

HARDING COUNTY AG NEWS

Vol 5 Issue 1

Blair Clavel, Harding Co. Extension Agent

I hope this newsletter finds everyone having a good spring. The county received a little moisture the 3rd week of March and hopefully it will keep coming. A lot of people are saying that they have never seen such a mild March. It has been good for calving, but let's hope it does not lead to a dry hot summer.

Loco Weed Spray and Research Workshop

Many land owners and ranchers are having trouble with loco. Loco has been a concern for many years and there have been hundreds of research projects on it. However, it is hard to get your arm around the research side of it on why cattle go to it. I have come to the conclusion that it doesn't really matter any more why cattle get on it, but what can we do to get rid of it. All avenues to control this cyclical plant seem impractical and futile at times. We have tried fencing, digging, mowing, chopping, burning, and spraying to control or keep cattle off. Results vary.



However, there are some good products on the market that will provide a good kill for loco. It is not cost effective to spray huge areas, but with spray foggers on small broadcast sprayers, small thickly infested areas can be sprayed.

If you are interested in learning more about spraying loco weed and seeing a demonstration first hand, join the Harding County Extension Service for a workshop on Friday, April 20th at 8:30 am at Shaw Ranch (Richard and Barbara Shaw). Dr. Kirk McDaniel, range specialist with NMSU, will be on hand to discuss loco weed control, new chemicals, and pros and cons of research. He will be setting up about 12 30X30 plots to test new chemical and monitor over the next 4 years. Myself, and David Graham will demonstrate how to broadcast spray larger areas using a fogging system that is economical and efficient. We will also discuss the grubs that are in the loco that should get a good kill over a 3-4 year period (I have found grubs in 90% of loco sampled this spring). The program will end before noon.

Quay County Extension Grasshopper Workshop

The state office of the Plant Protection and Quarantine branch of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is pleased to announce an open grasshopper management workshop at the convention center (1500 W. Tucumcari Blvd) in Tucumcari on April 25, 2007. This workshop will discuss risk management and practical approaches with grasshopper outbreak prevention, intervention, and suppression. Not all grasshoppers cause economic losses; remember some species are actually considered beneficial.

This free workshop is sponsored by APHIS, the University of Wyoming Extension, the New Mexico Department of Agriculture, and Quay County Extension Service. Our guest presenters are the well-known western states' extension entomologists Alexandre Latchinsky and Scott Schell. So if you missed last April's presentation in Las Cruces, here a great opportunity to attend this time.

The workshop will start at 9:00 and end about 3:30. We anticipate taking an hour lunch break. NMDA will allow some Continuing Educational Units for those attending this workshop. Please contact the Quay County Extension Service office at 505-461-0562 or Shawn Carson with PPQ at 505-527-6985, should you need more info or have local attendance questions. Hope to see you there!



If you are in need of an auxiliary aid or service to participate in this meeting, please contact Brenda at 461-0562 by April 20, 2007.

Tuberculosis in New Mexico

After going through and extensive regionalization plan to provide legal interstate movement of cattle in New Mexico several years ago, TB has reared its ugly head again. There has been a positive case of TB reported from a dairy in Artesia and there was suspicion of a TB infected herd in Northeast New Mexico. Testing of this herd has shown that this herd is CLEAN. It seems that the only possible ramifications for restricted movement of cattle in NM will be based on the Artesia dairy herd. We will see what the decision makers decide.

North Eastern New Mexico Livestock Association Meeting

The annual NENMLA meeting will take place at the Harding Co. Community Building on Sunday, April 29th, starting at 12:00 noon with a potluck lunch. The annual scholarship recipient will be awarded at this time and updates will be provided from New Mexico Cattle Growers Association on legislative outcomes. Other possible topics of discussion on the program include: Ethanol Effects on Cattle Prices, By-Product Feed Utilization, and Cattle Marketing Strategies for the Future. Come join area cattle producers and discuss relevant issues facing the cattle industry.

Standardized Performance Analysis (SPA) Workshop Set for April

A workshop by New Mexico State University's Cooperative Extension Service, set for April 12 at the De Baca County Extension Office in Fort Sumner, is one way for ranchers to closely analyze various aspects of their cow-calf operations. The 2007 Standardized Performance Analysis Workshop will allow ranchers to compare their performance to regional or statewide benchmarks.



"SPA provides ranchers an opportunity to analyze both the production and financial sides of their cow-calf operations," said Clay P. Mathis, Extension livestock specialist in NMSU's Extension Animal Science and Natural Resources Department. "By comparing the performance of a single operation to benchmarks, producers gain an enhanced ability to monetarily prioritize changes to management practices."

The New Mexico Cow-Calf SPA database currently has 61 cow-calf herd years of data from ranches ranging in size from 28 cattle to more than 2,000 head. Each cow-calf enterprise is evaluated using 30 key production and financial performance measures. When the analysis is complete, the ranch representative receives a report card that compares performance of each of the key measures to state benchmarks.

"For example, SPA benchmark data indicates that the average cost to run a cow in New Mexico is \$421, and the average percent return on assets, using cost basis, is 1.6 percent," Mathis said. "The SPA program will help each operation compare their herd production and financial measurements to benchmarks like these."

Upon completion of the analysis, an agricultural economist and NMSU Extension beef specialist will work with individual ranches to jointly develop a plan to improve profitability. Producers' financial and performance data will be kept confidential.

The workshop will be held the day after the De Baca County Livestock Producers Seminar. The seminar will focus on calf marketing: how producers can find ways to develop and better control the marketing of their product, even as the cattle industry changes, the market continues to be volatile and production expenses increase. The seminar also will be at the De Baca County Extension Office.

The annual SPA workshop will be limited to only 10 new ranches. Early registration is encouraged so a pre-workshop packet can be sent to participants, which will help them start organizing ranch data.

A downloadable registration form is available at <http://cahe.nmsu.edu/ces/animal>. Completed forms should be faxed to (505) 646-3164. The registration fee of \$100 per ranch will be collected at the workshop.

For more information, contact Mathis at (505) 646-8022 or De Baca County Extension Office Program Director Leigh Ann Marez at (505) 355-2381.

Cattle Growers Summer Meeting

The New Mexico Cattle Growers Association will have their summer meeting on June 28th to June 30th in Raton, NM. A highlight of the Promotion and Marketing Committee meeting will be an informative talk on age and source verification of cattle, and the new arrangement for sending non-hormone treated cattle to the European Union from Leann Saunders of IMI Global.



This newsletter will be available on the web site at <http://www.hardingcounty.org> .

If you have any questions or need any more information, please fee free to call the office at 505-673-2341.

Best Regards,



Blair Clavel

County Extension Agent