



News from KSU Animal Sciences

February, 2006

WHAT'S NEW >>>>>>

- ✦ **Environmental Management** - Producers should clean feedlots or areas of manure accumulation during the next couple of months before spring planting and grass green-up. Confined feeding pens or temporary feeding sites for the winter months are prime contributors to odor emissions if not properly cleaned and maintained. Also, fly production from these sites is much greater when manure and wasted feed is present, thus creating a nuisance and a potential reduction in animal performance for the remainder of the summer for their livestock. For more information, contact Joel DeRouchey (jderouch@ksu.edu or 785-532-2280).
- ✦ **Communicate the message!** Many times we tell employees to do a job and then are frustrated when the job is not done properly. But do you understand the personality of the people implementing the program? Some producers use formal personality profiling to determine the most effective methods of communication. Usually, a difficulty with compliance is not the employee's fault, but rather a need for communicating the message in a different format. An example of this is communicating the importance of feeder adjustment. When discussing feeder adjustment, frequently there is confusion as to how to properly adjust feeders. We have found that using pictures of a properly adjusted feeder has been a very effective communication tool. For more information please go to: asi.ksu.edu/swine and click on Feeder Adjustment tools under the Swine Extension and Research page.
- ✦ **PQA (Pork Quality Assurance) Kansas Adult Educator Training** can be accomplished by starting at the following web link: http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/pr_eyas/
Go through the PowerPoint presentation about half way down the page on the right side. Further directions will be found at the conclusion of the presentation. This training is available for Veterinarians, High School Ag. Instructors and County Extension Staff. Upon completion of the training, the adult educator will be certified to train and certify youth to meet the Youth PQA requirements that is needed to exhibit swine at the Kansas State Fair and the Kansas Junior Livestock Show.
- ✦ **Krehbiels Specialty Meats in McPherson, Kansas** has recently announced that they are ready to process poultry. Until now, there have been no small plants in Kansas that would process small poultry flocks under USDA inspection. They are ready for chickens, turkeys, game birds, and they will even process ostrich and emus. They have been testing a pilot project and they are ready to take birds. And they will also further process poultry into other value added products. They also AIR CHILL the carcasses which means they do not go through a chill tank of water.
Now you can have your birds processed at Krehbiel's, then you will be able to sell them through any store or market in Kansas and out-of-state as well. This will certainly open possibilities in niche marketing, alternative production, and processing of your home flocks. This is also great for participants in our Kansas State Fair Market Broiler Contest who need a place to process their project birds. You can contact Krehbiels Specialty Meats at (620)241-0103. They are located at 1636 Mohawk Rd, McPherson, KS.
- ✦ **Reaching for an Age Verified Market -- Sandy Johnson and Dale Blasi**
Until the New York State veal debacle, the Japanese had reopened the market to beef from cattle less than 21 months of age. The industry is hopeful that the necessary assurances can be made to encourage the rapid reopening of that market. Since providing age verification does require some advance planning, this is a prime time to discuss what is needed.

The first thing that producers need to understand about qualifying calves for export to Japan is that except for a very few large operations, they will need to work with a company that already has an approved program in place. USDA uses a Quality System Assessment Program (**QSA**) to provide an auditable trail that documents the requirements for a specific export market, such as the age requirement for Japan. The process of establishing a QSA requires several months of planning and development and thousands of dollars. The owner of the QSA can expect to be audited by USDA two times per year. The types of companies that currently have USDA approved QSAs are packers, feedlots and independent companies. For a current listing see <http://www.ams.usda.gov/lsg/arc/qsap.htm>. Requirements of each QSA are different. If a producer supplies cattle to more than one QSA (i.e. sells to two packers), separate records would be needed for each.

Process verified programs (**PVP**) that include age as a claim can also be used to meet requirements for export markets. Process verified programs were initially developed to substantiate more extensive product claims such as entire management systems or health programs. Not all PVPs include age as a part of the program. A listing of currently approved PVP is at: <http://processverified.usda.gov/>.

Producers that want to market their calves through an auction market should look for an auction that has its own QSA or independent companies that provide QSAs or PVPs **and** include program compliant ear tags. These are one time use, tamper-evident tags which contain a non-repeatable, unique number. The tag must be unique and specific to the program. It may be an EID, RFID or a visual tag. As with other value added marketing efforts, sufficient age verified calves would need to be present at a given auction to draw competitive buyers.

Some common generalities can be made about record keeping for age verification, regardless of the specific QSA or PVP program. Where individual birth dates are not recorded, documenting the beginning and end of the calving season is sufficient. In this case the entire group of calves would be aged based on the oldest calf in the group. Additional documentation is needed to support your claim of age on the calves such as bull turn out date, AI records, or vaccination records. A written management plan that describes your standard operating procedures is also needed. This would support the timing of the calving season, when calves are typically marketed, and number of calves available for sale. Who records the calving information and where the records are kept are examples of other types of information that must be documented in the process. Again, each system is slightly different so you must be trained and approved in a given system before expecting to market any calves as age verified.

Producers should expect to spend some time being "trained" for the requirements of which ever program they choose. The procedures are not that difficult but it will be very important to follow the details closely. The owner of a QSA will need to audit 10% (or other specified number) of its suppliers each year and USDA's twice yearly audits could go back to cow/calf producers.

Is this record keeping worth the effort? Initial reports of premiums paid at harvest for age verified cattle were in the range of \$25-\$35 per head. Demand for certain variety meats such as tongue was greatly reduced when export markets were cut off in December 2003. Since then some variety meats have just gone into rendering. An estimated 50% of US beef tongues harvested went to the Japanese market in 2003 where the retail value of tongue is considerably greater than in the US. However, in its short time open, the market had yet to establish how any premiums may be shared along the production chain.

While information concerning the Japanese market has received most press, opportunities exist for other export and domestic markets that require a QSA or PVP. Retailers have indicated they want source verification although as of yet they have not backed that up with a strong market signal. Cow/calf producers should explore options to capture additional value associated with age and source and stay up to date with these evolving market opportunities.

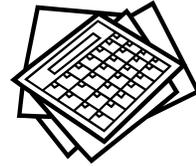
UPCOMING EVENTS >>>>>>>>>>

- ☞ **For more details on the upcoming Cattlemen's Day 2006** go to www.asi.ksu.edu/cattlemensday. This annual educational event will be held Friday, March 3, 2006 in Weber Hall. The Trade show and educational exhibits will open at 8:00 a.m. The morning program will focus on a "**Symposium on Animal Identification Systems**" and the afternoon will again feature breakout sessions on the latest beef cattle research. The pre-registration deadline is February 20, 2006. Registration will be \$15 per person in advance or \$25 per person at the door. Students are free if pre-registered. Morning refreshments and lunch are included with registration.
- ☞ Join us for **KSU Sheep Day and Youth Sheep Day** which will be held on Saturday, March 11, 2006 at Weber Hall on the K-State campus. Speakers for KSU Sheep Day will include D.G. Pugh, DVM, from Fort Dodge Animal Health in Waverly, Alabama. He will speak on "*Parasite Control Strategies*" and "*Vaccination Programs to Maximize Health in Your Flock*." Rodney Jones, KSU, will speak on "*Successful Sheep Family Business Transitions*" and Charles Lee, KSU, will speak on "*Prevention of Sheep Predation*." The producer program will begin with registration at 8:00 a.m. and conclude with a door prize drawing at 3:30 p.m.
Topics to be covered at Youth Sheep Day include feeding and management of the lamb project, proper selection and evaluation and basic fitting and showing. Several sections of showmanship allow participants to get hands-on instruction while practicing their skills. Matt Nichols of Manhattan, KS, will be the featured speaker for the event. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. with the program kicking off at 9:15 a.m. and will conclude at 3:30 p.m.
For more information, contact Cliff Spaeth at 785-532-1255; cspaeth@ksu.edu or Julie Voge at 785-532-1264; jvoge@ksu.edu.
- ☞ Mark you calendars for the **Livestock In-service Agent Training** that will be held March 28-30, 2006 at the KSU Union. This training will begin with information on horticulture and agronomy. The Livestock Section will cover a wide variety of topics including Quality System Assessment Programs and New Marketing Opportunities, Technology of Animal Identification, Understanding Sire Selection Information, Review of the Estrous Cycle, Testing & Utilizing Off-Quality Grains, Questions and Answers on Beef Nutrition, Forage Sampling, Veterinary Considerations from KSU and much more.
- ☞ The **2006 Kansas Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Contest** will be held Saturday, April 1 at Flint Oak Ranch in Fall River, Kansas. The contest is about teaching young people about wildlife, the needs of wildlife, and their habitat and is open to youth ages 7 - 18. For more information please contact Charles Lee, Extension Specialist, Wildlife, at 785-532-5734.
- ☞ **2006 Roundup will be held April 6th** beginning at 4 pm at the Agricultural Research Center in Hays. Research updates will be presented by John Brethour, Keith Harmony, Brittany Howell and Sandy Johnson. This will also serve as chance to meet and hear from the newest additions to the center, Director, Bob Gillen (formerly a USDA Range Scientist in Oklahoma) and beef scientist John Jaeger. For more information contact 785-625-3425, ext 200 or pball@ksu.edu.
- ☞ The **38th annual reunion of former K-State judging team members and coaches** will be April 8, 2006. The reunion will be held in the Alumni Center on campus. April 8 coincides with the Little American Royal and all University Open House. Reservations are due by April 1. For more information contact Dr. Miles McKee (785-532-1237).
- ☞ Watch for more information on the upcoming **Equestrian Camps**. The English camp will be held June 7-9, 2006 and the Western camp on June 14-16.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Date	Event	Location
February 25, 2006	Equifest	Wichita
March 3, 2006	KSU Cattlemen's Day	Manhattan
March 3, 2006	Special K Bull Sale	Manhattan
March 4, 2006	KSU Horse Judging Workshop and Horse Show Judges Seminar	Manhattan
March 11, 2006	KSU Sheep Day/Youth Sheep Day	Manhattan
March 16-17, 2006	High Plains Dairy Conference	Albuquerque, NM
March 28-30, 2006	Livestock In-service Agent Training	KSU Student Union
April 1, 2006	Kansas Wildlife Habitat Contest	Fall River
April 6, 2006	Hays Roundup	Hays
April 8, 2006	KSU Judging Team Reunion	Alumni Center, Manhattan
June 13-15, 2006	HACCP Workshop	Manhattan
August 26, 2006	State 4-H Livestock Judging Contest	Weber Arena, Manhattan

WHAT PRODUCERS SHOULD BE THINKING ABOUT IN APRIL.....



BEEF -- Cowherd Tips by *Twig Marston*

Many producers should consider calving in this month. Stress is minimized and forage/grass management may be optimized.

- Keep calving areas as clean and dry as possible. Give each calf a dry, comfortable and clean environment.
- Supplement and feed cows to maintain or improve body condition prior to the breeding season (cows should be in moderate body condition by the start of the breeding season to maximize fertility).
- For thin, young cows, consider feeding fat to improve rebreeding rates. Research indicates that when feeding about 0.4 lb. per head per day of a plant source (soybean, sunflower, safflower oils), fat can increase first-service conception and pregnancy rates (0% to 15%). Feeding fat can be effective both before and after calving. Consult your nutritionist.
- Mineral supplementation should include greater levels of magnesium [intake should be between 15 to 30 grams (g) per head per day, or at least 11% of the mineral mix] for grass tetany prevention.
- Plan your breeding season, both AI and natural service. Make sure all supplies and semen are on hand prior to the breeding season. For natural-service programs assign yearling bulls to 10-15 cows, 2- and 3-year-old bulls to 20-25 cows, and older bulls to 25-40 cows. Breeding for 65 days should be long enough; less than 90 days is a key sign of good management. Some suggest the service capacity of a yearling bull (less than 24 months) is equal to his age in months at turn out.
- Bulls should be in good body condition prior to the breeding season. Thin bulls can run out of stamina. Now is the time to make sure bulls are physically capable of performing for the upcoming summer breeding season.
- Breeding soundness examinations are recommended for all bulls!
- Consider using estrus synchronization and AI. Several synchronization systems to overcome anestrus are available. Selection depends on labor, facility and implementation costs.
- Consider breeding heifers three weeks prior to the mature cow herd to give them a greater chance to rebreed.
- Maintain top management concerning calf scours (sanitary conditions, early detection, electrolyte/dehydration therapy).
- Vaccinate calves as per veterinarian consultation. Castrate males that are not candidates for breeding stock prior to pasture turnout. Implant calves that will be sold at weaning.
- Wait for fly control until critical numbers are reached (100 to 200 horn flies per animal).
- Deworm cows and bulls if needed. Expect performance response to be variable dependent on location, weather, grazing system, history, infestation level and management.
- Use prescribed burning techniques to eradicate Eastern Red Cedar trees and improve forage quality.
- Good fences make good neighbors. Summer pastures should have had fences checked, repaired or replaced by now.
- Check equipment (sprayers, dust bags, oilers, haying equipment) and repair or replace as needed. Have spare parts on hand; downtime can make a large difference in hay quality.

We need your input! If you have any suggestions or comments on ***News from KSU Animal Sciences***, please let us know by e-mail to lschrein@ksu.edu, or phone 785-532-1267.