

# RUCKER'S RAMBLINGS

## ANIMAL AGRICULTURE INFORMATION

### SPRING 2013

Our New Website: <http://yadkin.ces.ncsu.edu>

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**CATTLE PRODUCERS MEETING:** There will be a Beef Producers Meeting for Davie & Yadkin Counties, Tuesday, April 23. The meeting will be held at Center Community Building in Mocksville, beginning at 6:30 pm. Sarah Milteer with Dow AgroSciences will be here to discuss weed control in pastures and hayfields. Weeds can take up valuable nutrients and water. Eliminating them from pastures and hayfields will allow the desired grass to grow more efficiently. With the price of feed inching up, maintaining a healthy and productive pasture can help the bottom line. This should be a very informative meeting so mark your calendars.

Supper will be served and reservations are requested. Please call the Extension Office at 679-2061, NO LATER THAN 5:00 PM FRIDAY, APRIL 19, to make reservations. We need an accurate count so food preparations can be made.

**Pesticide credits have been applied for. Bring your card.**

*Special accommodations will be made for the physically disabled, vision or hearing impaired person upon request. If special accommodations are required, please call Phil Rucker 679-2061, by April 16, 2013.*

#### **FREE PESTICIDE COLLECTION DAY IN DAVIE**

If you have old pesticides that are taking up space in your barn, garage or storagedshed, make plans to bring them to the FREE Pesticide Disposal Day. NCDA&CS will accept any pesticide, (insecticide, fungicide, herbicide, etc.) in original containers and clearly labeled. There is no charge for this service; however we *cannot* accept products with unknown identities, or not in pesticide containers. Paints and other hazardous waste will not be accepted.

The collection will be Thursday, May 2 from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm, at the Masonic Picnic Grounds, 201 Poplar St., behind the Brock Center. Call the Extension Office for more information or directions. This is a great opportunity to properly dispose of any unwanted pesticides.

#### **TIME TO UPDATE THE MAILING LIST**

Over the years my mailing list has grown quite large. Sending out a mailing has become a time consuming and expensive venture. Please help us update the mailing list to help us be more efficient in serving you. If you wish to remain on my mailing list please notify the Extension office by May 10, 2013 or there is a good chance you will be REMOVED from the mailing list. You may contact us by calling (679-2061), mailing us or email [phil\\_rucker@ncsu.edu](mailto:phil_rucker@ncsu.edu). When you contact us, we need the following information: Do you wish to remain on the mailing list? What areas are you interested in (cattle, forage, horse, pond, etc.)? Is your current information correct? How do you want to receive most information: mail or electronic? If you wish to be removed from the mailing list we need to know that also. **Please contact us by May 10 or we may have to drop you from our mail list.**

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**CATTLE PRODUCERS MEETING IN YADKIN**

There is a planned meeting for Yadkin Cattle Producers on Thursday, May 2 at Starmount High School in Boonville. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 6:30 PM.

Steve Woodruff with NRCS will discuss how to improve your soil health by improving water retention and providing increased moisture for your pastures and hayfields. Simple management practices will help you get the most out of those spring and summer rain storms by capturing every drop that falls. Come see a demonstration of the rainfall simulator in action. Steve will discuss different types of forage to improve water retention and management practices to enhance forage growth and survival when the weather is challenging.

We will also discuss the different types and varieties of grass that will survive in pastures and hayfields. Steve will talk about best management practices to get the most benefit from your grass as well as the best ways to upgrade the forage program you have now.

A meal will be served and reservations are requested. Please call the Extension Office at 679-2061, NO LATER THAN 5:00 PM TUESDAY, APRIL 30.

**GRASS TETANY:** When the grass starts to turn green and grow, grass tetany is a threat, especially to cows nursing calves. Magnesium in commercial mineral supplements or home mixtures should be provided. Your goal is to get one ounce of magnesium oxide in the cow each day. Also a mixture of 3 lbs. magnesium oxide with 97 lbs. of grain or protein supplement fed at 2 lbs. per head per day will work.

Start feeding high magnesium now, if you are not already, because it takes a while to build the levels high enough to resist grass tetany. It's not an overnight thing and good preparation can save you some headaches later on this spring.

**FLIES AFFECT EVERYONE:** Flies are attracted to ALL livestock and poultry because manure and left-over feed are food sources for them. Flies can reduce animal performance as well as irritate human and animal alike. The recent weather has been pretty wet setting-up a potential banner year for flies. Make your battle plans now. Don't wait until the animals are covered, your outside activities are invaded or even worse, your neighbors complain and relationships might be strained. Please contact me for options to control flies early before they become a major problem.

**FORAGE MANAGEMENT TIPS**

\* If you have not fertilized, it's getting late for cool season grass (fescue and orchardgrass) so get some advice before applying. Spreading late could benefit weeds more than the grass. If you decide to fertilize, think about split applications to spread out the forage growth.

\* Identify problem weeds and spray if you have not already. There are different types of weeds that come up different times of the year so make a weed control plan for the whole growing season.

\* Develop a grazing plan for your operation to help you utilize the forage efficiently. Overgrazing as well as undergrazing will reduce forage vigor and stimulate weed growth.

**DATES TO REMEMBER****MAKE PLANS TO ATTEND!!**

April 13	Barnyard Sale at Davie County Large Animal Hospital 998-7131
April 17	Hay Day at the Piedmont Research Station beginning at 9:00AM
April 19	Davie 4-H Golf Tournament, call 753-6100 for details
April 23	Davie Cattle Producers Meeting, 6:30 PM, Center Comm. Building
May 2	Pesticide Collection Day in Mocksville, call 336/753-6100
May 2	Cattle Producer Meeting in Yadkin, 6:30 pm at Starmount High
May 4	Spring Fever Angus Sale in Reidsville

### **HORSE MANAGEMENT TIPS**

Spring has sprung and summer is just around the corner. Warm weather calls for management practices to help keep horses healthy and ready for those pleasurable riding experiences. Grass is actively growing and full of nutrition. Talk with your veterinarian about the possibility of reducing grain supplementation to reduce the risks of digestion, hoof or obesity problems. The age, size and activity of your horse goes a long way in determining the nutritional needs.

Have your horse updated on all necessary vaccinations if not already done. Mosquito season is not far off and these pesky insects carry numerous diseases that can be transmitted to horses. Spring is also a good time to deworm your horse. Deworming your horse before the grazing season increases forage uptake as well as nutrient utilization.

Start hunting hay for the upcoming winter months. Make contacts and find the hay that you feel is the best buy and meets your horse's nutritional needs. Many producers are getting ready to start mowing and now is a good time to get your foot in the door. If you have a place to store hay, buying hay out of the field can sometimes save you some money. Don't wait until snow is on the ground and you are out of hay to start looking.

With spring and summer comes beautiful weather as well as hot humid days. While we can go inside and enjoy a cold drink, our equine friends are mostly left to fend for themselves. Be sure to make preparations to provide your horses with shade, lots of cool clean water, and fly protection. When horses are hot, lack water or are irritated by flies, they become stressed and that weakens the horse's immunity, increasing the chances of illness and giving the horse an un-thrifty condition.

Contact the Extension Center for more information on these management practices, forages, pasture management and other equine production issues.

### **GRAZING HORSES THIS SPRING**

The horse is at a higher health risk during periods of lush grass growth. Through photosynthesis, grass makes fructane (simple carbohydrate) all day while the sun is shining. High levels of fructanes can cause laminitis and other serious issues. At night, those fructanes are used by the grass to grow or are stored in the root system. Thus, you can decrease the risks by grazing during the night and early morning while fructane levels are low. It would be a good idea to stable the horse during the day, during periods of lush growth or otherwise limit free access to pasture. Maybe use poly-wire temporary cross fencing to allow only a little fresh grass each day during lush growth. Using a grazing muzzle during daytime turnout would help reduce the risks also.

### **HERD HEALTH TO-DO LIST FOR LIVESTOCK**

- \* Vaccinate equine (horses, donkeys, mules) against West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis. Take precautions to minimize standing water where mosquitoes breed.
- \* Feed cattle a COMPLETE mineral mix with Hi-Magnesium to help prevent grass tetany.
- \* Check pastures for toxic plants or trees and treat accordingly. Repair fences, barns and working facilities to reduce the chance of injury.
- \* Keep a close eye on ALL livestock grazing lush forage growth for potential problems.

### **HAY DAY AT THE PIEDMONT RESEARCH STATION**

The NC Department of Agriculture in conjunction with NC State University is sponsoring a *Hay Day*, April 17, beginning at 9:00 am, at the Piedmont Research Station, 8350 Sherrills Ford Road in Salisbury, NC 28147. Commercial equipment vendors will participate in the event and will demonstrate new machinery and equipment to cut, rake, tedder and bale hay. This will be a unique opportunity for producers to see and compare multiple brands of hay equipment operating in the same field on the same day. Dr. Matt Poore, Cooperative Extension Beef Specialist will coordinate the educational aspect of this event. Please contact Cooperative Extension at 704-216-8970 by April 15<sup>th</sup> to register and more information about this event.

**BACKYARD POULTRY CLINIC**

The Iredell Cooperative Extension is hosting an educational workshop for home flock owners on Saturday, May 4, 2013 from 1:00 pm until 4:00 pm. The workshop will be held at the Iredell County Agricultural Resource Center located at 444 Bristol Drive, Statesville, NC 29687. Jim Adkins and others associated with the Sustainable Poultry Network will be the speaking. Topics that will be cover are: Basic Husbandry and Disease Control, Feeds and Feeding, Sourcing Your Chicks & Poults, and Breed Identification. A grower round table for questions and answers will be held at the end. Please call the Iredell Cooperative Extension at 704-873-0507 by Wednesday, May 1 to register for the event. For more information contact Kathy Bunton, Area Specialized Agent, Poultry, at 704-878-3154 or [kathy\\_bunton@ncsu.edu](mailto:kathy_bunton@ncsu.edu). This event is free to the public.



**DAVIE COUNTY 4-H** will be hosting a Golf Tournament, April 19 to help provide academic scholarships. The tournament will be held at Pudding Ridge Golf Course. If you are interested in playing, sponsoring a hole or supporting in other ways, contact the Extension Office at 753-6100 for more information.



**DAVIE MASTER GARDENER PLANT SALE**

The Davie County Master Gardeners will hold their annual plant sale on Friday, May 10. This is a great time to purchase a wide variety of healthy plants to decorate your landscape and get some wonderful presents to give mom on Mother's Day. All proceeds are used to support the Master Gardeners and their projects. The sale will begin at 8:00am at the Mebane Building next to the Extension Center. Call the Davie Extension Center at 336/753-6100 for more information.

