



# TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

## THE REFUGIO COUNTY

### AGRICULTURE CONNECTION

<http://refugio.agrilife.org/>

Jan. – Feb. 2013

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#### EFFECT OF ESTABLISHMENT METHOD AND STOCKING RATE ON WHEAT PASTURE PERFORMANCE

Over four years, wheat pastures were established by the conventional method of seed sown into prepared bed, reduced tillage by single-pass with light disk followed by broadcasting, or no-till direct seeding into unprepared stubble from previous-year graze out. Continental X British steers initially averaging 530 lb were placed on pastures of all establishment methods stocked at  $\frac{3}{4}$ , 1, or  $1\frac{1}{2}$  head per acre for fall grazing from early November to early March. All groups were then commingled for spring graze out, ending mid-April to mid-May.

Establishment method did not significantly affect forage mass or nutrient composition. Overall fall-spring ADG was lower for conventional establishment than for reduced tillage or no-till. During the fall period, ADG decreased but grazing days/head and gain/acre increased as stocking rate increased. In the spring period, animal performance of the fall-stocked rates did not significantly differ. Over the complete fall-spring period, grazing days/acre was greatest for the high fall stocking rate and lowest for the low fall stocking rate; total weight gain/acre was greatest for the high fall stocking rate and lowest for the intermediate fall stocking rate. (J. Animal Sci. 90:3286; Univ. of Arkansas).

## Large Cotton Supplies, Weather Will Weigh Heavily in 2013

Writer: Blair Fannin, 979-845-2259, b-fannin@tamu.edu

COLLEGE STATION – Record-high carryover stocks of cotton and future weather patterns are just a few factors affecting cotton prices heading into 2013, according to a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service economist.

“We will see a cutback in Texas cotton acreage as farmers take advantage of strong corn, wheat and sorghum prices,” said Dr. John Robinson, AgriLife Extension cotton economist in College Station.



Robinson said cotton prices are still adjusting to historic prices in 2010-2011 when \$2-plus per pound cotton prices led to higher world production and reduced consumption. That set of circumstances led to record-high carryover stocks of cotton worldwide and weaker prices.

Texas cotton farmers will likely switch some acreage to grain crops to take advantage of high prices in 2013, according to Dr. John Robinson, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service cotton economist in College Station. (Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service photo by Blair Fannin)

Robinson said China accounts for about half of the world’s carryover stocks, and most of those are held off the shelf in government reserve, he said.

“The combination of these bearish fundamentals and policy uncertainty sets the stage for what we may see in 2013,” he said. “We can certainly expect significant reductions in cotton acreage, starting with Australia, Brazil and Argentina last month.”

With the strength in 2013 corn, soybean and wheat future prices, Robinson said there will likely be major shifts to grains and oilseeds in the Midsouth and Southeast. He projects if U.S. cotton planted dips to 8.9 million acres, “We could still see 14 million bales of production.”

“I would project a likely range of December 2013 prices at 65 to 85 cents per pound,” he said. “The upshot is that the insurance base price established in early 2013 will likely be in the 70 cent range – far, far lower than in the previous two years.”

The continuation of the sovereign debt issues in Europe or fiscal cliff fears in the U.S. “will only reinforce negative to slow economic growth in 2013,” he said.

“That suggests little room for a demand-driven rally in cotton prices,” Robinson said. “In addition, if some major cotton-producing country has a production disaster, the market shock could easily be squelched by China simply releasing some of their government reserve stocks. In short, weak demand and policy distortion will likely keep the upside capped and the downside open.”

# NEW TEXAS ID BEGINS JANUARY 1

By: Dr. Stephen Hammack

Professor & Extension Beef Cattle Specialist Emeritus

Texas A&M University



Beginning January 1, 2013, by virtue of a Texas Animal Health Commission ruling, all adult cattle in Texas must have an approved form of permanent

identification in place at any change of ownership. This includes sexually intact beef cattle 18 months older and above, and Mexican-origin event cattle. Not included are nursing calves, steers, spayed heifers, bulls, heifers under 18 months (unless they are about to calve), and cattle moved directly to slaughter. Forms of identification currently approved by TAHC for this purpose are:

- USDA alphanumeric National Uniform Eartagging System (NUES) silver metal tags
- USDA brucellosis calfhood vaccination tags (either USDA orange RFID or metal)
- Dairy Herd Improvement Association (DHIA) tags with 9-digit American number
- Official breed association registration tattoo (unique to the individual animal)
- Official breed association registration fire or freeze brand (unique to the animal)

- USDA approved 15-digit Animal Identification Number (AIN) tags including: •900-series RFID tags if traceable to herd owner

- USA prefix RFID tags

- 840-prefix RFID tags (if premises location is registered)

- 840-prefix non-RFID tags (if premises location is registered)

- Cattle-style clip, flap, or button tag (if owner and individual animal is identified).

Tattoos and brands that are not part of breed association registration procedures are not approved forms of ID. A database of official ID numbers assigned will be maintained by TAHC, but there will be no tracking required of individual changes of ownership.

For those preferring to use USDA metal tags, TAHC will provide free tags and pliers. They may be obtained from local TAHC field staff or USDA-APHIS Veterinary Services representatives. Some interested veterinary practitioners will also have tags available. In addition, tags and pliers will be available from most Texas A&M AgriLife County Extension offices. For more information contact Texas Animal Health Commission at (512) 719-0710 or [www.tahc.state.tx.us](http://www.tahc.state.tx.us).

# 10 Things You Can Do This Winter

By Dr. Megan Clayton

- 1.** Brush Management using the cut stump treatment or stem spray method
- 2.** Send off a fecal sample of your cattle herd to monitor diet quality. You may need to adjust your supplemental feeding program! OR, if purchasing hay, conduct a forage analysis.
- 3.** Measure your forage availability for livestock. Both pre-winter and post-winter assessments of your forage can help you determine the number of livestock you can feed. For example, checking your forage at the beginning of the winter will indicate the amount of grass you have for the winter and determine if adjustments in your stocking rate need to be made OR if you can expect to need hay.
- 4.** Identify areas where you had weed issues this year and/or where there is bare ground and/or where you fed hay. Learn to identify the problem plant in it's early stages so that you can treat early in the season, when the control will be higher and require less chemical.
- 5.** Evaluate your pastures you intend to prescribed burn. Do you have enough fuel to create the kind of fire you want this year?
- 6.** Maintain or install fire breaks for any prescribed burn you have planned for late winter.
- 7.** Use this cooler time to mend or plan fencing to maximize rotational grazing opportunities in the spring.
- 8.** Calibrate your spray equipment with this easy guide and be ready for next spring!
- 9.** After 1st freeze (or drought conditions), be careful not to turn hungry cattle into pasture with johnsongrass (or other sorghums) due to the potential of toxicities to build up in the plant.
- 10.** Watch a webinar from your own computer! The Texas Range Webinar Series has an hour long webinar every first Thursday at noon or you can watch them archived. Watch for free or pay \$10 to get a Pesticide Applicator CEU

Thanks to Dr. Barron Rector, Range Specialist, Dr. Wayne Hanselka, Professor Emeritus, Dr. Joe Paschal, Livestock Specialist, and Dr. Alyson McDonald, Range Specialist, for their contributions to this post.

# **EFFECT OF DISTANCE TRAVELED FROM AUCTION BARNS AND OTHER FACTORS ON HEALTH AND PERFORMANCE**

By: Dr. Stephen Hammack

Professor & Extension Beef Cattle Specialist Emeritus

Texas A&M University

Cattle are typically subjected to many forms of stress. One source of stress is transportation. Data were analyzed from 21 commercial feedyards located in the Central and South Plains on 14,601 groups of cattle from 1997 to 2009. Groups analyzed were restricted to those of the same sex (bulls and steers grouped as males), averaging at least 500 lb upon arrival, with at least 20 head, and with information on origin. Overall statistics were as follows:

	<b>MEAN</b>	<b>MEDIAN</b>	<b>RANGE</b>
Distance traveled, miles	433	342	0 to 1914
Arrival weight, lb	732	739	500 to 898
Days on feed	159	156	2 to 330
Group size	171	153	20 to 1439
Arrival sickness, %	4.9	1.1	0 to 100
Death loss, %	1.3	0.8	0 to 29
ADG, lb	3.1	3.1	0.4 to 5.3
Hot carcass weight, lb	809	816	344 to 1000

Overall, the data illustrate the large amount of variation in cattle feeding. In general, longer distance traveled equaled higher sickness and death. Cattle arriving averaging less than 600 lb (assumed to be younger in age) had more sickness and death as did males compared to females. Cattle transported over 1650 miles during summer also had more sickness and death. (J. Animal Sci. 90:1929; Kansas St. Univ.)

Individuals with disabilities, who require an auxiliary aid, service or accommodations in order to participate in any of the above mentioned activities, are encouraged to contact the County Extension Office eight days before all programs for assistance.

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The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of

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