

Osage County Agriculture Newsletter



**OKLAHOMA COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION SERVICE**

October/November 2020

Welcome Cheyenne Patrick!

I am Cheyenne Patrick, I am the new Oklahoma State University Extension Educator in Osage County. I attended Northeastern Oklahoma A&M where I received an associates degree in Animal Science and a minor in ranch management. From there I went to Oklahoma State University to continue my education and graduated with a bachelor's in animal science and minor in Ranch operations. I love the outdoors and riding horses. I am looking forward to assisting the Agriculture community.

Negotiating Surface Damages

Donald A. Lepp with Drummond Law and Oklahoma State University Extension will present a program on negotiating surface damages in Osage County for easements and oil and gas activities.

Mr. Lepp will give a presentation aimed at private landowners on how to negotiate with companies conducting oil and gas operations on their property or purchasing right of way easements across the landowners' property. Subjects to be discussed will include the landowners' rights when an operator conducts operations or when a spill occurs, reasonable amounts for surface damages, and the right to compensation for new easements. Time will be allowed for questions at the end of the presentation. The program will be November 17, 2020 at 6 pm at the Ag Building on the Osage County Fairgrounds. COVID precautions will be in place and the program is limited to the first 50 people to register. Contact the OSU Extension Office in Osage County to make reservations. Call 918-287-4170.

Lack of moisture threatens winter grazing

Derrell S. Peel

Oklahoma State University Extension Livestock Marketing Specialist

Most of western Oklahoma has received little or no moisture in the past two to three weeks advancing drought conditions once again. From the worst levels in early July, drought conditions in Oklahoma had generally improved until mid-September. In the past two weeks, the Drought Monitor map for Oklahoma shows conditions once again deteriorating. The Drought Monitor includes a Drought Severity & Coverage Index (DSCI), which provides an indication of how severe and widespread drought conditions are based on the Drought Monitor categories. The DSCI for Oklahoma was highest (indicating worse drought conditions) at 143 in early July. The DSCI improved to 55 by mid-September and has increased again to 64 in the latest Drought Monitor. Nationally, the DSCI has worsened since May and currently stands at 148, with the majority of drought conditions in the western half of the country.

La Niña conditions have developed this fall in the Pacific Ocean and are expected to persist through the winter.

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By Derrell S. Peel

Upcoming Events

The presence of La Niña in the winter typically results in drier than average conditions across the southern U.S. As a result, the drought outlook for the remainder of the year, provided by the Climate Prediction Center, indicates persistent drought in current drought areas with drought conditions expanding eastward into the central and southern plains, including much of Oklahoma. Current Oklahoma weather forecasts are consistent with these broader indications with scant precipitation prospects likely for the next two weeks.

Wheat pasture development and growth is likely to slow or even reverse if forecast weather conditions are realized. This, in turn, may reduce stocker cattle demand in the coming weeks. On average, Oklahoma calf prices are at or near the seasonal low in the late September/early October period. With larger fall runs of calves expected in October and November, the lack of wheat pasture demand may add additional seasonal pressure to calf markets this fall. Lack of wheat pasture or other forages may change the timing of calf and feeder cattle sales this fall.

A feeder cattle price pattern has developed this fall in Oklahoma that is very typical at this time of year. The price slides across steer weights are very different for feeder cattle below 600 pounds compared to cattle over 600 pounds. A larger price slide for the lightweight cattle means that the value of gain is lower. For example, steer prices last week (Oklahoma combined auctions) showed that the value of increasing steer weight from 500 to 550 pounds increased animal value by \$30/head or \$0.60/lb. value of gain. From 550 to 600 pounds, steer value increased by \$29/head or \$0.58/lb. of gain.

In contrast, steers from 600 to 650 pounds increased in value by \$69/head or a value of gain of \$1.37/lb. The same is true for heavier weight feeder animals. The same pattern is true for heifers with the price break occurring at about 550 pounds.

The current feeder price patterns mean that producers should consider the implications of current animal weight, short-term weight gain and timing as they evaluate fall marketing alternatives. In the current market for example, the value of 50 to 100 pounds of gain will be significantly lower for steers less than 600 pounds compared to steers over 600 pounds.

The Impact of Dressing Percent on Cull Cow Marketing

Glenn Selk, Oklahoma State University Emeritus Extension Animal Scientist

October is often the month of calf weaning and cow culling (for spring calving herds). Cull cows represent about 20% of the gross income in commercial cow calf operations. Understanding the major factors impacting cull cow prices is important to the bottom line. Remember cull cows that are destined to go to the packing house are graded by their fleshiness. In the USDA Market News reports cull cows are reported in four grades. The fattest cows are called “Breakers”. Moderately fleshed cows are “Boners” or “boning utility”. Thin cows are called “Leans” or “Lights”, depending upon the weight of the cow. There will be price differences among these four grades.

However, within each grade, large variation in prices per hundredweight will exist because of differences in dressing percentage. Cow buyers are particularly aware of the proportion of the purchased live weight that eventually becomes saleable product hanging on the rail. Dressing percentage is (mathematically) the carcass weight divided by the live weight multiplied by 100.

Key factors that affect dressing percentage include gut fill, udder size, mud and manure on the hide, excess leather on the body, and anything else that contributes to the live weight but will not add to the carcass weight. Most USDA Market News reports for cull cows will give price ranges for High, Average, and Low Dressing Percentages for each of the previous mentioned grades. As you study these price reports, note that the differences between High and Low Dressing cows and bulls will generally be greater than differences between grades. Many reports will indicate that Low Dressing cows will be discounted \$8 to \$15 per hundredweight compared to High Dressing cows and will be discounted \$5 to \$7 per hundredweight compared to Average Dressing cows. These price differences are usually widest for the thinner cow grades (Leans and Lights). See examples from last week’s sale in Oklahoma City National Stockyards:

https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/ams_1823.pdf

As producers market cull cows and bulls, they should be cautious about selling cattle with excess fill. The large discounts due to low dressing percent often will more than offset any advantage from the added weight.

“We interrupt this La Niña with an early winter storm”

Derrell S. Peel

Oklahoma State University Extension Livestock
Marketing Specialist

An unexpected arctic storm last week extended south across the panhandles of Oklahoma and Texas and across much of Oklahoma. The storm brought timely and much-needed moisture in the midst of ongoing La Niña conditions that have kept the southern part of the U.S. warmer and drier than usual. Seasonal forecasts are for drought conditions to persist in current drought areas and expand eastward across the central and southern plains. While La Niña conditions are expected to provide the baseline weather tendencies through the winter, sporadic intrusions of arctic storms may provide intermittent chances of precipitation and will likely result in considerable weather variability.

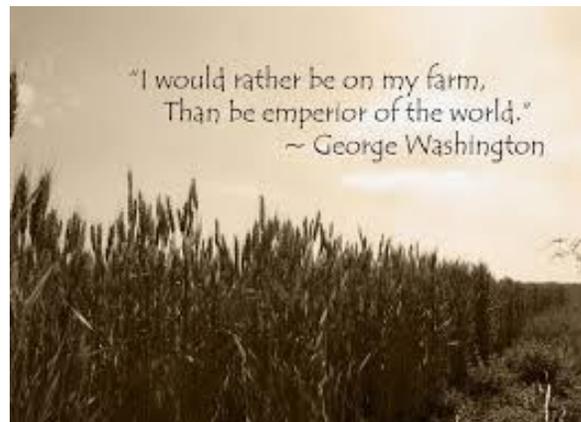
The storm last week brought precipitation in a variety of forms ranging from snow in the Panhandle to significant ice accumulations in central Oklahoma with widespread cold rain and intermittent sleet. Electric power is still out for many thousands of customers almost a week after the storm hit and several more days will be needed before power is fully restored. Clean-up will continue for many weeks and the tree scars will be apparent for years to come.

Cattle were exposed to cold, wet conditions for several days last week. Cold stress reduces productivity and increases health problems. These challenges can be particularly acute for calves in the process of weaning or newly weaned and for receiving stocker cattle that are already stressed. Cattle with persistent wet hair coats have significantly increased maintenance requirements and often require more and better quality feed. The storm no doubt affected feedlot cattle across a broad swath of cattle feeding country and may impact feedlot performance and timing in the coming weeks. Across Oklahoma, several auctions closed last week and pushed cattle prices lower yet.

The upcoming Drought Monitor this week will reflect the precipitation from the storm. The Oklahoma Mesonet shows that the bulk of the state received from 1.5 to over 5.0 inches of moisture in the last seven days. The precipitation may revive chances for wheat pasture and winter grazing. The latest crop progress report showed that 86 percent of Oklahoma wheat was planted, ahead of the five-year average of 82 percent for that date. Wheat emergence was reported at 74 percent, well above the five-year average of 66 percent. Prior to the storm, 25 percent of Oklahoma wheat was rated as poor to very poor. Wheat condition should improve as the precipitation is

reflected in the crop in subsequent reports. The wheat crop is generally poised to respond quickly to the timely precipitation. Stocker demand may pick back up somewhat in the coming weeks with improvement in the wheat crop. Seasonally large runs of feeder cattle are expected in the coming weeks and numerous value-added preconditioned calf sales are scheduled in the next five weeks.

Improved stocker prospects combined with a sharp recovery in Feeder futures markets last week may mean that the seasonal low in calf and stocker prices is past. March Feeder futures, the reference for winter grazing programs, increased by roughly \$8/cwt last week, making stocker budgets look more attractive again.



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Upcoming Pawnee/Osage Oklahoma State Extension Ag Programs

Sericea Demonstration Control– Two Field Days will be held to show different chemicals and costs used to control sericea in native pasture.

Stockpiling Bermuda Demonstration Field Day– A field Day will be held

Master Cattleman Planning Meeting– 6 pm, Tuesday November 10, Oklahoma State Extension Office, Osage County Fairgrounds, 1039 Old Highway 99 Pawhuska, OK, 918-287-4170. Topics, Times and dates will be discussed to allow as many as possible to take part in the Master Cattleman Program to be delivered Winter/Spring of 2020 and 2021.



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