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## **Do You Now Need Rain?**

Some areas are in much better shape than others in our area when it comes to moisture. The radar looked promising for rain on Monday night and Tuesday morning, but as some did see some rain, others did not. With that said, I am sure the normal tradition on Sunday of the Adams County Fair will continue. It seems to be a tradition anyway. For the past few fairs, while crop show and shop projects enter on Sunday evening, several of us are watching our phones for the radar, hoping the clouds move our way.

## **Late Harvest of First Cutting**

The Independence Day has come and gone and I am sure many of you spent the long weekend trying to finish up first cutting hay. The past 6 weeks or so seem to have been wet, or was it just the threat of rain? In either case, most farmers are later making that first cutting than normal.

With that said, we experienced a winter that caused more stress than normal to our livestock. Some of this may have been complicated with poorer quality hay than we thought we had. With so much of this year's hay crop being late, this is a good time to consider pulling some forage quality samples. The hay may have pretty good color, but that does not always relate to high nutrition. In fact there is little to any connection. The most common connection to high nutrition is probably the timing of harvest, and our timing this year has not been ideal.

The cost of doing a forage test is right at \$20. That is less than the cost of a bag of most 50lb. bags of mineral, and less than the cost of an average round bale of hay, in most cases. This does not even come close to the value of your livestock with the current market. I have a hay probe that can be loaned out for a day, but call ahead.

## **Fly Control/Pinkeye Prevention Needs to be Continuous Back**

Last week I included information about controlling flies that touched a little on Pinkeye. I have heard of several producers dealing with pinkeye in their herds in the past few days. This information may be of some help for those dealing with the problem. The article appeared in the Beef Blog and was written by Jim Krantz with South Dakota State University. Jim is a cow/calf field specialist for SDSU Extension.

With the grazing season well underway, most cattlemen have strategically planned their fly control program, focused primarily on pinkeye prevention. Obviously, cow/calf comfort and increased production are always considerations of fly-control programs but anyone who has witnessed the results of a pinkeye outbreak knows the discomfort and lost performance that occur.

The cost of pinkeye to producers previously noted through university research was in the \$100/calf range which included reduced weight gains, treatment costs and sale-day discounts. However, those numbers were compiled prior to the present market price structure so it could be considerably greater. Today, with 500 to 600 pound calves selling for about \$2.40 per pound, the lost value would be significant.

Because of the yearly potential for the re-occurrence of pinkeye, cattlemen should remain committed to its prevention throughout the grazing season. Pinkeye vaccination programs have recently received increased producer's acceptance throughout the industry, especially with the increase in calf value. Because there are many strains of the bacteria that cause pinkeye, many veterinarians work with producers to culture herd cases of pinkeye to make certain the vaccine includes the proper strain.

Several additional management options allow for the control of face flies which are considered the primary vectors for the spread of the infections from one animal to the other. Fly tags for cow, calves or both remain a standard recommended practice for fly control. Back rubbers placed near congregating areas for cattle, most commonly near water sources, remain an effective means of control. Cattlemen do need to monitor the product used in these oilers, because slaughter withdrawal is required for some.

Rotational grazing systems may have some advantages for pinkeye prevention in addition to increased forage quality. Tall grasses, especially those with seed heads, can be the initial irritant that provides the opportunity for the pinkeye bacteria to locate in the eye tissue. Allowing cattle access to mature grass pastures can provide the environment for a potential outbreak of pinkeye. Cattlemen might be well-advised to monitor their herds more closely following turnout in order to treat animals showing the first signs of the disease.

Mineral products containing additives which control fly populations by killing the larvae in cattle manure can also be effective in the battle against pinkeye problems. Daily consumption is the key for this management option as sources need to be available in strategic locations for easy access throughout the pasture.

Younger animals are more prone to being affected by the pinkeye bacteria. Calves are the major target but first-calf heifers are much more vulnerable than older cows. If preventive measures cannot be targeted at the entire herd, younger cows and calves deserve first access to any resources utilized in a fly-control program.

Economically, prevention is always a preferred strategy to treatment; it requires vigilance on the cattlemen's part throughout the entire grazing season. Pinkeye outbreaks can occur quickly so early detection and treatment may help prevent transmission to other animals and a potential major outbreak within the herd. Veterinarians are always a valuable resource to cattlemen in building a sound prevention program.

### **Dates to Remember**

July 13-19      Adams County Fair

July 15      Blueberries, Brambles and Wine Grapes Field Night at OSU South Centers in Piketon. Pre-registration is required by July 11. Call or email at 740-289-2071 Ext. 132 or [mcglothin.4@osu.edu](mailto:mcglothin.4@osu.edu)

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