

# Osage County Agriculture Newsletter



OSAGE COUNTY  
EXTENSION

July/August 2023

## Cow/Calf Corner

July 17, 2023

### Cow and Heifer Slaughter Still Strong but Declining

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

Heifer slaughter remained strong in the first half of 2023 but does show signs of declining going forward. For the first half of the year, total heifer slaughter was down 0.5 percent year over year with a decrease of over four percent in the month of June. The July Cattle report will be released by USDA on July 21 and the industry is looking to see if there are any indications that herd liquidation has ended, and herd rebuilding might begin. The report is expected to show that herd liquidation continued in the first six months of the year but may slow in the remainder of the year. There is no data currently to support the idea that heifer retention is underway but it may have started with recent improvements in range and pasture conditions. The beef replacement heifer number in the upcoming report will be of keen interest and is likely to show a still smaller number compared to last year but could show a slight increase year over year if heifer retention has begun.

The cattle inventory report will show that the beef cow herd continued to decline in the first half of the year. While beef cow slaughter is down thus far... down 12.0 percent year over

year in the first six months of the year...the current pace suggests a herd culling rate over 12 percent for the year. Beef herd expansion requires a herd culling rate below ten percent and likely below nine percent for a year or more.

Beef cow slaughter is likely to decrease more significantly in the second half of the year but is unlikely to drop enough to come close to stabilizing the beef cow herd this year. Total cow plus heifer slaughter through June averaged 51.8 percent of total cattle slaughter.

This percentage indicates continuing herd liquidation. Total female slaughter will drop below 45 percent of total slaughter during active herd expansion. This is unlikely to happen before 2024 at least.

The July Cattle report is expected to show that herd liquidation continued in the first half of the year. The report is unlikely to show definitive signs of strong heifer retention but could indicate the beginning of retention if the beef heifer inventory is down just slightly or possibly even up slightly. The monthly Cattle on Feed report released the same day will also include a quarterly breakdown of steers and heifers in feedlots. The number of heifers on feed decreased modestly compared to last year in the January and April data but a sharper decline in the number of heifers in feedlots in this July

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In This Issue:

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#### Cow and Heifer Slaughter Still Strong but Declining

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#### Challenging Times for Growth Promoting Implant Use

Paul Beck, Oklahoma State University, Extension  
Beef Cattle Nutrition Specialist

#### Grasshoppers: Adding Insult To Injury

By Brian C. Pugh

#### Fall Gardening Tips

#### Upcoming events

report would be the first significant data indication of heifer retention. In short, the upcoming reports are unlikely to show that herd liquidation has stopped but might provide indications that the situation will begin to stabilize in the remainder of the year.

### Challenging Times for Growth Promoting Implant Use

Paul Beck, Oklahoma State University,  
Extension Beef Cattle Nutrition Specialist

The U. S. Beef industry has used anabolic implants since the mid 50's when Synovex-S was approved for use in growing cattle. The artificial equivalent to testosterone, trenbolone acetate (TBA), combined with estrogen like compounds has been in use since the late 80's. The U. S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved implants in use today as efficacious and safe for beef cattle production. There has never been a substantiated adverse event for humans since approval in 1956. All implants are approved for no withdrawal before slaughter, emphasizing their safety.

Label changes, effective July 1, 2023, make reimplanting within a production phase off-label use of implants unless the label specifically states it is approved for reimplanting.

What are the stages of production?

There are currently 3:

1. "Beef calves 2 months of age and older" – defined by FDA as "Beef calves considered ruminating and nursing their dams from 2 months of age to weaning."

The FDA states: "While there are cattle ear implants

approved for use in this production phase, no implants are approved for use in a reimplantation program in this production phase of cattle."

2. "Growing Beef Steers and Heifers on Pasture (stocker, feeder, and slaughter)" – FDA defines as "Weaned growing beef steers and heifers ... intended only for slaughter (i.e., not for reproductive purposes) maintained on pasture and receiving the majority of their diet from grazing."

The FDA also states: "While there are cattle ear implants approved for use in this production phase, no implants are currently approved for use in a reimplantation program in this production phase of cattle. Cattle in this production phase may only receive one implant during this production phase regardless of whether they are considered part of the subclasses "stocker", "feeder", or "slaughter"."

3. "Growing Beef Steers and Heifers Fed in Confinement for Slaughter"– further defined as "Weaned growing and finishing beef steers and heifers (beef and dairy breeds) intended only for slaughter (i.e., not for reproductive purposes) and confined in group pens and fed a progressively high-energy diet ad libitum as their sole ration until slaughter... Includes growing beef steers and heifers in a grow yard."

Here are some resources available for further information: [https://www.fda.gov/animal-veterinary/resources-you/fda-letter-industry-provides-additional-information-and-](https://www.fda.gov/animal-veterinary/resources-you/fda-letter-industry-provides-additional-information-and-clarification-use-beef-cattle-ear-implants#1)

[clarification-use-beef-cattle-ear-implants#1](#)

## Grasshoppers: Adding Insult To Injury

By Brian C. Pugh

It's official, summer has reached Oklahoma and the warm season forages are trying to utilize available soil moisture to recover from the previous two years of adverse conditions. Many producers had a good spring with volunteer cool season forages like brome and annual ryegrass, but this has also prolonged the recovery period of Bermudagrass fields. Just when it looked like the weather was on our side, those small grasshopper nymphs that have been causing worry the last month have morphed into full grown forage eating machines. During average years, grasshoppers rarely populate to an extent that causes significant damage on forage. But as we all know, that "average" year in Oklahoma is ever elusive.

Most reports of grasshopper populations and damage are due to the differential grasshopper, *Melanoplus differentialis*. These hoppers are brown to olive green and yellow with chevron shaped black markings on the hind legs. They grow up to 1 ¾" long at maturity after growing through 5-6 stages (instars). These insects cause the majority of damage once they reach the adult stage.

Adults select grassy fencerows, roadsides and pastures to lay their eggs before winter arrives. They will deposit these eggs in 1 inch long packets ½ to 2 inches deep in the soil or in sod clumps.

Typically this is how the grasshopper overwinters (as an egg), but in mild winters adults can survive until the following year. The following spring through summer, tiny nymphs hatch in these grassy areas and begin the cycle again. But in order to mature through the instars in 40 to 60 days and reproduce they must find food... and this brings us back to our problem. Adults will feed readily on desirable forage species, corn, soybeans, sometimes weeds and many other plant species, potentially causing economic damage.

Control methods rely on good management. If you have grassy ditches, fencerows, etc. watch them closely early in the year. If you are seeing large populations of nymphs this is likely a nursery area where eggs are laid and hatched. This area can be treated to control the young hoppers. It is important to note that with any chemical method, young grasshoppers are much easier to control than mature hoppers! Additionally, if you routinely have trouble with grasshoppers develop a strategy to break their cycle; find the nurseries and treat the area.

Typically, good control on young grasshoppers coupled with minimal damage on forage resources will occur before early July. It seems that timeframe might be 3-4 weeks later this year however, due to the cool weather and slow nymph development. When is treatment warranted in a forage setting? If grasshoppers are robbing the forage or hay you need to get your herd through the winter then treatment should be considered. The real question becomes, can you apply

insecticide for less money than what the lost forage would be worth? If hay is scarce and tops \$75 per bale, the answer would be yes.

Actual thresholds for treating grasshopper infestations are higher than what you might think. For small grasshoppers (1/2 inch), treat when populations are 24-100 per sq. yard. For adult hoppers, treat at populations of 8-40 per sq. yard. Walk randomly through the field to determine if they are concentrated in certain areas, whereby reducing insecticide needed. Common chemical controls include:

**Carbaryl (Sevin):**

0.5-1.0 lb/acre for small grasshoppers, 1.25-1.875 lbs/acre for adults.

14 day pre-harvest interval (PHI) for grazing or haying

**Malathion:**

1.5-2 pts/acre (0.75 – 1.25 lbs/acre)

0 day PHI for grazing or haying

**Dimilin:**

2 fl oz./acre (0.0075 – 0.0156 lbs/acre) at 2nd to 3rd instar (1/2" or less)

0 day PHI for grazing or haying

**Lambda cyhalothrin (Warrior, Karate)- Restricted Use:**

2.56- 3.54 oz/acre (0.2-0.3 lb ai/acre)

0 day PHI for grazing, 7 day PHI for hay

**Contact your County Educator for many other chemical options.**

Producers should consider withdrawal times and chemical cost before deciding on an

active ingredient. If they have a private applicator license, many of the lambda cyhalothrin products have shown acceptable control of grasshoppers up into the adult stages at a reduced cost when compared to traditional products such as carbaryl. Just remember if using generics, many have a reduced concentration and achieving the desired application of active ingredient will be crucial. (Many generic lambda cy products are 1 lb instead of 2 lb/gallon products, this doubles the required application rate).

**Also remember to always read the label before spraying and good luck with the grasshoppers!**



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## UPCOMING EVENTS

- ◆ **July 25th**
- ◆ mesteading Series/Backyard Chickens
- ◆ **August 3rd**-Homesteading Series/Laundry soap and Macrame
- ◆ **August 10th**– Cimarron Ag Conference in Perry. Look On our Facebook page for flyer. Or call for more info.

### Fall Gardening Tips

- Seeds left over from planting the spring garden may be used in planting the fall garden if the seed is stored in a cool, dry location or in a refrigerator or freezer.
- Seeds that are stored in the freezer properly should remain viable for many years. Immediately following planting, return surplus seed to the freezer.
- In order to get early established growth, supplemental irrigation is desirable. Most vegetable crops will benefit from supplemental irrigation. Information on drip irrigation may be available from garden centers and county Extension centers. This technique allows an efficient method of irrigation.
  - drying

See the fact sheet below for more info:

<https://extension.okstate.edu/fact-sheets/fall-gardening.html#fall-gardening-suggestions>



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