

December 30, 2019
 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
 David Dugan
 Extension Educator, Agriculture and Natural Resources
 and Community Development

Feeding to Meet the Needs

Several times over the past few months I have discussed getting hay tested for quality. Last year was a disaster for many livestock producers when it came to the quality of the forages that was available for feed during the muddy and cold conditions.

Many cows, especially older cows, were stressed. Cows need nutrients in order to keep warm and the need for energy was high. The energy was not there in much of the hay fed during January through April. Unfortunately, we could be headed for a similar train wreck in the coming months. The poor quality hay is a part of the formula that we dealt with a few months ago. Cows were full of hay, but basically starving to death. The energy levels are referred to as Total Digestible Nutrients. When you get a feed sample back the TDN and Crude Protein are the first two things that you should want to know.

Last week in the Beef Blog a post discussed the nutritional needs for cows based on the stage of pregnancy or nursing a calf at her side. As we look at various nutritional phases for cows, here are some typical rules of thumb used by nutritionists, both during pregnancy and after calving:

Mid-pregnancy: 55% TDN; 7% CP
 Late pregnancy: 60% TDN; 9% CP
 After calving: 65% TDN; 11-12% CP

These are average guidelines, but as a producer it is important to adjust to weather swings. Windy conditions can increase stress. The stress can be more of an issue to colder it gets, but if it is raining or snowing it is really magnified. When the animal's hair is matted down and a cold wind is blowing, it will increase the levels of energy needed to maintain. When the nutritional needs are not met, the animals rob from their body reserves, thus they lose weight as they rob calories from fat. Eventually this will take a toll. Older animals or any that are already in somewhat thin are at an increased risk.

To adjust feed in a manner that will help livestock adjust you need to follow the forecast. Energy levels need to be increased a few days prior to the "blast". High energy feeds can be in many forms including several grains and/or by-products. One of the simplest is simply whole shelled corn. Feeding 4 or 5 pounds per head per day will increase the energy intake significantly. That same corn may help stretch your hay supply as well. And with the short supply of hay, feeding corn may save you money, especially if your hay supply is somewhat short.

Also, the mineral is very important. While it is important to keep mineral available all year round, it may be even more important during cold weather. If cows are short on minerals it can have a negative impact on their metabolism. If the metabolism slows down the cow is not able to produce as much body heat. When this happens she robs from her fat reserves and loses weight. If this continues for a period of time it will take its toll on all cows, but especially those older or thinner cows.



Pesticide Re-certification

The Adams County Re-certification will include Fertilizer and Pesticide on Thursday January 9 at Frisch's in West Union. YOU MUST pre-register by calling Barbie at the OSU Extension Office and there will be a fee of \$10 for Fertilizer only, and \$35 for Pesticide including Fertilizer. Call the office at 544-2339 or stop by at the Adams County Government Annex to register.

Other locations and dates in surrounding counties include:

Highland County Extension Office on Jan. 15, in Hillsboro starting at noon, call 393-1918

Brown County Fairgrounds on March 19 at 5:30 p.m., call 378-6716

Dates to Remember

- Jan. 9 Pesticide Re-certification at Frisch's. You must pre-register at 544-2339.

- Jan. 16 Pesticide and Fertilizer Testing for Private and Commercial Applicators at the Old Y Restaurant at noon. Register by calling ODA at 800-282-1955 or online go to <http://pested.osu.edu>