

Livestock News

July/August/September 2014

**Protect Your Investment by
Minimizing Hay Losses**
Page 1

Hoof Trimming in Goats
Page 2

**Animal Waste Management News
/Forage Management Tips**
Page 3

**Trying to make Sense out of the
Beef Market**
Page 4

**4-H Farm Credit Showmanship
Circuit**
Page 5

**Moore County Cattle Field Day/
Upcoming Events**
Page 6



Protect your Investment by Minimizing Hay Losses

*By: Justin Whitley, Livestock Extension Agent with
N.C. Cooperative Extension in Duplin County*

It's that time of year when everyone is busy cutting, conditioning, tedding, raking, baling, wrapping, and watching the sky, trying to beat that afternoon thunderstorm when there's hay on the ground. Whether you love riding the tractor and baling hay or you dread it, one thing is for sure; it's a costly process. According to NCSU Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics forage budgets, the cost of producing one ton of hay is estimated at \$70.52. These costs include operating costs such as twine, fuel, labor, and repairs, as well as fixed costs of depreciation, taxes, insurance, and interest. Storing your hay in a manner that will protect it from weathering losses is a good way to protect such a pricey investment.

Getting hay dried to 16% moisture in Eastern North Carolina weather conditions can be quite difficult. Practices such as conditioning, tedding, and raking can be used to increase the efficiency of drying time and make sure that your bales are as dry as possible before being stored. Bales that are stored with moisture content of 20% or greater can lead to growth of fungi and microbes that due to the respiration processes have the potential to increase the temperature of moist plant tissue. Temperature increases have the potential to reduce the nutritive value of the hay as well as to the point where spontaneous combustion can cause fire and loss of a whole crop of hay.

Dry matter losses and forage quality losses vary depending on storage condi-

tions. Most of these losses are due to weathering which happens when bales are stored outside on the ground and are rained on as well as wicking moisture up from the ground. Weathering begins slowly, but then accelerates because weathered hay is more easily penetrated by rain, and doesn't dry as rapidly afterwards. Round bales under a shed will lose around 3%, round bales outside and covered will lose 5-10%, and round bales that are outside and uncovered can lose as much as 15-20%. Losing 20% of your \$70.52/ton hay equals losing \$14.10/ton just while your hay is sitting around! Forage quality is also negatively affected by weathering. Total crude protein levels and soluble carbohydrates will decrease, while fiber levels and ADF will increase. Quality of hay fed during the winter is critical to animal performance, as many witnessed this past winter when hay quality was generally poor.

Something as simple as stacking and covering could reduce losses by at least half. You can check around with your neighbors to see if they have some unused shelter space where you can store hay. I know there are a lot of vacant chicken houses sitting around empty that would make great hay storage! The bottom line is, hay is a valuable resource that should be treated as such. If you would like some more information about hay storage methods, contact your local livestock extension agent!

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Hoof Trimming in Goats

By: Kaitlyn Johnson, Livestock Extension Agent with N.C. Cooperative Extension in Moore County



Trimming your goats' hooves is a task that can be easily learned, however, the challenging part is committing to following a timely schedule for trimming. Many foot and leg issues arise from the lack of hoof trimming or improper trimming techniques. The amount of time between trimmings varies depending on a variety of factors, including the terrain the animals are on, the age of the goat, level of activity, nutritional level and even the breed. Goats that are raised in smaller pastures that are "clean" (relatively free of debris and rocks) or in confinement will typically require more frequent trimmings than goats that are raised on vast pastures and pastures that contain things for the animals to climb on. Each animal will require observation to determine when the hoof needs to be trimmed, there is no set trimming interval. Once you become familiar with how the hoof is supposed to look, it will become easier to identify when it is needed. A properly trimmed hoof should look like that of a newborn kid.

The tools recommended to trim hooves include: gloves, a set of hoof shears that have sharp edges, and a way to restrain the animal. Some optional items include: a rasp, a hoof knife with a sharp edge, some iodine, turpentine, or copper sulfate. The latter is typically used in treating foot rot, foot scald or abscesses.



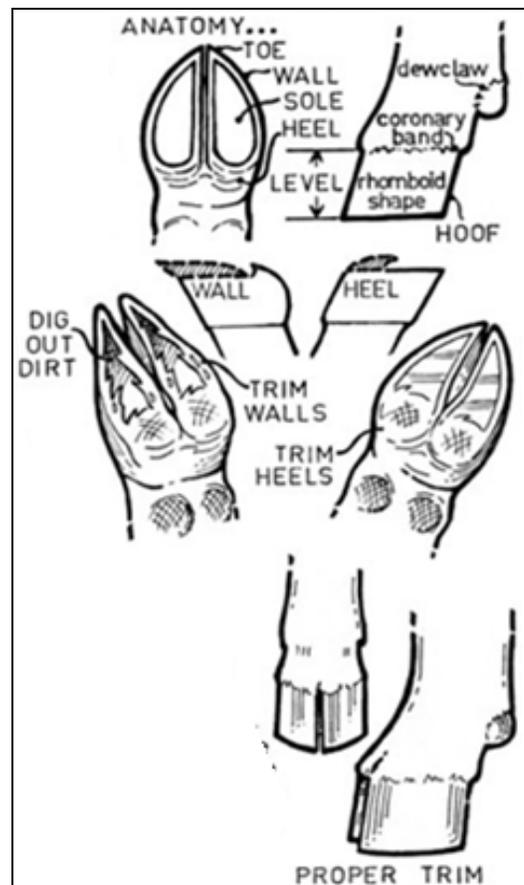
The first step in trimming is to clean off the hoof, so that it is free of dirt and debris. Besides being easier to see, a clean foot will not dull the shears edge as fast as a dirty foot. The next step is to remove any rim or excess growth from the walls of the foot. The wall may have grown and folded back under the foot. In this case some of the overlapped toe will have to be cut back so that the rim of the wall can be removed properly. The trimming of the wall and toe should be done using shears, the heel and sole can be cut using shears but some find it easier to use a hoof knife. It all depends on what you have on hand and prefer. If you choose to use the hoof knife, always cut away from the goat and yourself. The sole should be trimmed down in this slices until the heel, sole and wall form a flat surface upon which the goat should stand at a correct angle of about 45 degrees. Stop trim-

ming as soon as the sole begins to appear a pinkish color, this means you are getting close to the "quick". Any further trimming will cause the foot to bleed. If you do happen to cut too close, a disinfectant such as iodine should be used. In most cases after the application of iodine the weight of the goat itself will put pressure on the cut and stop the bleeding.

If the hooves have been neglected for some time, and the toes are very long it is usually not practical to try to bring them back to normal in one trimming. It is generally better to trim a little at a time to gradually bring them back to proper shape, size and angle with more frequent trimmings. A good rule of thumb is to keep the hair line of the hoof almost parallel to the ground, and the more often trimming is done the less time and energy per trimming it takes and the more conditioned the animals will be to trimming. This in most cases will lead to better behaved goats and decreased chance of the animal developing foot problems.

In summary, a conscientious effort at a good foot care program will keep goats looking better, healthier and more productive.

ANATOMY... TOE WALL SOLE HEEL LEVEL rhomboid shape HOOF dewclaw coronary band



Animal Waste Management News

By: Amanda Hatcher, Livestock Extension Agent with N.C. Cooperative Extension in Duplin County

Upcoming classes related to animal waste in our area:

- ◆ 10-Hour Animal Waste Operator Class in Kinston or Snow Hill on July 30 & 31. Contact Eve Honeycutt at 252-527-2191 to sign up.
- ◆ 10-Hour Animal Waste Operator Class in Kenansville on October 21 & 22. Contact Amanda Hatcher or Wanda Hargrove at 910-296-2143 to sign up.

Frequently Asked Questions...

Where do I go to find out how many animal waste hours I need and when I have to have them by? How about my pesticide credits?

Animal waste continuing education approvals go through the NC DENR's Division of Water Resources but pesticide continuing education approvals go through the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Cooperative Extension offers continuing education for both.

For animal waste, go to: <http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/wq/tacu-renewal> and click on "Animal Waste & Wastewater Operator Continuing Education Report" on the

center. This will bring up an alphabetical list of all animal waste operators in the state as a PDF, which will list the number of hours needed and the deadline. Everyone has three years to get their required six hours of continuing education credit.

For pesticide credit, go to: <http://www.ncagr.gov/aspzine/str-pest/pesticides/Recert/RTsearch.asp> then type in the name of the applicator or you can search by license number. After entering the name, click "Find Record" and scroll down to find the correct name. Then click on the name and hit "search." Clicking on "check credit status" will give you a list of the classes you have already taken and just below you will find the deadline on your hours. Clicking on "required credits" will tell you how many hours you need for the type of license you have. If you have more than one license, make sure you check all pesticide applicator numbers.

Please contact your extension agent if you have questions and to ask about continuing education and initial education opportunities.



Hay Directories

are below for people selling hay or looking for hay to buy. It is free to list your hay for sale.

1. North Carolina Department of Agriculture's Hay Alert is at <http://www.agr.state.nc.us/hayalert/>. Producers can call the Hay Alert at 1-866-506-6222. You can sign up to list your hay on-line.
2. The Southeastern NC Hay Directory is available at <http://onslow.ces.ncsu.edu/files/library/67/HayDirectory.pdf>. Call your Extension Agent to learn how to include your farm on the list.

Forage Management Tips

From *Production and Utilization of Pastures and Forages in North Carolina*

July

- * Continue a four to six-week schedule of nitrogen applications on summer grasses. Do not delay application because of dry weather unless it has not rained at all since the previous application.
 - * Maintain harvesting frequency for quality hay.
 - * Hot dry weather can result in nitrate and prussic acid poisoning of animals grazing stunted, highly fertilized summer annuals.
 - * Sample soils and apply lime on fields to be planted in the fall.
 - * Decide which fescue pastures to stockpile.
- Apply nitrogen (60-80 pounds/acre) around September 1st.

August

- * Apply lime to pastures with pH below 5.8 to be over seeded.
- * Start harvesting corn silage in the hard dent state and when the dry matter is between 35% to 40%.
- * Fertilize warm-season grasses.
- * Fertilize fescue and keep cattle off of the pastures to be stockpiled.

September

- Fertilize and lime cool-season grasses.
- Keep pressure on summer grasses and completely use them before grazing cool-season forages.
- Watch for fall insects (armyworms, grasshoppers, crickets).
- Overseed or no-till winter annuals into summer perennial grass.

Trying to Make Sense out of the Beef Market

By: Randy Wood, Livestock Extension Agent with N.C. Cooperative Extension in Scotland County

Whether you've been in the cattle business for decades, or a relative newbie to the trials and tribulations of raising beef calves for the purpose of making a dollar or two, the past couple of months have been pretty unusual for us all. Cattle farmers, who never fail to grumble about the prices their calves bring every year, have found it increasingly difficult to gripe about their sale checks the last three or four years. So far this year, even the most disgruntled and pessimistic cattle farmer would fail to do anything but grin when they get their sale checks in the mail. The fact is 2014 might be the best beef prices that many of us will see in our lifetimes. Any economist will tell you that when supply and demand gets out of balance; prices will shift to reflect it. With the U.S. beef inventory being at an all-time low, those of us with calves still in our pastures will reap the benefits.

Every spring the talk around cattle farms turns to marketing. When, where and how to. All with the purpose of getting those extra two or three cents that your neighbor didn't get. So far this summer, as long as you have a trailer and some calves to put in it, you'll have a pretty good day at the market. With 600 pound calves bringing close to \$1200 at the weekly slaughter sales around the state, you're going to do okay whenever and wherever you decide to sell.

That being said, below are some steadfast rules of calf marketing that you need to keep in mind when deciding what route you're going to take when it comes time to sell your calves.

1. Worry more about total dollars per calf sold, not price per pound.

The most over-scrutinized number in the cattle business is what price per pound you're getting at the market. The number that cow-calf farmers need to be concerned with is what was the total selling price of their calves. Weight of their calves at weaning time is a much greater factor when it comes time to determine profitability on your farm. If you are not making money, you need to first look in your pastures to see if the problem is with your cows instead of blaming the cattle buyers on sale day.

2. Know the marketing options that are available and the prices they normally return.

So far we have not gotten into the start of the graded and preconditioned calf sales in July, so we don't really know at this time what this year's calf sales will bring. The traditional premiums that buyers are willing to pay for the value-added practices required at these sales may be affected by this unusual market situation. Traditionally however, value added sales will bring the following;

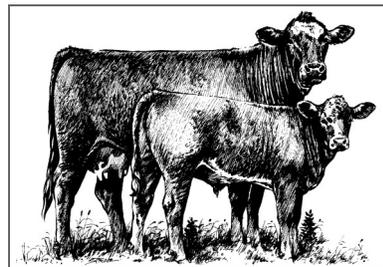
Traditional graded sales- some calf management required.; minimum weight of 300 pounds, one blackleg shot, dehorned, castrated & healed. These sales will normally bring \$5-\$8 per hundredweight over a weekly sale.

Pre-conditioned (BQA) sales- more advanced management required- a full set of vaccinations, calves weaned and bunk broke for minimum of 45 days. These sales will normally bring \$8-\$12 over a weekly sale.

Truckload/direct sales- a wide range of management options are available, but calves are normally preconditioned & vaccinated. Also calves are not premingled at a stockyard so there is less stress on the calves before the buyer takes delivery. Prices will range significantly but usually will bring anywhere from \$12-\$20/cwt over a weekly sale.

3. Finally, select the option that makes sense to your farm each year.

Do not tell yourself that there is only one particular way or time of year to market. Each year brings it's own challenges. Market shifts, weather patterns, feed inventory, etc, can all play a factor in how you market this year versus last. Don't be afraid to make a change if it makes good business sense. The best farmers are the ones that are not afraid to adapt to new situations; Weather patterns, adopting new technology, spreading risk, etc.



4-H Farm Credit Showmanship Circuit

By: Tiffanee Conrad, Livestock Extension Agent with N.C. Cooperative Extension in Richmond County

4-H youth are busy preparing for the start of the 2014 4-H Farm Credit Showmanship Circuit season. They have been training and clipping their animals for the past month. Many of them get their animals as soon as school lets out for the summer. The entire Circuit is proudly sponsored by Carolina Farm Credit and Cape Fear Farm Credit. This funding is used to operate the Circuit. The county shows are in both Farm Credit territories, which makes it a great partnership. The first show will be held in Randolph County on August 2nd. Youth ages 5-19 have the opportunity to compete against other youth from across the region at each of the 12 County Shows between August and the State Fair in October. Youth can show goats, heifers or lambs as part of the Show Circuit. Points are accumulated for placings in showmanship at a series of shows in the South Central area of North Carolina. The Showmen will finish the season at the Farm Credit Showmanship Circuit Banquet held in November.

Youth compete in Showmanship and Confirmation classes at each show. The Showmanship classes are designed to gauge the 4-H'ers knowledge and skill with the animal while Confirmation classes are all about the animal itself. Females will be bred and will continue production on the farm. They are judged on their frame and structure based on how they would carry the extra weight of being pregnant and the stress of milking. Castrated market animals, are judged on the total meat marketability of the animal. Rules and the schedule will be listed on the Stanly County website in July at: <http://stanly.ces.ncsu.edu/>

There are three divisions for all species. First place in each division will win a belt buckle and a banner ribbon, second place will win a banner ribbon, and third place through fifth place will win a tri-fold ribbon. Each youth participant receives a Circuit tee shirt. 4-H Showmen will also win ribbons, trophies, and premium money at each individual show. Some youth put their winnings into the bank to save it for college while others may use it to invest in next year's show animal. There are several college scholarships available for youth to apply for which are strictly for 4-H members or 4-H Showmen.

Many 4-H'ers are currently gathering sponsorship money to pay for their individual county show and to support many of them traveling to the State Fair to show their animals in October. What these youth will learn from showing livestock is only the beginning. They learn leadership skills, animal husbandry, record keeping, self-esteem, and responsibility to name a few. They make friends for life across the state and learn how to communicate with adults and other youth. The future of agriculture lies in our youth, as they are the future farmers, doctors, teachers and agricultural advocates in our community. This is why we want to send a huge thank you to our sponsors and to all the parents, friends and family of the showmen who support them throughout the show season!

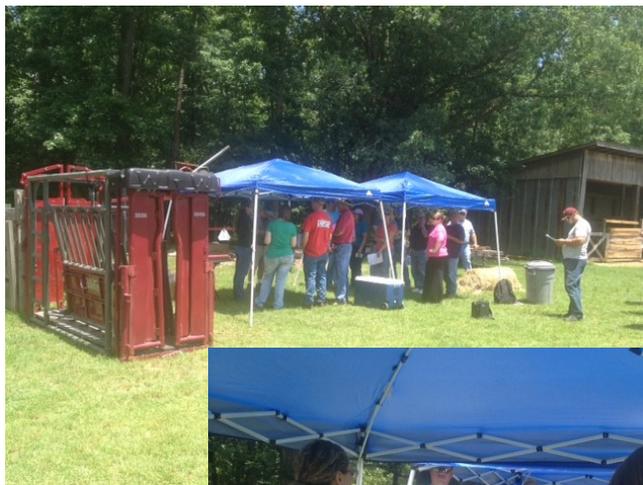
There are also animal related opportunities for those that do not have animals or live in the city. Youth may also participate in livestock judging, skillathon, and quiz bowl. These competitions allow youth to learn about animal equipment and nutrition without them having to actually own an animal. There are also many opportunities to participate in livestock industry youth leadership programs. You can find information about all the youth livestock programs at this website: http://www.cals.ncsu.edu/an_sci/extension/animal/4hyouth/ah4h.html

If you would like information on how to join 4-H or how to start showing animals in the Circuit, please call your local Extension Agent. If you have questions about the Circuit, please call the coordinator, Tiffanee Conrad at 910-997-8255.



Moore County Cattle Field Day Held May 31, 2014 at Horse Creek Farm

Producers from several counties in the Sandhills came out on Saturday to learn about different management techniques for their beef cattle herd.



The group discussed proper fencing techniques, an alternative method to pregnancy check cattle, body condition scoring, and how to understand hay reports as well as sampling procedure.

Lunch was served by the Growing Farmers 4-H Livestock Club!



Participants were able to test their skills and get practice blood drawing for pregnancy checking as well as hay sampling!

☆ Upcoming Dates! ☆

- **July 16, 2014**– State 4-H Livestock Judging Contest – *NCSU Beef Education Unit, Raleigh, NC*
- **July 17, 2014**– State 4-H Skillathon and Quiz Bowl Contest – *NCSU Beef Education Unit*
- **July 23, 2014**– 4-H South Central District Showmanship Clinic– *Blinson Hereford Farm , Buies Creek*
- **July 25, 2014**– Beef BBQ Boot Camp
- **July 28– August 2, 2014**– Southern Region 4-H Horse Championships– *Hunt Horse Complex*
- **August 3-6, 2014**– Youth Beef Industry Tour– Meet in Raleigh then *Across North Carolina*
- **September 4, 2014**– 4-H Livestock Health Certificate Clinic– *Moore County Cooperative Extension*
- **September 13, 2014**– Moore County 4-H Heifer and Goat Show– *Travis Farm, West End, NC*
- **September 23-27, 2014**– Moore County Agriculture Fair– *Moore County Fair Grounds, Carthage*

For more information about any upcoming events please contact Kaitlyn Johnson.

Moore County Cattleman Association Meetings:

All meetings begin at 7pm and are held at the Moore County Ag Center.



- **September 4**– Research Station Updates and Projects– -Dr. Sandy Stewart, Director NCDA & CS Research Station Division
- **October 2**- Topic TBD
- **November 6**- Topic TBD
- **December 4**– Holiday Meal– Bryan Blinson, Director of North Carolina Cattleman's Association, will be on hand to discuss NC Beef Industry Updates and Changes. **PLEASE RSVP to Kaitlyn Johnson at 910-947-3188 or kaitlyn_johnson@ncsu.edu.**