Virginia Cooperative Extension

A partnership of Virginia Tech and Virginia State University





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Livestock Update

Beef - Horse - Poultry - Sheep - Swine

September 2012

This LIVESTOCK UPDATE contains timely subject matter on beef cattle, horses, poultry, sheep, swine, and related junior work. Use this material as you see fit for local newspapers, radio programs, newsletters, and for the formulation of recommendations.

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Scott P. Greiner, Extension Project Leader Department of Animal & Poultry Sciences

2012

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Dates to Remember

BEEF

OCTOBER

- 11-14 VA Junior Livestock Expo. Rockingham Fairgrounds. Harrisonburg. <u>Contact:</u> Paige Pratt, (540) 231-4732; email: <u>pjpratt@vt.edu</u>
- 18th Annual Hokie Harvest Sale, VT Beef Cattle Center, Blacksburg. <u>Contact:</u>
 Dr. Dan Eversole, (540) 231-4738; email: <u>deversol@vt.edu</u>

SHEEP

SEPTEMBER

Sheep Field Day & Ram Lamb Sale. SWAREC. Glade Spring. <u>Contact:</u> Lee Wright, (276) 944-2200 or Scott Greiner, (540) 231-9159; email: <u>sgreiner@vt.edu</u>

SWINE

OCTOBER

26-27 Virginia Tech Small-Scale and Niche Market Pork Production Conference. Tidewater AREC. Suffolk. *Contact:* Mark Estienne, (757) 657-6450, ext. 408; email: <u>mestienn@vt.edu</u>

September Beef Management Calendar

Dr. Scott P. Greiner Extension Animal Scientist, VA Tech

Spring Calving Herds

- Inventory feed supplies, test hay for nutrient content and plan winter feeding strategies
- Give pre-weaning vaccinations to calves
- Make final preparations for calf crop marketing program
- Pregnancy check cows
- Body condition score cows at weaning and separate thin cows
- Put open, old and very thin cows on cull list
- Make arrangements for backgrounding calves
- Continue feeding high Se trace mineral salt
- Continue to stockpile forages, if possible

Fall Calving Herds

- Body condition score cows; plan nutrition and grazing program on BCS
- Inventory feed supplies, test hay for nutrient content and plan winter feeding strategies
- Make sure all calving supplies are on-hand
- Move pregnant heifers and early calving cows to calving area about 2 weeks before due date
- Check cows 3 to 4 times per day; heifers more often assist early if needed
- Keep calving area clean and well drained; move healthy pairs to large pastures 3 days after calving
- Ear tag all calves at birth; castrate male calves in commercial herds
- Give selenium and vitamin A & D injections to newborn calves
- Feed cows extra energy after calving especially to two-year-olds; cows calving at BCS < 5 should receive special nutritional attention
- Keep high quality, high Selenium, high magnesium minerals available
- Plan estrous synchronization program; line-up AI technician and supplies

VSU Hair Sheep Day 2012

'Getting Started with Hair Sheep'

October 13, 2012 8:30 am – 5:00 pm VSU Randolph Farm

Hair sheep have been a growing segment of the U.S. sheep and small ruminant industry. They are well suited for sustainable, easy-care sheep production and are a good fit for novice producers.

Virginia State University owns a hair sheep flock of various breeds, and has conducted hair sheep research since 1997. Research evaluated breed differences in performance under forage-based production systems, and the use of accelerated mating. Other research assessed supplementation strategies for forage-fed lambs and parasite control systems.

Program

9:00 - 9:10 am

Welcome Dr. Wondi Mersie, Associate Dean School of Agriculture, VSU

9:10 - 10:10 am An Introduction to Hair Sheep Production (Part 1) Susan Schoenian, U. of MD

10:10 - 10:30 am

VSU Hair Sheep Research Stephan Wildeus, VSU

> 10:30 - 11:00 am Break

11:00 – 12:00 am An Introduction to Hair Sheep Production (Part 2) Susan Schoenian, U. of MD

> 12:00 – 1:00 pm Lunch

1:00 -2:00 pm

Living with parasites Dr. Anne Zajac, VA Tech

2:00 - 5:00 pm

FAMACHA Workshop

Dr. Anne Zajac, VA Tech

2:00 - 5:00 pm

Small Ruminant Program Research Posters & Displays

Dr. Michelle Corley Associate Professor - Molecular Immunogenetics Dr. Vitalis Temu Assistant Professor - Forages Dr. Adnan Yousuf Assistant Professor - Animal Nutrition

Registration Name:	The Hair Sheep Day will introduce interested individuals and novice producers to hair sheep production on small farms. It will cover the basic information on breeds, production systems, flock health, and				
Address:	marketing opportunities. The registration fees cover breakfast and lunch.				
Phone:	The FAMACHA workshop is offered as an additional event to the Hair Sheep Day and will allow participants to become certified in				
e-mail:	the use of an integrated parasite management system. The workshop will include hands-on training of the eyelid color scoring using the FAMACHA card.				
Registration Fee: \$10	Registration for the workshop is limited to the first 40 registrants and requires an				
FAMACHA workshop: \$12 (add to registration fee)	additional \$12 fee to cover the cost of the FAMACHA card issued to the participant.				
Number of attendees:					
Total amount \$	Directions to Randolph Farm: The Extension Pavilion is located at 4415 River				
Make checks payable to: Virginia State University	Road, Petersburg, VA 23803 and can be located via GPS. Please contact Stephan Wildeus if additional driving directions are				
Send by October 1, 2012 to:	required: 804.524.6716 or				
Virginia State University Att: Celeste Ricks	<u>swiideus @vsu.edu</u>				
BOX 9061 Petersburg, VA 23806 Ph.: 804.524.5894 e-mail: cricks@vsu.edu	If you are a person with a disability and desire any assistive devices, services or other accommodations to participate in this activity, please contact Stephan Wildeus at (804) 524-6716 at your earliest convenience.				

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2012-2013 Winter Feeding Strategies

Dr. Mark A. McCann Extension Animal Scientist, VA Tech

Feeding the flock during the upcoming winter of 2013 could be summed up in one word--- **minimize**. The Midwestern drought and its impact on grain and feed costs have increased prices about 50%. Shifts in management need to be considered in an effort to minimize (not eliminate feed needs). I have listed a few of the most important possibilities for consideration--- note many of these are not new but may deserve more consideration in view of the current feed environment.

1) Delay ram turn-in to a date that would insure that lactating ewes can take advantage of the spring flush of growth during lactation and require minimum supplementation. Under grazing conditions, forage can meet a ewe's energy and protein requirement except during lactation. Spring lambing flocks can take advantage of new pasture growth which is very digestible and high in protein. Generally, this will meet the nutrient needs of ewes nursing singles. Ewes nursing twins will respond to low levels (1-1.5lb/d) of energy supplementation.

2) Stockpile tall fescue. Fertilizing limited acreage (40-70 lb N/acre) and accumulating forage growth is a management practice that works. The amount of accumulated growth will be dependent on fall moisture. Strip/limited grazing is the most efficient method to utilize the accumulated growth. The quality of this accumulated growth diminishes only slightly over the course of the winter.

3) Test hay which will be used. There is a large variation in hay quality beyond forage variety and cutting. Fertilization and harvest conditions have a significant impact on hay quality. Visual evaluation and comparison can detect gross differences between hays, but do little to estimate nutrient content. Only through forage testing can the nutrition content be estimated and a feeding program devised. Farmers can distinguish between their top and bottom hays when the hay is harvested. However, the question then becomes "How good is the better hay and how bad the poor hay is?" Efficient, economical and effective supplementation programs depend on an accurate forage test. Economically you do not want to overfeed and from a production perspective you cannot afford to underfeed. Additionally, the hay nutrient analysis can determine if protein or energy maybe the most limiting nutrient. As potential hays are evaluated, the following tables are helpful in comparing hay nutrient content to a stage of production for the ewe and potential feedstuffs that fulfill deficiencies. Table 1 contains the CP (crude protein) and TDN (total digestible nutrient) requirements of a 180lb ewe across different stages of production.

Stage of Production	TDN Lb/d	CP Lb/d	Voluntary DM Intake, Lb/d	Percent TDN*	Percent CP*
Maintenance	1.6	.27	2.9	55.0	9.3
Early Pregnancy	1.8	.31	3.3	55.0	9.4
Late Gestation	2.9	.49	4.4	65.5	11.1
Early Lactation	4.3	.96	6.6	65.5	14.5

Table 1. TDN and CP Requirements of 180lb ewe

* Percentage of the Dry Matter

Table 2 contains the amount of energy and protein supplementation needed to balance hay of varying qualities for 180lb ewes across stage of production. Corn and soybean are used as standard supplements but other feeds can be substituted. In today's environment of high input costs and slim margins, having the facts on hay quality can improve the accuracy and cost effectiveness of nutrition and management decisions.

Forage A	Analysis								
CP % of DM	TDN % of DM	Early ² Gestation		Late ³ Gestation		Early ⁴ Lactation		Late ⁵ Lactation	
		Lbs SBM	Lbs Corn	Lbs SBM	Lbs Corn	Lbs SBM	Lbs Corn	Lbs SBM	Lbs Corn
11.2 & over	56 & over	-	-	-	.75	.5	2.5	.3	1.5
9.5 - 11.1	56 & over	-	-	.15	.75	.8	2.5	.45	1.5
	53 - 56	-	-	.15	.85	.8	2.7	.45	1.65
	50 - 53	-	-	.15	1.0	.8	2.9	.45	1.80
8.2 - 9.5	54 - 56	-	-	.25	.8	1.0	2.5	.55	1.5
	51 - 54	-	.2	.25	1.0	1.0	2.75	.55	1.75
	50 & under	-	.4	.25	1.2	1.0	3.0	.55	2.0
7.3 - 8.2	53 – 55	.1	-	.4	.8	1.1	2.5	.6	1.5
	51 - 53	.1	.2	.4	1.0	1.1	2.75	.6	1.75
	50 & under	.1	.4	.4	1.2	1.1	3.0	.6	2.0
Under 7.3	Under 48	.23	.5 – 1.0	.45	1 -1.5	1.2 -1.5	2.5 -3.5	.78	2.0 -3.0

¹ Recommendations are made on basis of 44 % soybean meal and ground shelled corn. Other supplements can be used to deliver the same amount of energy and protein.

² Dry ewes in the first 15 weeks
³ Last 4 weeks of pregnancy (200% lambing rate expected).
⁴ First 6-8 weeks of lactation suckling twins
⁵ Last 4- 6 weeks suckling twins.

** Note 1.5lbs of corn gluten feed can replace 1.0 lb corn and .5 lb soybean meal.

4) Lastly, the identification of high quality hay can allow decisions to be made regarding storage of the hay if options are available. If limited shelter is available, clearly the best hay needs to be in the dry.

Clearly the grain markets have added another set of hurdles which need to be evaluated and addressed. Following the options noted above can have significant impact on this winter's feed bill.

Sheep Update

Dr. Scott P. Greiner Extension Animal Scientist, VA Tech

2012 Virginia Performance Tested Ram Lamb & Replacement Ewe Lamb Sale Results

The 37th Annual Virginia Performance Tested Ram Lamb Sale was held at the Virginia Sheep Evaluation Station at the Virginia Tech Shenandoah Valley AREC near Steeles Tavern on Saturday, August 25. A total of 52 rams sold for an average price of \$554. Top-selling ram was a Suffolk consigned by Suffangus Farm of Greenville, VA which sold for \$1,275. An educational field day was held prior to the sale with a nice crowd on hand. Replacement ewe lambs were sold immediately following the rams. A total of 29 ewe lambs sold for an average price of \$330. Ashley Club Lambs of Grottoes, VA consigned the top-selling ewe lamb which commanded \$540. Rams and ewe lambs sold to buyers in Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Maryland. Sale results were as follows:

	Average Price
22 Suffolk	\$640
8 Fall Dorsets	\$516
10 Winter Dorsets	\$413
4 Katahdins	\$631
2 White Dorper	\$638
1 North Country Cheviot	\$400
5 North Country x Suffolk Cross	\$460
52 Total Rams	\$554
29 Commercial Ewe Lambs	\$330

The Virginia Ram Lamb Performance Test and Replacement Ewe Lamb Sale is sponsored by the Virginia Sheep Producer's Association. Information on the 2013 test and sale may be attained from Scott Greiner, Extension Sheep Specialist, Virginia Tech, phone 540-231-9159 or email <u>sgreiner@vt.edu</u>. For more information about the program, please visit the VA Tech Sheep Extension website at <u>www.vtsheep.apsc.vt.edu</u> or the Virginia Sheep Producers Assoc website <u>www.vasheepproducers.com</u>.

Virginia Tech Sheep Sale Grosses \$29,700

Buyers from seven states including Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Wisconsin, and Nebraska purchased sheep at the 13th Annual Virginia Tech Sheep Center Production Sale held on Sept. 1, 2012 at the Alphin-Stuart Livestock Teaching Arena in Blacksburg, Va.

The sale, which has been held annually since 1999, grossed \$29,700 and featured 59 lots of Suffolk and Dorset rams and ewes. The top selling lot was a Suffolk ram lamb which commanded \$1050. A total of 23 Suffolk rams averaged \$666 per head, 6 Dorset rams \$642, 18 Suffolk ewe lambs \$417, 14 Dorset ewe lambs \$295, and two crossbred ewe lambs \$275.

"All the proceeds from the sale go back to the Department of Animal and Poultry Sciences to help support teaching, research, and extension programs, including the farm operations and

facilities such as the Copenhaver Sheep Center," said Scott Greiner, professor of animal and poultry sciences and Virginia Cooperative Extension sheep specialist."

According to Greiner the sale was first started because of breeders' interest in Virginia Tech's sheep. The sale was started to merchandise the sheep through public auction.

In the 1990s, Virginia Tech began participating in the National Sheep Improvement Program to calculate the Estimated Breeding Values (EBV). Estimated Breeding Values are the predicted values of an animal as a parent compared with other potential parents. The EBVs provide extra information to sheep breeders that allow them to compare animals of the same breed with each other beyond visual appraisal. This information is available for all of Virginia Tech's sheep and is provided to buyers as an evaluation tool for traits such as growth, maternal ability and carcass merit.

Next year's production sale will be held on Saturday, Sept. 7. For more information about Virginia Tech's sheep flocks, contact <u>Scott Greiner</u> at 540-231-9159, email <u>sgreiner@vt.edu</u>.

Annual Virginia Fall Bred Ewe & Doe Sale to be Held December 1

The 2012 Virginia Sheep Producer's Association Fall Bred Ewe & Doe Sale will be held Saturday, December 1 at 1:00 PM at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds in Harrisonburg. Yearling ewes and does, ewe lambs and doe kids, along with mature ewes and does will be sold. All yearling and mature ewes and does will be sold as guaranteed pregnant. Breeds offered will include Suffolk, Hampshire, Dorset, and crossbreds (including wether dams. All does will be registered meat goats or meat goat crossbreds. For a sale catalog or more information visit the VSPA website <u>http://www.vasheepproducers.com/</u>.

Flock Management Tips - Fall

- Work with veterinarian to perform breeding soundness exams on all rams prior to turnout.
- Flush ewes with 1 pound of corn or barley per day beginning 14 days prior to the breeding season to enhance lambing rate. Continue flushing 4 weeks into breeding season.
- Trim and check feet.
- Stockpile forages.
- Test hay samples to determine their nutritive value. Assess winter feed supplies and devise plan to secure needed feedstuffs. Work with an Extension agent to determine the supplements that will be required to formulate balanced diets for winter feeding.
- Graze spring-born lambs on available fall pasture and aftermath hay fields.
- Supplement grain on pasture to enhance lamb weight gains.
- Plan marketing strategy for any portion of lamb crop that remains.
- Identify and retain ewe lambs from spring lambing to be used as replacements. Breed so that they will lamb first as yearlings.
- After November 1, place ewes on stockpiled fescue pasture.
- Maximize the utilization of stockpiled forages through strip grazing. Use temporary electric fence to limit the sheep's access to a portion of the stockpiled pasture until fully utilized.

Sheep Field Day & Ram Lamb Sale

Saturday, September 22, 2012 2:30 PM - Field Day (with Meal) 5:30 PM - Ram Sale

VA Tech Southwest Agriculture Research & Extension Center 12326 VPI Farm Rd. Glade Spring, Virginia (exit 29 or 26 off Interstate 81)

Selling a select group of 60 Registered & Commercial Katahdin rams from 13 Consignors, rams were developed on forage-based grain on grass system which includes evaluation for parasite resistance.

Field Day Program to include information on Ram Genetic Evaluations for Growth & Parasite Resistance, Forage & Feeding Management, Breeding Season Management, Ewe Synchronization, and General Sheep Health Topics

Sponsored by Virginia Cooperative Extension For a sale catalog or more information contact:

Lee Wright, Virginia Tech Southwest AREC (276) 944-2200

OR

Dr. Scott Greiner, Virginia Tech (540) 231-9159 Website -- <u>www.vtsheep.apsc.vt.edu</u>

List of Consignors:

- Jeff & Kathy Bielek <u>Misty Oaks Farm</u>, Wooster, Ohio
- John Bruner *Leaning Pine Farms, LLC*, Science Hill, Kentucky
- Travis Gilmer Gilmer Sheep & Livestock, Nickelsville, Virginia
- Jim & Sally Hash *Big H Livestock*, Marion, Virginia
- Kenneth & Connie Jessee *Jessee Farms*, St. Paul, Virginia
- Milledge & Roxanne Newton <u>Hound River Farm</u>, Hahira, Georgia
- J. Pete Odle *OW Farm*, Nickelsville, Virginia
- David Redwine *Hillcrest Katahdins*, Gate City, Virginia
- Frank Stahl *Destiny Acres*, Frazeysburg, Ohio
- Donna Stoneback <u>Wade-Jean Farm</u>, Loudonville, Ohio
- Larry & Lisa Weeks <u>Triple L Farms</u>, Waynesboro, Virginia
- Lee & Cindy Wright *Rolling Spring Farm*, Chilhowie, Virginia
- Virginia Tech <u>VA TECH Southwest AREC</u>, Glade Spring, Virginia

If you are a person with a disability and desire any assistive devices, services or other accommodations to participate in this activity, please contact Scott Greiner at (540)231-9159 at your earliest convenience.

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Small-Scale and Niche Market Pork Production Conference

Mark J. Estienne Tidewater Agricultural Research and Extension Center Suffolk, VA

During the past three decades, the Virginia and U.S. swine industries experienced major changes, including a decrease in the number of farms, an increase in the size of existing operations, and a move towards vertical integration. For example, Smithfield Foods, Inc., the world's largest pork producer and processor, has many company-owned farms in the Commonwealth and maintains production contracts with numerous growers throughout the state. Smithfield Foods also has corporate headquarters, a large feed mill, and a slaughter plant processing approximately 10,000 head a day in Virginia.

The vast majority of pork consumed in the U.S. will continue to be produced by large entities such as Smithfield Foods. However, there is an increasing number of small-scale and niche market farmers producing pork for consumers that prefer their meat to be from hogs raised locally in less-intensive systems that they perhaps perceive to be more animal welfare-friendly. For example, a popular website (<u>http://www.eatwild.com/products/virginia.html</u>) lists at least 25 small farms in Virginia raising pasture pork for local consumers.

It is anticipated that many small-scale and niche-market producers entering the industry will seek educational information on swine production and management from local county Extension offices, as well as from swine specialists located on the Virginia Tech campus and at the Tidewater AREC. The *Virginia Pork Industry Conference*, held in January of each year, has been and will remain the primary continuing education event for traditional hog producers in Virginia. Issues addressed at that venue, however, are not necessarily applicable to many small-scale and niche market pork producers that may need more fundamental information and training.

Thus, a conference entitled, the "*Small-Scale and Niche Market Pork Production Conference*," and described below will be conducted at the Tidewater AREC on October 26 – 27, 2012. This conference is sponsored by Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE), the Tidewater Agricultural Research and Extension Center, and a grant from the Virginia Pork Industry Board. There is no fee for attending but <u>ALL PARTICIPANTS MUST PRE-REGISTER BY OCTOBER 19, 2012!</u>

Information brochures and registration forms (paper or electronic versions) can be requested by contacting:

Mark J. Estienne, Ph.D. Virginia Tech- Tidewater Agricultural Research and Extension Center 6321 Holland Road Suffolk, VA 23437 757-657-6450, ext. 408 <u>mestienn@vt.edu</u>

Small-Scale and Niche Market Pork Production Conference				
<u>October 26-27, 2012</u> Virginia Tech-Tidewater Agricultural Research and Extension Center (TAREC) Suffolk, VA				
Program				
<u>Friday, October 26</u> 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.	<u>- Pre-conference workshop</u> National Pork Board PQA-Plus Training and Certification Mark Estienne, Ph.D., TAREC and Cynthia Gregg, VCE, Brunswick County			
<u>Saturday, October</u> 9:00 – 9:30 a.m.	27- Conference Registration and continental breakfast			
9:30 – 9:50 a.m.	Corporate and small-scale and niche market pork production: Can they co-exist? <i>Mark Estienne, Ph.D., TAREC</i>			
9:50 – 10:30 a.m.	Marketing options for small-scale and niche market pork producers Panel Discussion Moderated by Allen Harper, Ph.D., TAREC			
10:30 – 10:45 a.m.	Break			
10:45 – 11:25 a.m.	Application of genetic principles to pork production <i>Cindy Wood, Ph.D., Virginia Tech- Animal and Poultry Science Department</i>			
11:25 – 12:00 p.m.	Feed and feeding options for small-scale and niche market swine farms Allen Harper, Ph.D., TAREC			
12:00 – 12:45 p.m.	Lunch- BBQ			
12:45 – 1:25 p.m.	Basics of a herd health program for small-scale and niche market swine production Jeremy Pittman, D.V.M., Staff Veterinarian, Murphy-Brown LLC, Waverly, VA			
1:25 – 2:00 p.m.	Troubleshooting reproductive failure on small-scale and niche market swine farms <i>Mark Estienne, Ph.D., TAREC</i>			
2:00 – 2:15 p.m.	Break and travel to TAREC Swine Research Unit			
2:15 – 4:15 p.m.	On-farm demonstrations and hands-on learning activities- Small groups will rotate to various stations in the Tidewater AREC Swine Research Unit including: artificial insemination and use of ultrasound for pregnancy diagnosis; proper procedures for processing baby pigs; controlling pests in swine buildings; selecting replacement gilts and use of ultrasound for determination of live animal fat and muscle content; and use of composting for dead pig disposal.			