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Beef AI Just Got Easier

Central Missouri cow/calf producers interested in using artificial insemination (AI) and estrus synchronization to increase genetic quality and consistency in their herds now have access to tool and facilities to help. Through grant funding a single stall artificial insemination barn is now available to cow/calf producers in the central Missouri region. The cost is \$25.00 per day which will cover maintenance and upkeep on the barn.

The AI barn keeps cattle quieter during the insemination process, making the insemination process safer and quicker for the inseminator as well. The dark environment the barn provides the cattle makes them easier to handle and inseminate along with providing an indoor environment for the inseminator to work in.

Extension livestock specialists can also assist producers in setting up a synchronization calendar utilizing a planning tool from the Iowa Beef Center. The **Estrus Sync** software helps producers select the most appropriate synchronization protocol for their management and schedule the steps necessary for the protocol to be effective.

To use the Central Missouri AI barn:

- Contact your local livestock specialist or the Callaway County Extension Center (573-642-0755)
- The charge to use the barn is \$25 per day of use
- The barn is located at the Boone County Extension Center
- To pull the barn, a half-ton pickup with a receiver hitch is required. A drop hitch is provided.

Author: Mark Stewart, Livestock Specialist



Bottom Line Tidbits: Changing or Terminating Farm Leases

Although the fall crop harvest is just getting started, farm landlords and tenants wanting to make changes in their lease agreements need to be reviewing the terms of their current rental agreements. Hopefully you have written leases to review. This is a particularly important time of the year because there is typically a lease termination time notification period listed in the terms of a lease. An additional point is many landlords and tenants are unaware that when terminating or changing verbal leases, they must give the other party at least 60 days written notice prior to the end of the lease agreement anniversary.

An advantage of a written lease is it will state the date the lease agreement was made. If you have a verbal lease that has been in existence for several years, it may be difficult to determine the anniversary date. Was your lease agreement entered into on January 1, March 1, or some other date? Remember if either party wants to terminate a verbal farm lease – written notice must be delivered to the other party at least 60 days before the anniversary date of the lease agreement.

So the bottom line is – if you want to terminate a verbal lease, put your intentions in writing and deliver the notice to the other party. For example, if you have a lease with an anniversary date of January 1, the party wishing to terminate the lease should deliver written notice to the other party before the end of October. Again, this is where a written lease would be valuable because it would eliminate the potential debate over the anniversary date of the lease agreement. So if you currently have an oral lease, even if you do not plan to change the terms of the lease, there is no better time than now to put it in writing.

Parman R. Green, Ag Business Management Specialist

Livestock Risk Protection - Lamb

The Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC) Board approved a Livestock Risk Protection (LRP) plan for lamb on September 28, 2006. LRP-Lamb is available to provide price insurance coverage to lamb producers in 27 states. Missouri is one of these states. Historically there has not been price insurance, exchanges offering futures or derivative contracts on lamb prices for lamb producers.

LRP-Lamb is similar in concept to LRP for swine and cattle, offering protection against declines in slaughter lamb prices. Producers are now offered coverage prices based on a statistical model that uses various industry data, such as cutout, slaughter, weight and pelt information, to forecast cash prices at the policy end date. As policies mature, producers receive insurance payments if the cash index, a figure based on actual Agricultural Marketing Service market information, is below the coverage price purchased.

The LRP- Lamb policy contains provisions, known as “circuit breakers”, which allows Risk Management Agency (RMA) to suspend sales when certain restrictions in the policy are triggered. This feature is similar to the LRP-Swine and LRP-Cattle.

LRP-Lamb coverage is offered for 13, 26 and 39 week periods. This pilot program contains limits on sales at \$250,000 in premiums per day and an annual limit of one million head insured. The insurance is available through most local crop insurance agents.

Author: Mary Sobba, Ag Business Specialist

Saving Energy in Livestock Confinement Buildings

Saving energy in livestock confinement buildings takes a different approach than we use in our homes. In homes, we can adjust the thermostat and add insulation and make considerable changes in the amount of energy used. The ventilation required in confinement livestock buildings makes energy conservation more challenging. In 1983, the National Food and Energy Council published a Farm Energy Analysis Program providing good suggestions for saving energy.

With fuel rates are going up everywhere it may be time to blow the dust off the Farm Energy Analysis. Suggestions are divided into no cost, low cost, significant cost and major cost improvements. Following is a summary of major points in this article.

No Cost Maintenance and Management Practices:

- Use ventilation rates that provide air movement for best production. (not too much and not too little)
- Reduce the load on ventilation systems by eliminating excess moisture. (leaky waterers, etc.)
- Routinely clean fan blades and shutters.
- Lubricate motors and fan bearings, inspect belts and adjust for proper tension.

Low Cost Maintenance and Management Practices:

- Select ventilation fans that have high efficiency in terms of cubic feet of air moved per minute for each watt of energy used.
- Monitor building environment closely -- don't run fans unless they are needed.
- Use zone heating to provide brooding areas for young livestock and keep the rest of the room cooler.

Significant Cost Improvements and Investments:

- Add temperature-controlled variable speed fans, two-speed fans or motor-operated shutters.
- Add an air-to-air heat exchanger to warm incoming air in the winter.
- Add an evaporative cooler in summer.

Author: Don Day, Natural Resource Engineer

Deworming Small Ruminants

Meat goats and sheep are increasing in numbers in Central Missouri. Because of our climate, internal parasite control can be challenging. A limited number of deworming products combined with parasite resistance to some of these products is making parasite control in sheep and goats increasingly difficult. Below is some information compiled by Dr. Scott Greiner, Extension Sheep Specialist at Virginia Tech concerning deworming sheep and goats.

Approved dewormers for use in sheep include Levamisole (Levasole and Tramisol), Ivermectin (Ivomec Sheep Drench), Albendazole (Valbazen), and the recently approved Moxidectin (Cydectin Sheep Drench). Keep in mind that all other products are currently not labeled for small ruminants, and must be prescribed and administered under veterinary direction.

Reduce the number of deworming treatments and practice selective deworming through strategies such as the FAMACHA system. Deworm only when necessary to prevent development of drug resistance, and deworm only those animals which warrant deworming.

What is FAMACHA?

This is a program to help monitor parasite loads by examining the eyelids of the animals. Those animals with pale eyelids indicate parasite induced anemia. These animals should be immediately dewormed. Producers may obtain FAMACHA scoring cards by attending a training class. Contact your area livestock specialist for more information on this program.

Following are a few tips for a successful sheep and goat deworming strategy:

- Cull highly susceptible sheep from the flock. Research has shown that a small percentage of the flock hosts the majority of the parasites, and these parasites shed the majority of the eggs.
- Use pasture management to enhance the effectiveness of a deworming program. The practice of “dose and move” can reduce the dependence on anthelmintic (dewormer) drugs to prevent and treat parasites by reducing the number of parasites animals are exposed to. Using the dose and move technique, animals are moved to a clean pasture after treatment. A clean pasture does not ensure that infective larvae are not present, but has infectivity low enough that susceptible animals do not become infected rapidly. A strategic deworming protocol must still be followed after moving the animals.
- Management intensive grazing systems can help reduce parasite infections.
- Lower stocking rates will reduce the intensity of the deworming program. Fewer livestock result in fewer shed worm eggs within a given area, thereby reducing parasite loads. This in turn may reduce the frequency of deworming, and help minimize developed resistance.
- Administer the proper dose. Be sure to estimate the weight of the animals accurately. Dose for the heaviest in the group — not the average. Dosages that are inadequate for the body weight of the animals are not only less effective on decreasing worm loads, but may also enhance parasite resistance to the drugs.
- Rotate dewormers annually. This means that if you used Ivermectin last year, switch to Levamisole this year. Rotating anthelmintics on an every other year basis will help prevent parasites from developing resistance to the product.
- When introducing new animals to the flock, deworm with products from two different drug classes (see Table 1). New animals should be isolated a minimum of 30 days prior to introduction. Mixing untreated animals with treated ones on the deworming program may destroy earlier efforts to minimize worm loads in the flock and potentially introduce resistant worms.

There are three major groups of drugs approved for deworming sheep and goats. These are listed in the table below. It is important to know which drugs are in each group, because once worms become resistant to one member of the group, they will be resistant to the other members of the group.

Table 1. Sheep and Goat Dewormers		
Chemical Name	Class of Drugs	Trade Name
Ivermectin	Macrolide	Ivomec
Moxidectin	Macrolide	Cydectin
Levamisole	Nicotinic	Tramisol
Albendazole	Benzimidazole	Valbasin

Additional information may be obtained at the Maryland Small Ruminant Page at: <http://www.sheepandgoat.com>

Author: Gene Schmitz, Livestock Specialist

Geotextiles Can Help With Mud Problems

Geotextiles can be used to reduce problems in wet and high traffic areas where gravel might be hard to keep in place. Practical applications of geotextiles can be around livestock waterers, feeders, gates and lanes. The material is placed between soil and gravel to prevent the gravel from moving into the soil.

Use of geotextiles can reduce the cost of solving problems in wet areas compared to the cost of pouring concrete or using greater depths of gravel and having to replace it periodically. Using rock over geotextiles reduces the depth of rock that is needed for stability. It may take half the depth of rock than would be needed without the geotextiles.

Your local Natural Resources Conservation Service office may have cost share and specifications for installation of geotextiles. Talk to your local Soil and Water District Board to determine if geotextile fabrics are an approved cost share component.

The following guide from Ohio gives more information on using geotextiles:

<http://ohioline.osu.edu/aex-fact/0304.html>

Another document from Kentucky gives other information:

<http://www.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/aen/aen79/aen79.pdf>

Author: Don Day, Natural Resource Engineer



AG CONNECTION

Ag Connection is published monthly for Central Missouri Region producers. Ag Connection can be found in the Internet at: <http://extension.missouri.edu/agconnection/index.htm>.

Editorial Board: Don Day, Managing Editor; Parman Green, Mark Stewart, Jim Jarman, Todd Lorenz, Wendy Flatt, Mary Sobba, Gene Schmitz, Wayne Crook, Randa Brunkhorst and Jim Quinn.

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