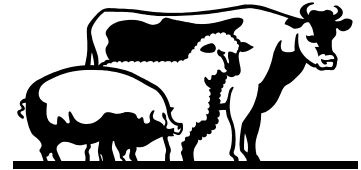


UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

LIVESTOCK LINES



STANISLAUS & SAN JOAQUIN COUNTIES

NOVEMBER 2005 ♦ VOLUME 11, NO. 2

DID YOU KNOW...

Livestock Lines is available in an electronic format?

by **Theresa Ward**

Livestock and Natural Resources Farm Advisor

UCD VET VIEWS- FALL CATTLE HEALTH REMINDERS

Fall is here, the days are shorter and the list of things to get done is longer. Sometimes, there are multiple lists, or even a list of lists. Suffice it to say there is plenty to do and not much time. This time of the year as we try to get all the cattle worked through the chute, I thought it might be good to review a few cattle health considerations that are always important.

Pregnancy Check. For the cow herd this is an important check on current progress and can be the first sign of any problems that might have occurred. This is a check on the bulls as well as the cows. For spring-calving herds, open cows can be culled at this time. The price of cows has been pretty good recently so it may be a good time to sell open cows or late-calving cows. For thin, open cows you may want to add a little weight on with cheap feed before selling them. If the pregnancy rate is less than 90%, consider checking the bulls for Trichomonosis. When Trich gets into a herd the first year, the pregnancy rates often fall to less than 90%

and the next year may plummet to 70% or less. When your veterinarian checks the cows for pregnancy, get a general assessment of health. If the cow is in marginal condition, this may be the time to start planning for her eventual exit from your herd.

Bull Examinations. For fall-calving herds, examine the bulls BEFORE they go out with the herds. This includes a breeding soundness exam and a Trich test. This is the time to prevent these types of losses. Dominant bulls that are sterile will really decrease pregnancy rates and move your calving season back. Vaccinate and deworm these bulls before they go out with the cows. The bulls can receive 2 doses of a "Vibriosis" bacterin at 2-3 times the dose given to the cows. This is an effective way to prevent Vibriosis in the herd. If you have bought new bulls, be sure they were vaccinated against Anaplasmosis or do it at this time. Adult bulls should receive 2 doses of the killed Anaplasmosis vaccine available from the California Woolgrowers.

To simplify information, trade names of products have been used. No endorsement of named products is intended, nor is criticism implied of similar products which are not mentioned.

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Vaccinate the bulls as you would for the cow herd (Clostridial vaccines, virus vaccines, etc.).

Vaccinations. In the cow herd, the minimum should include (1) a Clostridial vaccine (usually an 8 way) that includes Redwater protection (*Clostridium hemolyticum*) as the most important component, (2) Vibriosis vaccine for cows that are going to be turned out with the bulls, (3) Leptospirosis vaccine for cows 3 to 8 months pregnant, and (4) a virus vaccine booster (IBR, BVD, PI3, BRSV). For open cows the modified live vaccines are safe and for pregnant cows the killed virus vaccines are safe. Additionally, there are some new modified live virus vaccines that are safe for pregnant cows **IF** the cow herd has been vaccinated appropriately in the past. We need to remember that the modified live IBR vaccines can cause abortions if the pregnant cows have not been well vaccinated in the past. For pregnant cows that are going to calve within 30 to 90 days it is wise to use a Rota virus, Corona virus, K99 combination vaccine to help prevent scours in calves. In herds that have had Trichomonosis in the past, this may be a good time to vaccinate the cow herd with the Trich vaccine. But before you go to all the work and expense of working the cows through the chute, talk over your vaccination program with your veterinarian. Also, take good care of the vaccines when handling them. Keep live vaccines out of the sun. Keep all vaccines on ice and prevent them from freezing on cold mornings.

Parasite Control. This is an excellent time of the year to deworm cattle. They are often going on to clean pastures or range. So kill the parasites, stop the parasites from laying eggs, and prevent the contamination of the fields they will be on for the next few months, as well as getting the parasites out of the cattle. Fluke control is particularly effective at this time of the year, as most of the flukes will be mature and this is the life stage when the flukes are most susceptible to drugs. The drugs that can kill flukes include Valbazen® and Ivomec Plus®. Grub control is an important consideration in the fall. Also be sure to check with your veterinarian that the grub control drug you are going to use is safe and effective.

Miscellaneous Items. Fall is the time of year to remove any fly control ear tags from the cattle. This will help prevent the flies from developing resistance to the insecticides used in these ear tags. There have not been many new fly control ear tags developed over the last several years, so preventing resistance in the flies is important. If you are in an area of California that is copper deficient, this is the time of year you want to supplement with injections or boluses. The copper injections (copper glycinate) last about 6 months and the copper boluses last about 12 months. Also, for selenium deficient areas, this may be the time of year to supplement the cattle. The California Cattlemen's Association sells a selenium bolus that lasts for one year. Alternatively, selenium injections can be given to provide partial supplementation for 30 to 40 days. This is a good time of the year to review your overall supplementation program as well as your mineral program. Be sure to spend a little time with your veterinarian, livestock advisor, nutrition consultant, and any others to discuss the items that need to get done at this busy time of the year.

John Maas, DVM, MS
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MEDUSA HEAD PROJECT

If you are unlucky enough to have medusa head grass on your ranch, you know what a headache it can be. Cattle rarely graze it, fire can control it, but burn permits are getting harder to obtain, and herbicides that can control it, also kill everything else out there that you want to keep. Researchers on campus have been working on different strategies to control medusa head, and now we are ready to launch a State-wide project, enlisting local ranches as cooperators. The objectives of the project are spelled out below, but the bottom line, like most Extension projects, is to find real world answers to problems that you have. Your help in allowing us on your ranch is how we do this. If anyone is interested, please call me in the Modesto office (525-6800) and I can discuss this further with you.

Objectives:

1. Inventory and monitor Medusa head infestation in land managed by collaborators.
2. Determine cost and effectiveness of Medusa head control by placing palatable block supplements to achieve high densities of livestock in Medusa head patches.
3. Determine best stocking density and pasture size to control medusa head efficiently.
4. Quantify effects of frequency and intensity of defoliation on level and duration of control.
5. Develop a site-specific and simple system to forecast date of medusa head's greatest susceptibility to mowing and grazing using widely available weather records.
6. Incorporate results in training materials, disseminate, and demonstrate results.

ANIMAL ID

Our national animal ID system is slowly moving forward. This summer, USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) made a decision to have records housed by a private company. They did this as an attempt to eliminate worries of producers across the US that information would be subject to the Freedom of Information Act if held by the government. Many States are moving forward with premise identification and pilot projects to work out the bugs in the system. It will be awhile until everything falls into place, but don't wait too long to get involved. APHIS welcomes any comments producers may have about the program, and they are listening and paying attention. This summer I had the Chief of Staff for APHIS with me for a day, through the Ag Leadership Washington DC Exchange. We discussed the program, and all of the possible shortfalls that may happen here in the state, even had somewhat of a heated debate over dinner. She kept an open mind, and I toured her around our two counties so she got a good idea of the different circumstances producers deal with, and we were even able to meet with a local producer to discuss this and some other issues. Bottom line — the program is here and is not going away. Animal health issues have made it a top concern. Yes, there are still many things that need to be ironed out — technologies, who is responsible for the reporting of movement, who is going to pay for it, etc. I urge everyone to keep an open mind, look into ways that you might be able to make a system such as this work for you instead of only seeing it as one more thing to do. We will have information about how you can use animal ID to your advantage, as well as

some of the different technologies available, at the Oakdale Livestock Forum this coming February.

AVIAN INFLUENZA- AKA- BIRD FLU

With so much information lately on the news concerning Bird Flu, I thought I would give all poultry owners, bird hunters, and us poultry consumers some information from APHIS.

To start, it is important to remember that Bird Flu is not in the U.S. There are two forms of the virus — low and high pathogenic avian influenza. Both have symptoms, with the low being less obvious, less contagious, and less fatal. Look for signs of respiratory disease, depressed appetite and decreased egg production. The high virus is the one that is fatal to birds. Often birds are found dead. Early symptoms will be respiratory problems; discharge from beak, eyes; swollen head, eyelids, comb, wattles, or hocks; soft shelled or misshapen eggs; decreased egg production; decreased appetite; diarrhea; incoordination; or purple discoloration of the wattles, comb, and legs. Contact with fecal material is the most important form of spreading the disease currently, but anything that has contact and moves from place to place can carry the virus. This includes flies, wild birds, equipment, people, and machinery, anything that can come in contact with an infected bird and move to another house.

APHIS is monitoring US flocks, and has banned poultry products from areas infected with Bird Flu to prevent the spread. However, with migrating birds being a vector, it is possible that some day we may have Bird Flu in the U.S. Having proper biosecurity reduces the risk of spreading Bird Flu, or any disease. So far, there is no known risk of spreading Bird Flu through contaminated poultry products. Domestic poultry are being destroyed and not entering the food chain when the virus is found. However, wild birds, such as ducks, are vectors of the disease. Proper food safety methods should be used when handling any poultry products to prevent any disease. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends cooking poultry products to at least 160°F, which will kill any virus. WHO is also continuing to research the threat of Bird Flu through contaminated meat or eggs. Refer to their website, as well as APHIS's, and CDC's websites to remain current on Bird Flu.

WHO: <http://www.who.int/en/>

CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/>

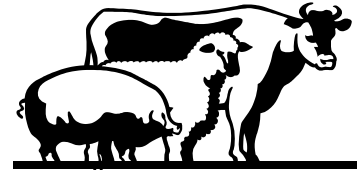
APHIS: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/>



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OAKDALE LIVESTOCK FORUM UPDATE!

We will be breaking with tradition for the 54th Annual Oakdale Livestock Forum because of scheduling conflicts. Instead of the Forum being on the 4th Tuesday of February, this year it will be on the 1st Tuesday, which is **February 7th, 2006**. Please mark your calendars now and look for the next issue of Livestock Lines for all the information concerning the Forum!

RESOURCES

Livestock Lines is available in an electronic format! By simply signing up on our website, you can have the latest Livestock Lines delivered hot off the presses to your e-mail address! You can also check out other newsletters from our office that you can sign up for as well as check for upcoming meetings. So be sure to go to <http://cestanislaus.ucdavis.edu/> and check out the resources available on-line! You will still receive a “hard” copy mailed to you unless you notify me that you would only like to receive notices and newsletters electronically.

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