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Conference — August 7

Registration begins at 7:45 a.m.

The program will begin at 8:30 a.m.

Program Topics and Speakers

Beef Cattle Outlook and Industry Changes

- Dr. Ron Plain
Extension Economist
University of Missouri

Managing Health on Newly Purchased Calves and What To Do In a Health Wreck

- Dr. Dee Whittier
Extension Veterinarian
Virginia Tech

Stocker-Feedlot Dynamics: How Is It Changing?

- Dave Latta
Assistant General Manager
Pratt Feeders, LLC

Stocker Operator Panel

- Tennessee Stocker Operators
Paul Fugate • Sneedville, TN
Sidney Riley • Bluff City, TN

Use of Supplemental Feeds In a Forage Based Stocker Program

- Dr. Matthew Poore
Extension Livestock Nutritionist
North Carolina State University

Livestock Risk Protection Insurance for Stocker Operations

- Dr. Emmit Rawls
Extension Livestock Marketing Specialist
University of Tennessee

Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development. University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating. UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

Tri-State Stocker Conference Pre-Conference Tour



August 6, 2008
Washington County
and Smyth County

The Appalachian Region of East Tennessee, Southwest Virginia and Western North Carolina has many beef producers who fall into the category of backgrounders or what is now more popularly called stocker operators. These producers fill a vital role of buying calves, many of which have had little management, adding 200 to 300 pounds of weight, and either marketing them as semi truckloads or retaining ownership to a custom feedlot. They provide a storage function in that large numbers are presented to the market by cow calf producers in the fall, but feedlots need a year around supply of replacement cattle. In addition these operators make use of the abundant supply of native grasses and supplemental feeds and by-products. There a number of areas of risk involved in the stocker business. These include but are not limited to price risk for calves bought at lightweights and sold at heavier weights, price risk for feed or feed ingredients, and health risk on newly purchased calves. The Tri-State Stocker Conference has been planned to offer information to assist stocker operators in managing some of these risks.

On today's tour we will visit three Virginia stocker operations where you will learn how these producers work to ensure success.

We will also be testing your weight guessing abilities. At one of today's tour stops we will be having a weight estimation and dosage calculation contest. There will be prizes for those who estimate weights correctly and can calculate the appropriate dosage for the provided products.

Heavy hors d'oeuvres and drinks served at fairgrounds while you visit the trade show following the tour.

Craig Hammond Farm

Craig Hammond of Glade Spring Virginia operates a backgrounding operation which has two aspects to it. He buys 4 - 500 pound cattle in the months of January, February, and March. These cattle are fed in the backgrounding barns on his property for 45 days and then turned out on grass. In the barns they are fed a total mixed ration (TMR). In the spring months he focuses on buying cattle in the 600 pound range which are sold as yearling cattle in the 8 wt range. The cattle are grazed on rented land or custom grazed.

In addition to the backgrounding operation, Craig also works as an order buyer, buying cattle directly out of the field, by electronic-auction, and at in barn sales. He covers all the barn sales in Virginia and North Carolina. He assembles the cattle in load lots, which are shipped to Western feedlots and upper Midwest concerns.

Rosenbaum Farm

Rosenbaum Farm is operated by William Rosenbaum and his son Todd. The farm consists of 365 acres 100 of which is devoted to corn silage production. The farm was started by William's father Clyde in 1949. They have been involved in various segments of the beef industry over the years including finishing cattle.

Currently the Rosenbaums buy 2-300 pound calves and sell them when they reach the 5-700 pound range, depending on market conditions. The calves are fed in the barn till all health treatments such as vaccinations are complete, at which point they are either grazed for a 45 - 60 day period or placed directly on a ration consisting of corn silage and various by-product feeds.

Stokes Farm LLC

Eddie Stokes and son Brian run about 2450 stocker cattle and 130 cows. Most would look at that statement and say that Brian simply is following dad into the family business, but that is not entirely true. Brian and Eddie have evolved into what they are today by slow growth and hard work. As with any grown business there have been growing pains over the years, but they have in the end a solid operation.

Stokes farms brings cattle in from various locations and cattle are processed the following morning with modified live Bovi-Sheild Gold 5 and Ultrabac 7- Way Clostridial with Somnus, and castrated. Cattle at this time will all receive a shot of Excede, and after a short weaning period they are put out on grass. The goal is for all stocker cattle to be sold and gone from the farm by the first of September, which allows time to grow grass for the calves to come in that fall.

Incoming cattle will be from 3 to 5 weights. Five weight cattle will receive no grain but only grass. Death loss will usually run about 1.6% for steers and 1.3% for heifers.

Marketing is probably as important to the operation than any other factor, and their program is so good that Brian quite often buys neighbors cattle and sells them as well.

