

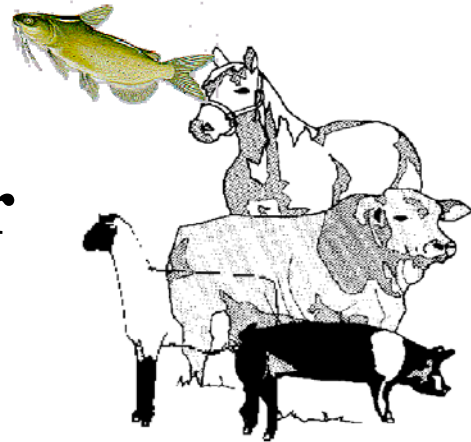
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Animal and Dairy Science Department
Rhodes Center for Animal and Dairy Science

Livestock Newsletter

July/ August 2006

<http://www.ces.uga.edu/Agriculture/asdsvm/beef-home.html>



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Robert L. Stewart
Extension Coordinator
Animal and Dairy Science Department

LIVESTOCK NEWSLETTER

July/August

AS-1

Understanding Branded Beef Programs

Carole Hicks, Extension Animal Scientist

Deciding how and where to get the most money for your calves can be a producer's worst nightmare. One marketing option is to enroll in a branded beef program. It is a simple process that can be done easily once you understand the differences between them. For decades beef was marketed only as a commodity while other competing products were sold under brand names and marketed by separate companies. An established brand name creates consumer recognition and loyalty for that specific product name.

Branded beef programs have been around longer than probably thought. Major packers of the 1920's marketed their own house brands to try and supply consumers with a guarantee of a high quality product. The major boom of branded beef programs began much later beginning with the development of CAB – Certified Angus Beef in 1978. Now there are over 40 USDA recognized branded beef programs, all with specific standards to participate.

The needs and preferences of the consumer have driven the formation of branded beef programs. In general, branded beef programs can be broken into three categories. Breed specific branded programs choose cattle from a specific breed or breed type. Company specific programs choose beef from all of breeds, but include other criteria in terms of grade, marbling, size, types of feed used and/or restrictions on the use of pesticides, antibiotics and hormones. The last is store branded beef, which is exactly as the name describes. Some grocery store chains are now branding their own beef products. Most programs can be further classified into one of three groups: (1) light/lean beef, (2) organic and/or natural, and (3) high palatability beef.

America's drive for improved health has created the opportunity for several niche markets to be developed – lean, natural, and organic. Beef that is marketed as lean often has had additional external fat trimmed and has lower quality grade requirements. It is important to remember that USDA quality grades are based on the amount of marbling, intramuscular fat in the beef, not on the value of the product. For example, Laura's Lean Beef markets ground beef products with 92% lean or higher and uses primarily leaner breeds of cattle (Limousin and Charolais) in their program.

Other programs market their beef based on the way the animals have been handled and/or processed. The USDA defines natural beef as "minimally processed

containing no additives.” Beef that is labeled “natural” is most likely being marketed for the restrictive use of certain types of feed, antibiotics, hormones and pesticides on the live animals. Organic beef is somewhat similar to natural; however, foods that are labeled organic are monitored and must meet the guidelines set forth by the USDA Organic Standards. Organic farms are closely monitored and are subject to inspection regularly.

A majority of branded beef programs only strive guarantee the consumer a consistent, satisfying eating experience. Their requirements are based on USDA Quality and Yield grades. They often prefer cattle of higher marbling breeds to insure a highly palatable product.

More and more beef in the supermarket carries a brand name on its packaging. Branded beef accounts for approximately 20% of the beef sold. Producers can take advantage on this growing market and reap the rewards of a value-based system. After evaluating the branded beef programs available, producers can select one that most closely matches his/her type of cattle and management practices. A complete list comparing the requirements and specifications of many branded beef programs is located at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/lsg/certprog/speccomp.pdf>.

HORSE HAPPENINGS NEWS FROM THE AMERICAN HORSE COUNCIL

The American Horse Council will hold an “ISSUES FORUM” in Austin, Texas on Monday September 25, 2006 at the Marriott Austin Airport South, 4415 South IH-35 from 8:45 AM to 4:00 PM. The forum is to address the recent EVA (Equine Viral Arteritis) outbreak, new developments in taxes for horse owners and breeders, the Unwanted Horse Coalition and access to trails. The meeting will conclude with an “ASK THE EXPERTS” panel.

EQUINE SPECIES WORKING GROUP OFFERS RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE NAIS SUBCOMMITTEE

The Equine Species Working Group (ESWG) was created to review the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) and the possible participation of the horse industry in the program, should it become mandatory in the future. The ESWG is committed to developing recommendations for a national equine identification plan which are in the best interests of, and protect the rights of, horse owners and breeders.

On August 1, 2006, the ESWG made recommendations to the NAIS Subcommittee on how the equine industry might reach NAIS compliance in the future. Each of the different species working groups report to the NAIS Subcommittee, which in turn reports to the Secretary of Agriculture’s Advisory Committee on Foreign Animal and Poultry Diseases. There were two key points that were the focus of the ESWG report: movement and identification.

Reportable movements are a major concern and topic of discussion with the ESWG. Because of the extensive daily movement of horses not only intra- and interstate, but internationally, the ESWG decided to focus on those horses that are at the greatest risk of being exposed to and/or spreading disease. In recognizing the heavy burden that would be placed on horse owners or premises managers/owners by a reporting mechanism, it was recommended by the ESWG that the horse industry continue to rely on the current regulatory mechanisms in place for horses that move. These regulations that require a brand inspection, Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI), VS-127 Permit or International CVI prior to movement will serve as the starting point for trace back in the event of a disease outbreak.

“The recommendation not to report any equine movements was one that went through much discussion, and one that we feel is very important,” says ESWG Co-Chair Dr. Marvin Beeman. “Although it may not achieve the ideal goal of the NAIS, the current practices will cover those horses at the greatest risk. It is the most practical solution at this time, as there will be no additional burden placed on horse owners or premises owners and managers.

Each of the previously mentioned regulatory documents are kept and maintained in either the state/country of origin, the state/country of destination or both. Each document contains information as to the horse’s point of origin and its point of destination. In the event of a disease concern federal and state animal health officials would be able to access that information. Most importantly, with the exception of the one-time official identification of the horse, these are practices currently being met by horse owners who move their horses and therefore will not require the establishment of new business practices in the industry.

The other focus of the ESWG report was equine identification. Standardization of the identification practices in the horse industry is a major focus of the ESWG. With standardization, the horse industry would be able to ensure that the impact of an equine disease emergency could be quickly managed and controlled to benefit the veterinary welfare of the horse and re-establish normal movements as soon as possible. The ESWG recommends that states standardize requirements for Certificates of Veterinary Inspection (CVIs) and that, for NAIS compliance, horses should be identified with the ISO/ANSI compatible RFID chip (1178/85, 134.2kHz), implanted in the nuchal ligament on the left side, in the middle third of the neck, halfway between the ears and the withers.

The ESWG also recommended that official identification, CVI, VS 127 permit, or International Certificate of Veterinary Inspection is required. *From AHC News, Summer 2006 vol. 3, no 2*

Hearings Held on American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act

The American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act (H.R. 503) was the focus of a flurry of activity during the week of July 24 in the House of Representatives. By week’s end, the first hearings ever held in Congress on the slaughter of horses for food had occurred and the bill had been discharged or reported out of two House Committees.

It is anticipated that the bill will be considered by the House of Representatives after the August-Labor Day Recess, probably during the first week of September.

The Bill

This bill was introduced in February 2005 by Congressmen John Sweeney (R-NY) and Ed Whitfield (R-KY). It would prohibit the slaughter of horses for human consumption. The bill would amend the Horse Protection Act (HPA) to prohibit the shipping, transporting, or sale of horses for slaughter and subject violators to penalties of up to \$3,000 and/or one year in jail for the first offense and up to \$5,000 and/or two years in jail for a second offense. An offender may also be subject to civil penalties of \$2,000 for each violation. The bill calls for \$5 million for enforcement.

Hearings

Two days of hearings were held on the bill. These were the first Congressional hearings ever held on the issue of slaughtering horses for human consumption.

A hearing was held before the Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection of the Energy and Commerce Committee on Tuesday and a hearing was held before the House Agriculture Committee on Thursday. A total of thirteen witnesses appeared before both Committees, both supporting and opposing the bill.

Proponents of the legislation argued that horses are different than other animals and should not be slaughtered for food, that the transport and slaughter process is inhumane, that many horses are stolen and that many sellers don't know their horses may be sent to the processing facilities.

Opponents raised concerns about what would happen to the tens of thousands of horses slaughtered now, who would care for them and provide funding for their care, and the interference by the government with decisions like this about personal property.

The hearings drew a lot of interest and highlighted the strong feelings surrounding this issue, particularly within the horse industry itself as horse owners and horse organizations testified both in support and in opposition to the bill.

Committee Actions

Both Committees released the bill so that it is ready for action by the full House. Representative Joe Barton (R-TX), Chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, discharged the bill himself without any recommendation or action by the Committee, an unusual step, but within his discretion as Chairman. Mr. Barton indicated his opposition to the bill, but during the hearing other members of the Committee voiced support.

The House Agriculture Committee Considered the bill and amended it. Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-VA) opposed the bill and most of the members of the Committee also expressed opposition. This was reflected in the amendments the Committee adopted during its consideration.

The Agriculture Committee approved amendments to the bill that would: limit the application of the bill to Kentucky and New York, the states of the principal proponents; exclude from the prohibitions processing plants in existence on the date of enactment; require the Secretary of Agriculture to assume responsibility for unwanted horses and to compensate any horse owner for the loss of value and costs incurred in euthanizing and disposing of such horses; and to require USDA to reimburse state and local governments for the costs incurred in caring for stray or abandoned horses.

After approving the amendments, the Committee voted to report the bill to the House “unfavorably...with a recommendation that it not be agreed to.

Next Steps

The two bills will now go to the House Rules Committee, which will decide how the bills will be considered by the House. The Rules Committee may limit debate to either the bill as originally introduced, to the bill as amended by the Agriculture Committee or to a bill that includes provisions from each.

The proponents of the bill hope to have it considered by the House when Congress returns from the August-Labor Day recess. Any bill passed by the House would have to be passed by the Senate before it could be sent to the President for signature.

From AHC NEWS, Summer 2006 vol.3, no. 2

Providing Roughage for Horses with Limited hay Supplies Dr. Gary Heusner

It appears hay supplies due to droughty conditions will be in short supply. With the current dry conditions some questions are arising pertaining to uses of hay substitutes as sources of roughage for horses.

Whenever we feed horses we always like to have the total dry matter consumed made up of at least 50% forages, pasture and/or hay. The higher the forage (roughage) intake the better as the horse is a nonruminant herbivore and requires roughage in the diet to maintain normal gut and digestive function as well as behavior. Although not proven experimentally, it appears a horse requires a certain “chew time” or “chew factor”. If the chew time is not met, behavioral problems may arise. The first problem usually encountered is the development of vices such as wood, mane, and tail chewing. The normal function of the digestive tract may also be comprised with less saliva production due to reduced chewing. Saliva not only helps to digest feed but acts as a buffer to prevent too high an acidity in the gut. The higher acidity in the gut will change the type of bacteria in the cecum and colon and may lower the digestibility of roughages that are consumed by the horse. There is also strong evidence that the higher acidity in the gut may cause the horse to look for something to chew.

Horse diets can be altered so that roughage and grain intake are equal. For all of the reasons mentioned previously caution should be exercised to make sure the horse receives a minimum of 0.75 to 1.0 % of body weight in forages per day. This

means an 1150 pound horse should consume 8.6 to 11.5 pounds of hay or hay equivalent per day. Hay equivalent is a key word as a complete pelleted feed with a high fiber content is not the same as a feed that has fiber present that has not been ground and/or pelleted. Hay chopped to a stem length of less than one inch does not appear to provide the same fiber factor as hays that have a fiber length one inch or longer. What can be used to partially substitute for hay in horse diets? Two readily available sources of feed for horses are beet pulp and cottonseed hulls.

Beet pulp can make up to 20-25% of the total diet of a horse. Beet pulp has a crude fiber and digestible energy content similar to alfalfa hay for horses. The 1150 pound horse doing light work can be maintained on 9.75 pounds of good quality Bermudagrass hay and 9.75 pounds of a grain-sweet feed that contains 10-12% crude protein and 5-8% crude fiber. If beet pulp were used at up to 25% of the diet, the horse could be fed as follows:

	<u>Pounds/day</u>
Bermudagrass hay	4.90
Beet pulp	4.90
Grain mix (10-12% protein, 5-8% crude fiber)	9.75

The same 1150 pound horse doing moderate work could be fed as follows:

	<u>Pounds/day</u>
Bermudagrass hay	5.75
Beet pulp	5.75
Grain mix (12% crude protein, 5-8% crude fiber)	11.00

Cottonseed hulls fed with a grain mix can make up 20% of the total diet by weight. We (The University of Georgia Horse Center) have successfully fed diets containing 20% cottonseed hulls with no hay. Cottonseed hulls have a fiber content twice as high as Bermudagrass hay. Cottonseed hulls could be used to feed the 1150 pound horse doing light work as follows:

	<u>Pounds/day</u>
Bermudagrass hay	6.00
Cottonseed hulls	4.50
Grain mix (10-12% C. Protein, 5-8% C. Fiber)	10.25

The same horse doing moderate work could be fed as follows:

	<u>Pounds/day</u>
Bermudagrass hay	7.50
Cottonseed hulls	5.50
Grain mix (12% crude protein, 5-8% crude fiber)	12.00

There are many options and combinations you can put together to feed your horses. The key is to make sure the roughages total 50% (or greater) of the total intake of feed. The second key is to make sure that the alternative roughages used do not make up over 20-25% of the total diet. The third key is to make all diet changes gradual. Diet changes should be made over a seven to ten day period. If you need help trying to determine what roughage alternative or amounts can be used do not hesitate contacting your County Agent or myself.

Beef Sire Selection Manual – A New Resource for Cattlemen

Ronnie Silcox
Extension Animal Scientist

The National Beef Cattle Evaluation Consortium (NBCEC) has sponsored the development of the *Beef Sire Selection Manual*. This 76-page book covers genetics for beef cattle producers. The manual contains articles from some of the best and brightest beef cattle researchers and extension specialist from around the country. These articles are available in pdf format at the NBCEC web page:

<http://www.nbcec.org/nbcec/education.html>

Contents include:

The Importance of Sire Selection

Assessing Management, Resources and Marketing

Genetic Principles

Crossbreeding for Commercial Beef Production

Breed and Composite Selection

Data Collection and Interpretation

Expected Progeny Differences

Interpretation and Utilization of Expected Progeny Differences

The Role of Economically Relevant and Indicator Traits

Selection Decision Tools for Economic Improvement Beyond EPD

Visual and Phenotypic Evaluation of Bulls

DNA-Based Technologies

Most of the calculation of EPDs for beef cattle and much of the research and development of genetic prediction in beef is done at Colorado State University, Cornell University, and the University of Georgia. To reduce duplication in research efforts, coordinate future research in this area and make more efficient use of limited resources researchers at these three universities have formed the National Beef Cattle Evaluation Consortium. The consortium officially began July 1, 2001 with funding from a Special Research Grant authorized by Congress and administered through Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service.

NBCEC also conducts national programs in Extension and graduate student training in animal breeding. To accomplish these objectives and to better meet research needs, several research groups at other universities were asked to participate as affiliate members of the consortium. These currently include Iowa State University, Kansas State University, and University of Kentucky.

NBCEC has held workshops on beef cattle evaluation. Some of the materials presented in these workshops can also be found at their web site.

Performance of cows sired by high milk EPD bulls

Johnny Rossi – Extension Animal Scientist

Cows that produce more milk will wean heavier calves. Therefore, most producers strive to increase the milk production potential of their cow herd. Purchasing bulls with a higher milk

EPD will increase the milk production of heifers retained from the bull compared to a bull with a lower milk EPD. This has been proven in several research studies. The milk EPD is measured in pounds of calf weaning weight of calves produced from the bull's daughters. For example, the daughters of a bull with a milk EPD of +20 would wean calves that were on average 10 pounds heavier than the daughters of a bull with a milk EPD of +10. The extra 10 pounds of weaning weight would be solely due to the extra milk produced by the daughter from the +20 milk EPD of the bull.

The increased milk production is not free. The more milk a cow produces, the more feed she must eat to produce the extra milk, and maintain body condition to breed back. A reduction in pregnancy rate is not the only concern with increased milk production. Calving interval increases with decreasing body condition score. Increased calving intervals will result in younger and lighter calves at weaning time.

In a study conducted at Oklahoma State University, cows sired by bulls with either a high (+19) or a low (-12) milk EPD were evaluated for calf weaning weight and for reproductive performance. Cows that were 6-, 7-, and 8 years old were used. All cows were either Angus or Polled Hereford. Calves were born both in the spring and fall and were weaned at seven months of age.

The milk EPD was very accurate in predicting the weaning weight differences of the calves. Cows sired by high milk EPD bulls weaned calves that were 31 pounds heavier than calves from cows sired by low milk EPD bulls. The bulls used in the study were proven bulls with highly accurate EPD's for milk. There will be more variation in the milk EPD's of bulls that are young and unproven at purchase.

At weaning time, cows sired by low milk EPD bulls were about 35 pounds heavier than cows sired by high milk EPD bulls. Also, body condition score was greater for cows sired by a low (5.3) milk EPD bull versus a high (5.05) milk EPD bull. Lower body weights and condition scores are to be expected for higher milking cows. Does the lowered weights and body conditions scores affect pregnancy rates? Calving interval was five days greater for cows sired by high versus low milk EPD bulls. Calves from cows sired by a high milk EPD bull were worth about \$30 more than calves from cows sired by a low milk EPD bull. If a calf gains about 2.5 lbs per day prior to weaning, then the calves from high milking cows would give up 12 pounds of weaning weight due to being younger than the calves born to cows with lower milk production. This would reduce the added value of the higher milk calves to only \$20 more than the calves from lower milk EPD bulls. Cows rebreeding each year were 85% for higher milk production cows versus 87% for lower milk producing cows. To develop a replacement heifer to replace an open cow, it will cost about \$500. Only two open cows per hundred would reduce income by \$10 per cow. This further reduces the value of higher milk production to about \$10 per cow. Factor in the increased costs of feeding a cow that produced more milk, makes it questionable to increase milk production above what is average for a breed. It will not pay to give up reproductive efficiency in favor of heavier milking cows if reproduction is impaired beyond that was observed in this study. Longer calving intervals and reduced conception rates will occur if milk production is increased too much. Selecting bulls for average milk production and feeding cows to maintain body condition scores of 5 to 6 should avoid problems associated with increased milk production.



Market New Branch
P O Box 86
Thomasville, GA 31799
Tel 912-226-1641



Agricultural Building
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

WEEK ENDING: 9-01-06 The Cooperative Extension Service would like to thank Terry Harris for submitting this information.

GEORGIA CATTLE: RECEIPTS: 12,100 LAST WK: 13,600 YEAR AGO: 10,300

<u>FEEDERS</u>	<u>STEERS</u>	<u>MED & LARGE 1</u>	<u>HEIFERS</u>
	<u>130.00-160.00</u>	<u>300/350 LBS</u>	<u>120.00-146.00</u>
	<u>123.00-150.00</u>	<u>350/400</u>	<u>112.50-132.00</u>
	<u>109.00-140.00</u>	<u>400/450</u>	<u>106.00-128.00</u>
	<u>110.00-132.00</u>	<u>450/500</u>	<u>104.00-120.00</u>
	<u>105.00-125.50</u>	<u>500/550</u>	<u>98.00-114.00</u>
	<u>102.00-123.00</u>	<u>550/600</u>	<u>96.00-111.00</u>
	<u>97.00-118.00</u>	<u>600/650</u>	<u>92.00-106.00</u>
	<u>94.00-112.00</u>	<u>650/700</u>	<u>90.00-100.00</u>

<u>SLAUGHTER COWS</u>	<u>% LEAN</u>	<u>75-80% 850-1200 LBS</u>	<u>42.00-49.00</u>
		<u>80-85% 850-1200 LBS</u>	<u>43.00-52.50</u>
		<u>80-86% OVER 1200 LBS</u>	<u>43.00-53.00</u>
		<u>85-90% 800-1200 LBS</u>	<u>41.00-51.00</u>

5 Area Daily Wtd Average - Texas/Oklahoma; Kansas; Nebraska; Colorado; and Iowa/So Minnesota Feedlots:

Steers...Select/Choice 65-80% Weighted Average Price Range 88

Heifers..Select/Choice 65-80% Weighted Average Price Range

By-Product Drop Value (Steer)...Hide and Offal Value 8.48cwt.

Box Beef Cut-Out ValueChoice 1-3 550/750 LBS. 145.28

Select 1-3 550/700 LBS. 135.39

Georgia Hogs: GA-FL-AL Direct Area Receipts 3700 Trends 3.00 Lower

US 1-2 220/260 LBS. 36.00-38.00 Sows 300/500 LBS. 500-UP

<u>FEEDER PIGS</u>	<u>GEORGIA</u>	<u>TENNESSEE</u>	<u>GEORGIA</u>	<u>TENNESSEE</u>
<u>US 1-2 35/40 LBS.</u>				<u>55-60</u>
<u>40/45</u>				<u>60/65</u>
<u>45/50</u>				<u>65/70</u>
<u>50/55</u>				<u>70/80</u>

IOWA-SOUTHERN MINNESOTA DIRECT HOGS: RECEIPTS TRENDS 1.50 higher
BARROWS & GILTS 49-51% LEAN 185 LB CARCASSES RANGE 61.00-70.00 WTD AVG. 67.62