by phone or email. We continue to meet the needs of OSU University and Noble County. Feel free to contact the office during normal business hours. Thank you for understanding.

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**NOBLE COUNTY
EXTENSION**

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Agriculture News and Updates: April 2020



**NOBLE COUNTY
EXTENSION**

Are You Having Dystocia Problems This Year? Earl H. Ward, Area Livestock Specialist

After talking to producers this spring, it seems there is an anomaly happening with difficult births. We all know that many things influence a calf's birth weight, but even producers who pay close attention to the obvious factors like genetics or cow size might find themselves helping a cow that has never had any trouble. Much like unexplained high levels of twinning, could environmental factors impact dystocia?

What environmental factors could increase dystocia problems? Rainfall, temperatures, cool season forages, or maybe even the barometric pressure? As I write this article it is a beautiful 60-degree day in northeast Oklahoma, but this winter has not always been easy on our animals. I have written several articles on cold stress on cows and how when an animal is wet their lower critical temperature (LCT) is raised to somewhere around 59-degrees. For every degree drop in temperature below that LCT her energy requirement increases one percent. From November 1st, 2019 till March 1st, 2020 the Mesonet weather station in Talala, OK has reported 38 days with measurable precipitation. That means that 31% of the time our cows were wet. It also reported that in the last 45 days there have been 135 hours where the Cattle Comfort Index was at a cold stress level. I say all this to say that although our winter might have mild, the combination of wind, temperature, and moisture is detrimental to a cow's body.

This winter's weather conditions have most likely led a cow to a negative nutrient balance. Meaning that she is burning more nutrients than she is consuming. Supplementation certainly helps negate this deficiency, but there are times when the cold stress is so severe that we could never feed enough supplement to counter act that stress. This negative balance could result in a weakened female at calving.

When the body is exposed to cold temperatures it begins to shiver and the blood supply is moved from the skin to the internal organs. This reallocation of the blood supply to the internal organs means that

there is a higher level of blood supply to the fetus. The more blood supply to the fetus translates to a larger calf. Nebraska researchers observed six years' worth of weather and production data and determined that the colder the winter the higher the calf birth weights. The study was summarized by saying that a one-degree drop in average winter temperatures resulted in a one-pound increase in calf weight, associated with a 2.6% greater calving difficulty. (Source: Deutscher, G.H. 1999. Climate Affects Calf Birth Weights and Calving Difficulty. Nebraska Beef Cattle Report)

So as famers and ranchers we have to deal with the hand that was dealt to us and even though it may not be the winter that we wanted it is what we have. I encourage producers to pay close attention during calving season this year and help when it is time to help. It is suggested to give a cow thirty minutes and a heifer one hour before stepping in and helping. Be prepared by having animals close to your working facilities and if you see trouble, don't wait. Have a conversation with your OSU Extension Educator and veterinarian about what you need to do to prepare for the worst.

Noble County Courthouse, Fairgrounds and County Barns -closed to the public

The Noble County Commissioners voted on March 16, 2020 approving the closing of the Noble County Courthouse, Fairgrounds and County Barns to the public beginning March 17, 2020. This will be in effect until further notice. Office hours will still be held at each office. All locations will be available by email or phone. All events scheduled are cancelled or postponed until further notice.

Cattle Lice - Earl H. Ward, Area Livestock Specialist

While feeding steers last week we began to see patches of hair coming off their necks. That means we are seeing the results of lice that should have been treated months ago. Oklahoma has four different species of lice. Three of these species are sucking lice and the fourth is a biting lice. It is the sucking lice that makes the largest impact on the animal's performance.

The entire lifecycle of lice is spent on the host and can be completed in as few as 16 days. Lice populations increase during the winter months and decrease during the summer due to not being able to survive the high temperatures. Animals that have lice will lick, scratch, or rub areas that are itchy. Inspect your animals by parting the hair and examining the skin for lice. If two or more lice are found per four-inch area, then treatment should follow. Diagnosing lice seems easy but can be mistaken for ringworm or scabies.

The treatment for lice is fairly simple. Although it is recommended to control lice in the fall, most of us find ourselves finding the symptoms in the spring. All species can be treated with sprays that target both the biting and sucking lice. We used a pour-on insecticide that covered both internal and external parasites for our steers. Since the lice eggs are not affected by the insecticide, a retreatment is recommended two to three weeks after initial treatment.

For more information about lice, see your OSU Extension or visit www.livestockbugs.okstate.edu.

Find Farm Management Resources Wherever You Are

Producers may access information on farm financial management topics along with production, marketing, and risk management through their smartphone on the e-Farm Management website. This site includes videos, tools, and publications for farmers and ranchers to strengthen their farm management skills.

In the Income Statement video, viewers learn the definition of an income statement and ways that it can be used by a producer on their farm or ranch. The video explains the income statement's relationship to other financial statements. Lastly, the video shows the difference between a cash and accrual income statement.

To view this video and find additional information on the farm income statement, visit: <http://agecon.okstate.edu/efarmmanagement/income.asp>.

More information on this and other farm management topics may be found: 1) by contacting your nearest Extension Educator 2) on the e-farm management website (<http://agecon.okstate.edu/efarmmanagement/index.asp>) or 3) on the OSU Ag Econ YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/OkStateAgEcon>).

Goat Prices Average Higher in 2019 - JJ Jones, SE Area Ag Econ Specialist

Meat goats, which are the largest sector of goats in the U.S., increased to 2.09 million head in 2020. This is 1.7% from 2019. Dairy goats showed the largest increase moving up to 440,000 head, an increase of 2.3%

2019 prices for 40-60 lbs. goats started out below 2018 but jumped up quickly and averaged over \$3.00/lbs. during the spring months before taking the normal seasonal slide into the summer months. Prices reached their annual low point in July at 2.43/lbs. which is a several months earlier than normal. Prices then proceeded to climb the rest of the year with December averaging \$2.93/lbs. Overall 2019 prices average \$2.80/lbs. which is \$.05 over 2018 and \$0.15 over the five year average.

Imports of frozen goat meat for 2019 show an increase of 18.4% over 2018 totaling almost 16.17 thousand metric tons. Although higher than 2018 imports fell short of the record mark set in 2017 and were more like 2015 and 16. The decline in imports from 2017 is mostly due to the decline in goat meat being imported from Australia where drought and wildfires have hurt goat production. 2019 saw huge percentage increases from New Zealand and Mexico.

