



Newsletter

May 2007

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56th Annual Florida Beef Cattle Short Course



Demonstration/Discussion - Feeder / Finish Calf Evaluation - Jesse Savell, Department of Animal Sciences, UF/IFAS, Gainesville, FL



Dates to Remember

May

- 1** 44th Annual FL Dairy Production Conference - Gainesville, FL
- 2-4** 56th Annual FL Beef Cattle Short Course - Gainesville, FL
- 5** Cattlemen's Choice Simmental Sale - Colbert, GA
- 5** Rogers Bar HR 2007 Cream of the Crop Charolais Female Sale - Collins, MS
- 12** Performance Horse Sale - New Zion, FL
- 15** Equine Management Workshop – Advanced - Gainesville, FL
- 19** Heart of Florida Annual Club Calf Sale - Alachua, FL
- 19** Whitley Red Angus Share the Herd Sale - Letohatchee, AL
- 24** Beef Cattle Workshop - Callahan, FL
- 25** Subtropical Ag Research Center Field Day - Brooksville, FL
- 25-26** Williston Ranch Rodeo - Williston, FL
- 30 - June 1** Southern Pasture & Forage Improvement Conference - Tallahassee, FL

June

- 2** Florida Junior Brahman Association State Show - Fanning Springs, FL
- 3** Horsemanship School - Welaka, FL
- 5** 2007 North Florida Beef Cattle/Forage Field Day - Marianna, FL
- 5** Management Decisions for the Cow/Calf Herd in Stressful Times - Hastings, FL
- 9** 8th Annual Plenty of Class Brangus Female Sale - Fairmont, GA
- 9** 27th Annual Carolina Brahman Breeders Assoc. Sale - Clemson, SC
- 10** Horsemanship School - Welaka, FL
- 14** 2007 Corn Silage/Forage Field Day - Tifton, GA
- 14-16** Senepol Cattle Breeders Association Convention - Kissimmee, FL
- 15-16** Northeast Florida Youth Classic Prospect Steer & Heifer Show - Callahan, FL
- 17** Horsemanship School - Welaka, FL
- 18-19** FCA Cattlemen's College - Marco Island, FL
- 19-21** FCA/FCW Annual Convention & Allied Trade Show - Marco Island, FL
- 22** State 4-H Horse Events - Gainesville, FL
- 24** Horsemanship School - Welaka, FL
- 26-28** 4-H Hog & Ham - Gainesville, FL

2007 North Florida Beef Cattle/ Forage Field Day Scheduled

Mark your calendars and plan to attend the fourth Beef Cattle/Forage Field Day at the University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, (UF/IFAS) North Florida Research and Education Center Beef Unit in Marianna, FL, on Tuesday, June 5, 2007. The field day will begin at 8:00 am (CDT) and will end at 3:00 pm. Lunch and refreshments will be provided.

The field day will include demonstrations along with field tours of ongoing research. Topics covered will include an update on feed efficiency research, alternative fertilization of pastures, weed control in pastures, mineral supplementation of the cow herd, cull cow marketing options, update on by-product feeds, ongoing forage studies, and pasture mole cricket control.

The NFREC Beef Unit is located one mile west of Greenwood, FL, on state highway 162. For additional information call (850) 482-9904 or (850) 482-1243. A registration fee of \$10 will be charged.



Bronson Takes Action to Assist in Animal Evacuation

Florida Agriculture and Consumer Services Commissioner Charles Bronson has taken steps to make it easier for horse and livestock owners to move their animals in the event of an evacuation due to wildfires.

Bronson has temporarily suspended intrastate movement requirements only for those animals being evacuated from affected areas. He has also lifted interstate requirements for animals being evacuated from the fire affected areas in Georgia and moving into Florida. At the same time, Alabama and Georgia officials have waived their interstate movement requirements for Florida livestock being evacuated into those states.

“We need to help people get out of harm’s way as quickly as possible because these wildfires can spread quickly and we have new fires breaking out in many areas of the state each day,” Bronson said. “This temporary suspension of these requirements is critical for people who need to move out of an area quickly and want to protect their animals.”

Anyone transporting livestock during this emergency situation must continue to stop at the Florida agricultural interdiction stations. If the proper paperwork does not accompany the shipment, the transporter will be issued an ALE-5, Livestock Truck Passing Report. This movement report must accompany the livestock during transport within Florida, Georgia and Alabama until the owners return home when it is deemed safe to do so.

For a listing of facilities accepting livestock in the southeast, log on to the Division of Animal Industry’s Emergency Evacuation Web site at: http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/ai/adc/adc_emerg_manag_links.shtml.

SOURCE: Dr. William Jeter
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Release - May 10, 2007

Florida Agricultural Museum Receives Grant Funding for New Permanent Exhibit

Florida Agriculture and Consumer Services Commissioner Charles H. Bronson announced that the Florida Agricultural Museum has received \$31,000 in funding from the Division of Historical Resources to mount a new exhibit, “Florida’s Black Cowboys: Past and Present.”

The permanent exhibit will introduce visitors to the involvement of black men and women in Florida’s cattle industry, past and present, through text panels, archival images, and appropriate artifacts. Some images and text will be collected during interviews with present-day African American cattlemen.

The involvement of African Americans in the state’s cattle industry is a little known and under reported aspect

of Florida's history. The term "cowboy" was introduced to America during the 18th century in coastal South Carolina and specifically referred to a black male slave who tended cows. Long before that, however, African Americans both enslaved and free served as ranch hands and overseers on the large ranches established by important Spanish families connected to the royal government of Florida. Many Africans had experience in tending cattle in their homelands and interestingly shared an "open grazing" approach to cattle raising with the Spaniards, who introduced both cattle and African Americans to the state. Some free blacks ranched for themselves but more frequently they acted as drovers for herds being moved into and out of the state. Black participation in Florida's cattle industry continued throughout the centuries Florida's development. Today, black men and women remain important players in ranching operations throughout Florida.

Cattle were first introduced to Florida by Ponce de Leon on his second voyage in 1521. The expedition failed, and it seems unlikely that the cattle survived. When Pedro Menendez de Aviles successfully established his colony in 1565, he brought with him 200 terneras, or bred heifers. By the 17th century, the largest of Florida's Spanish ranches were coming into existence. Throughout the colonial and territorial periods, and the days of early statehood, cattle remained a crucial component of Florida's economy and history. Even today, in the face of development and the loss of rural working lands, the cattle industry remains a cornerstone of Florida's agricultural operations.

Phase One of the exhibit will be completed over the course of the next year. Funding is currently being sought for Phase Two of the project. Phase Two will involve the production of a DVD for possible distribution to television stations and all public Florida K-12 schools and 4-H coordinators for inclusion in their youth development and educational programs. The DVD will also be added to Phase One of the exhibit.

The Florida Agricultural Museum is a direct support organization of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services created under Florida Statute and designated as the museum for agriculture and rural history of the State of Florida.

SOURCE: Bruce J. Piatek
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Release - April 19, 2007



Japan Tests Fail to Show BSE Infection from Young Cattle

Brain matter carrying mad cow disease from the two youngest cattle confirmed with BSE in Japan has so far failed to infect mice in tests, a Health Ministry official said on Wednesday.

The test results could influence Japan's trade talks with the United States, as Tokyo has restricted American beef imports to cattle aged 20 months or younger on grounds that the youngest case of the disease was found in a 21-month-old animal.

Washington is pressing Tokyo to raise the limit to up to 30 months, arguing this is in line with international standards.

Japanese scientists used brain matter from cattle aged 21 months and 23 months which had been diagnosed with mad cow disease in 2003 and were subsequently slaughtered.

The brain matter was injected into mice, but the animals did not show signs of developing the disease.

"The results so far do not show that (mad cow disease) has spread," the Health Ministry official said.

He did not specify when the tests started.

The official said he expects the test results to be eventually presented to the Food Safety Commission, a panel of experts that assesses risk and makes policy recommendations.

The Japanese animals whose brain tissue was used for the experiment are believed to be some of the youngest cases of bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or BSE, found in cattle in the world.

Experts believe older cattle are more likely to develop the brain-wasting disease.

The United States is still struggling to regain its previous role as one of the top foreign suppliers of beef to Japan, a position it lost after it reported its first case of mad cow disease in December 2003, prompting Japan to ban the meat.

It has since resumed exports, but beef sales have been slow in Japan due to a number of reasons including the restriction on the cattle's age.

The World Animal Health Organization is expected

to give the United States a “controlled risk” rating later this month, a ruling Washington is expected to use to pressure Japan to further open its beef market.

Japan was the top foreign beef market for the United States before the ban, buying some \$1.4 billion worth of the meat in 2003.

SOURCE: Reuters
Release - May 9, 2007

Animal Welfare is Our Livelihood and Our Legacy

Paxton Ramsey is a Texas cattle producer and member of the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA). In testifying on behalf of the American rancher before the House Agriculture Committee’s Subcommittee on Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry, Ramsey reaffirms the importance of animal welfare to the cattle industry.

“As a rancher, the care and well-being of my livestock is top priority. Ranchers are the original proponents of animal care and welfare because we understand the moral obligation that comes with being a steward of our animals. We spend every day living off the land, working with our livestock - and it is our passion.

“This long-standing commitment to the health and welfare of our animals is probably not something we talk about enough in public, because it is not something that we have to make a conscious decision to pursue. Good care of our animals is second nature to us. It is not something we do because it is popular or newsworthy. We do it because these animals depend on us and we cannot fail them.

“Taking good care of our livestock is not just about doing the right thing; it also makes good business sense. It is well-recognized by our entire industry that it is in everyone’s best interest – from producer to packer – to handle animals humanely. Sound animal husbandry practices – based on generations of research and practical experience – are known to impact the well-being of cattle, individual animal health, and herd productivity.

“NCBA has long taken its role in animal welfare seriously. As the trade association for America’s cattlemen, we have a role to help educate and train our members in the proper care and handling of livestock. These discussions began at the grassroots level and have involved the expertise of all entities associated with our business. Producer-led initiatives include NCBA’s Beef Quality

Assurance (BQA) Program and the cattle industry’s “Guidelines for the Care and Handling of Cattle.”

“Created in 1987, BQA unites animal scientists, veterinarians, feed suppliers, animal health companies, packers, and retailers with producers. The BQA program provides guidelines for livestock care and handling, nutrition, and veterinary treatment. Cattlemen become certified and undergo continuous training to remain certified.

“BQA incorporates current Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations, as well as Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles. Today, BQA influences more than ninety percent of U.S. cattle.

“Not only is proper care and handling something we practice, it is also regulated by state and federal laws. As such, we look forward to working with Congress to ensure that state and federal agencies such as the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) have all of the resources they need for inspection of regulated facilities that handle livestock. In addition, we think it is crucial for local, state, and federal governments to prosecute those who willingly mistreat their animals and break these laws.

“Years of practical experience have shaped the practices that my family, and ranching families across the country, use to provide humane care of our livestock. It is not just something we talk about, it is something we do everyday.”

SOURCE: NCBA
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Release - May 8, 2007



Jason Stewart, right, a professional rodeo competitor from Williston, Fla., prepares to rope a steer with partner Billy Melsom, an amateur rodeo competitor from Starke, Fla., at UF’s Horse Teaching Unit in Gainesville -- Saturday, March 24, 2007. The pair were among more than 30 riders who took part in UF’s second annual Ropin’ in the Swamp competition. In the event, pairs of riders attempted to rope and secure a steer in the shortest time possible. (AP photo/University of Florida/IFAS/Eric Zamora)