

December 20, 2007

TO: Yadkin County Livestock Producers

FROM: Phillip Rucker, Jr.
 Extension Agent
 Agriculture-Livestock

North Carolina Cooperative Extension
 Yadkin County Center
 PO Box 97
 209 E. Elm St.
 Yadkinville, North Carolina 27055
 336-679-2061
 phil_rucker@ncsu.edu
 http://Yadkin.ces.ncsu.edu

Beef Producers Meeting: There will be a joint meeting for the beef producers in Davie and Yadkin Counties. It will be held Tuesday, January 22, 2008. We will meet at Deep Creek Farms and Grain beginning at 6:30 PM. The program will focus on weed control and drought management. There will be a sponsored meal so PLEASE CALL THE EXTENSION CENTER 679-2061 BEFORE Friday, January 18 to register. We are trying to get pesticide credits approved for participants so bring your pesticide cards. Make plans to attend this meeting Tuesday, January 22.

State purchasing hay to resell to farmers at lowest cost possible: The first shipment of hay bought by the state for resale to livestock farmers will be delivered to six sites across North Carolina in early January, Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler announced today. As livestock owners buy up the hay, the N.C. Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services will purchase additional loads, Troxler said. He and Gov. Mike Easley worked to get the Council of State to approve funding for the program earlier this month. "The hay we're bringing in will provide an emergency stockpile that farmers can tap if they find themselves in desperate need." The six distribution sites were chosen because of their proximity to areas with large livestock populations where the need for hay is great. Large and small bales will be available at each of the following locations:

Mountain Research Station, 265 Test Farm Road, Waynesville;
 Upper Mountain Research Station, 8004 N.C. Highway 88 East, Laurel Springs;
 Piedmont Research Station, 8350 Sherrills Ford Road, Salisbury;
 Piedmont Triad Farmers Market, 2914 Sandy Ridge Road, Colfax;
 Caswell Research Farm, 2415 W. Vernon Ave., Kinston;
 Oxford Tobacco Research Station, 300 Providence Road, Oxford.

The department has placed an initial order for 36 truckloads of hay, which will be distributed evenly among the six locations. Delivery dates for each site are still being finalized. Livestock owners should contact the department's toll-free Hay Alert hotline at 1-866-506-6222 or log on to www.ncagr.com/HayAlert for information.

The state will use its purchasing power to buy hay at the lowest price possible. Farmers **will pay the direct costs of the hay and transportation**, so the state will eventually be reimbursed for its spending.

Hay Relief Programs: In previous mailings, you have received information concerning several Hay Relief Programs dealing with transporting hay you purchased. The three programs Golden Hay, Ag Partners and Equine Partners have been well received and many applications have been filed with the NCDA&CS. Let me restate that these programs are for TRANSPORTATION ONLY and not to purchase hay.

IMPORTANT REMINDER! The Golden Hay Program has a December 31, 2007 deadline for all applications to be submitted. Ag Partners and Equine Partners are on a first come – first served basis and you need to apply as soon as possible.

To participate, livestock producers must submit an application, to the NCDA&CS. The reimbursement amount will be determined by dividing the allocated funds by the amount of money requested in approved applications. Farmers will be reimbursed for a percentage of their transportation costs. You must have receipts, vouchers, mileage records, Animal ID Premise Numbers and other information to be eligible. You can download applications and eligibility criteria from the NCDA&CS Hay Alert Web site, www.ncagr.com/HayAlert or call toll free 1-866-506-6222 weekdays from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. The Hay Alert site and hotline also help farmers find hay and transportation.

Possible Feed Opportunities: Feed supplies are getting tight. Hay and alternatives are in short supply and getting harder to find. Be prepared to make a quick decision and purchase commodities to feed your livestock this winter. Sometimes an opportunity will fall into your lap and you may not have time to invest in full scale research. Do some reading now on what types of alternative feeds will work in your operation, how to feed, possible costs and other necessary information. Have your homework done before hand so you can make a quick but wise decision. Contact the Extension Center if you have questions about certain feed stuffs.

Upcoming Conferences: Some conferences and workshops have been scheduled and others are in the planning stages. Please keep your eyes and ears open for possible opportunities and make every effort to attend ones you feel will help you with you livestock operation. I'll try to keep you aware of opportunities.

Statesville Regional Beef Conference – Thursday, January 3, 2008. This conference will begin at 3:30 PM at the Iredell Agricultural Resources Building in Statesville. NC State specialists will be on hand to discuss feeding options and ways to help your pastures recover from the drought. There will be an update on herd health practices and a special discussion on the Market Outlook for 2008. There is a sponsored meal and reservations are requested. Please call the Extension center before Monday, December 31 to register for this conference.

The Forage and Grassland Council will be hosting conferences for cattle, small ruminants and equine owners. There will be four cattle and small ruminant conferences in January with three in Virginia and one in Oxford, NC (January 23). And the Equine conferences are in February and all will be in Virginia. For information, contact the Extension Center.

NC Cattlemen's Conference will be February 22 and 23 at the Hickory Metro Convention Center. This is a great opportunity to hear discussions on important cattle issues. You can visit the trade show and swap stories with other producers. Contact the NC Cattlemen's Assoc. 919/552-9111 for more information.

There will be several local meetings and workshops that focus on feeding options, forages and pasture management, drought management strategies and other topics. These opportunities will be held in Davie, Yadkin and surrounding counties. You are encouraged to attend these opportunities. Please give me topics you feel are needed and you would like addressed. This will help me prioritize the needs of the producers and plan programs to meet those needs. Contact me at Davie 336/753-6100, Yadkin 336/679-2061 or email me at phil_rucker@ncsu.edu.

The next few months could be a little tough and will more than likely set the stage for the next year or so. We need to try and work together to learn all we can to help livestock producers survive this challenge and prepare for whatever the future brings.