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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Feeding Hay When the Supply is Short

Back in the fall of this year, some livestock producers were telling me that they thought they may run short on hay because they did not get a second cutting due to the wet weather we had in the typical dry part of the year. Others told me that they had more hay than normal because they had a good amount of second cutting due to the rain that kept most grasses green and growing throughout the normal dry part of the year. It all seemed to be each person's view, but that is not the same now.

In recent weeks I have been to several programs that producers were attending and when the hay supply was mentioned the rumblings were all similar. Things like the cows are eating me out of house and home or I am not sure I have enough hay if they keep eating like this. All in all, I have not heard many say much positive about hay supply, and most mention that they may not have enough.

So, how do you stretch it out? I mentioned some stuff last week about feeding supplements. The idea of feeding some dry feed with corn or byproducts will help meet their needs nutritionally so you can limit feeding hay. Another idea might be to reduce waste.

Feeding round bales is a challenge when it comes to not wasting hay. There are several ways to feed them and some are more efficient than other ways. If you think you are going to be short you may want to continue feeding round bales the same way you are, but will need to cull a few cows. If you have already culled all that you want to cull that decision might not be too easy..

If you do not want to reduce you cow numbers, then you need to look at options that reduce waste. For some that might be as simple as purchasing a few hay rings. Yes, there will still be waste, and feeding the bales will be more difficult, but the difference in waste can be significant. Maybe as much as 30 percent difference. Good hay rings that will last are not cheap, but at 3 bales out of 10 they will pay for themselves in a short time. Hay rings will last a few years in most cases, so they will pay year after year.

Other options, and with all of the mud, it might be a good break for the cows, too. Unroll the hay on frozen ground. Get them away from the muddy conditions around the rings. If fed daily it will reduce the waste, too. Feeding multiple days of hay in rings, without rings or unrolling the hay will result in more waste. Sometimes this can add up to a huge amount of hay over the entire feeding season. So, if you feed just enough so each cow can eat, but not have enough for all to eat and then bed down in what you intended for them to eat tomorrow.

So, how much do they leave if you unroll a bale each day compared to unrolling 3 bales to feed them multiple days? They will waste approximately 10 percent on a fed as needed basis. They may waste over 40 percent if you feed multiple days at one time.



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Dr. Steve Boyles wrote an article that appeared in last week's Beef Cattle Letter. It also appeared in the Beef Blog last Friday. Dr. Boyles has more details and more specific numbers on ways to reduce waste when feeding the hay that you have left.

BQA Certification

We have added another session at the Union Stockyards on Wednesday, February 13. The class will start at 6:30 p.m. but the meal will begin around 5:30 or a little before. Call ahead to register. Call Janet at 937-393-1958 to sign up for this program. There will be a meal at 5:30 p.m. with the program beginning at 6:30 p.m. Please plan to arrive early so you can be finished eating by 6:30 p.m.

Ohio Tobacco Museum

In 2019 the fundraiser will be held the same as it has been in the past two years. The Scioto Ribber will cater the meal, and you can choose steak, ribs or chicken with the purchase of your ticket. The location will be the Ripley Elementary School Cafeteria and the date will be April 13, 2019. Tickets are now available and remember we only sell 300 tickets. You can contact me for more information at dugan.46@osu.edu or call 937-544-2339.

Dates to Remember

- Feb. 5 2019 Southern Ohio Specialty Crop Conference at the Oasis Conference Center in Loveland, Ohio. Go to the conference website at <http://go.osu.edu/swohfvsc> or call the Warren County Extension office at 513-695-1311 if you have additional questions. I have registration materials in the Adams Co. Extension Office.
- Feb. 5 Ohio Beef School in Adams Co. will be Frisch's in West Union at 7:00 p.m. RSVP
- Feb. 6 Ohio River Valley Agronomy Day at Mason Co. Extension Office in Maysville. Free program that begins at 9:00 a.m.
- Feb. 7 Fertilizer and Pesticide re-certification at Frisch's in West Union. Fertilizer starts at 5:00 p.m. with pesticide beginning at 6:30 p.m.. Please pre-register by Jan 31 for this class by calling Barbie at 544-2339.
- Feb. 21 Adams County Cattlemen Education meeting at Frisch's at 7:00 p.m. The topic will be meeting nutrient needs with poor hay and plenty of mud, plus the importance of good quality minerals.
- Feb. 28 GAP for Tobacco at Frisch's at 1:00 p.m. Call 544-2339 to RSVP one week prior.
- Feb. 28 GAP for Tobacco at Maysville Comm. College at 6:00 p.m.
- Mar. 5 GAP for Tobacco at Frisch's at 1:00 p.m. Call 544-2339 to RSVP one week prior.
- Mar. 5 GAP for Tobacco at the Brown Co. Fairgrounds at 6:30 p.m. call 378-6716.
- March 12 Farm and Family Night at Maysville Community and Technical College.