

OKLAHOMA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE—NORTHEAST DISTRICT

# TIMELY TOPICS

Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources

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Photo Credit: Todd Johnson

## **Diseases Associated with Rainy Weather**

*Barry Whitworth, DVM, Area Food/Animal Quality and Health Specialist for Eastern OK*

With record rainfall in Oklahoma, producers have their hands full taking care of their livestock. Unfortunately, wet conditions create additional problems for livestock. Moist damp conditions can lower immunity which makes animals more susceptible to infections. Most illnesses will occur during or shortly after the adverse weather event. However, some diseases may not occur for several months.

When the skin and hooves remain wet for long periods of time, the physical properties of the tissues that are a barrier to microorganisms begin to break down. This results in skin and foot infections developing. The most important thing a producer should do to prevent problems is to pay close attention to their cows during these wet conditions. Any skin lesions found should be treated. At the first sign of lameness, cattle should be examined for any signs of foot rot and treated promptly.

The wet muddy conditions that the animals are dealing with now are stressful. Stress lowers immunity. Young animals are especially vulnerable. Two common diseases that young animals get are pneumonia and diarrhea. Producers should observe their herds closely for any signs of these diseases.

Internal parasites are always a problem in small ruminants, but with all the extra moisture this could be a bad summer for all animals. Nematodes (roundworms) thrive in moisture and warm temperatures. Producers need to keep a close watch on their animals for any signs of parasitism such as anemia, bottle jaw, diarrhea, and rough hair coat. It is a good idea for producers to do fecal egg counts to monitor their herds. Cattle producers may be wise to check for liver flukes. Sheep and goat producers should be routinely using the FAMACHA eye score chart to monitor for internal parasites in their herds. Coccidiosis may be more a problem in young animals at this time due to the rainy conditions. When animals congregate in small areas to avoid the inclement weather, they are more prone to contaminate food and water sources.

With all the standing water, mosquitoes could be a problem this summer. Horse owners should protect their animals by limiting standing water as much as possible and by applying an approved equine insecticide. Horses should also be up to date on West Nile Virus, Eastern Encephalitis Virus, and Western Encephalitis Virus vaccinations.

Another disease to be aware of is leptospirosis. With abundance of water, animals may drink from sources that are contaminated with *Leptospira* organism. Cattle with leptospirosis will have a fever and poor appetite. Severely infected animals will develop anemia, jaundice, and may have dark urine. Producers need to vaccinate their cattle for *Leptospira*. Any sick animals will need to be treated. They should consult with their veterinarian for the best treatment options.

Lastly, two diseases that tend to follow flooding events are blackleg and anthrax. Outbreaks of both diseases tend to occur in the summer following flooding events. Flood waters disturb the soil which expose the spores. The spores may be carried by the flood waters to areas where cattle graze. The spores in the grass may be ingested by livestock. This is especially true if the grass becomes short due to over grazing or dry conditions. The most common clinical sign for the two diseases is sudden death. Producers who lose animals without signs of illness should contact their local veterinarian for a diagnosis.

For additional information about the above diseases, producers should contact their local veterinarian or local Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service County Educator.

## Leaving Money on the Table with Calf Sales?

*Earl Ward, Area Livestock Specialist*

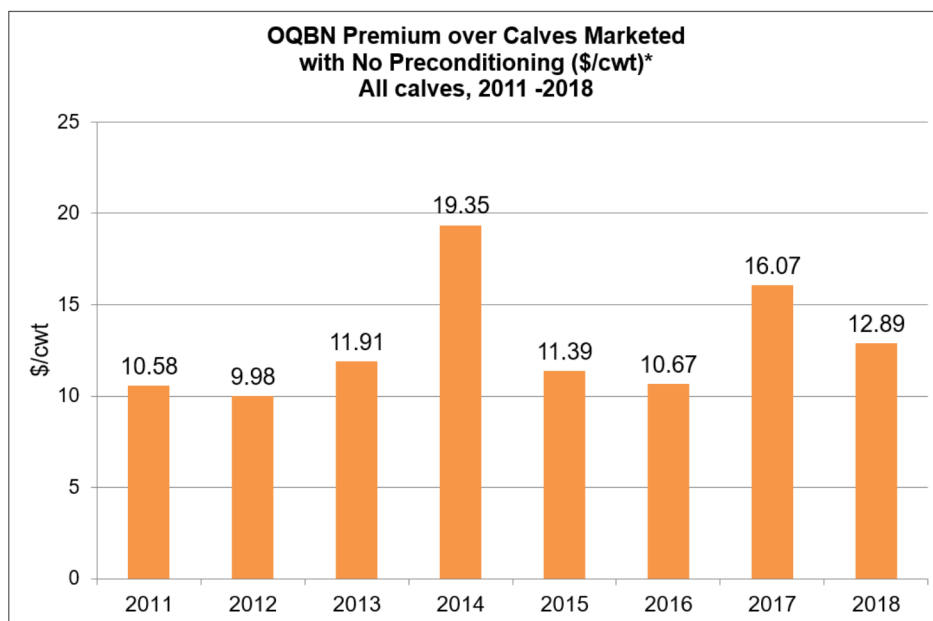
Seventy-nine percent of the cow/calf farms in our country own less than 50 cows, yet this group of ranchers own 28.7% of all the beef cows. Some of these producers consider themselves “hobby ranchers” because only five percent are looking toward this production to be their primary income, 78% of these producers are looking for a supplemental income source, and the other 17% report that they do it for other reasons. Most of these “hobby ranchers” say that they don’t necessarily need the operation to make money, but just not lose money. I say it is a lot more fun to do this work if it pays a dividend. Sixty percent of producers with less than 50 cows market their calves through a conventional auction and there are management practices that we can perform to make our calves more attractive to buyers sitting in that auction.

The first step we could take is narrowing down our calving season. The 2007 APHIS report showed that 55% of beef farms had a year-round calving season. For smaller producers it would be all but impossible to market a group of calves that are of the same sex, color, and size in a year round calving system. By pulling bulls throughout the year, a producer could narrow down their calving season and have the potential to sell larger groups of calves. Selling larger lots of calves will increase the price per head.

The next step would be to make sure to castrate the bull calves. Unless you plan on selling your male calves for bull prospects then you should be castrating them as early as possible. The calf’s stress level is minimum if he is able to let Momma nurse him back to health. Historically steer calves have always brought more money than bull calves. Since January 2014 the average price advantage was \$15.86 per hundred weight for a 500-550 pound steer versus bull calves. That would calculate out to \$79.31 per head difference. It is true that a bull calf will gain more weight than a steer calf, but research has shown that an early castrated steer calf with a growth implant will gain as much as a bull calves prior to weaning and will perform much better post weaning.

Dehorning calves has shown to have a financial benefit of anywhere from \$3.15 - \$5.25 per hundred weight, which translates to \$16.54 - \$27.56 per 525 pound calf. This solution could be as easy as picking a polled bull. Even a calf with small scurs will be discounted in an auction setting.

The biggest impact a small producer could have on their calf prices would be to wean and precondition their calves. At every cattle auction, the seller would claim “these calves have all been vaccinated and weaned” without any verification. Therefore enrolling your calves in a wean/vaccination program will provide confirmation that your calves healthy and ready to grow. Most of these programs make sure that the producer’s calves have been given two rounds of vaccinations, bulls have been castrated, any horns have been removed, and been weaned for at least 45 days.



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\*Premiums calculated as difference in weighted average prices at same sale



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Research has shown that calves need at least 45 days to get over the stress of weaning and any illness that might come. Doing all of this work on the ranch provides the potential of additional revenue back to the operation. The Oklahoma Quality Beef Network is a wean/vac program offered through OSU Extension that provides unbiased, third-party verification of the vaccination records, wean date, and ensures healthy calves are being sold no matter how big or small the cow/calf operation is. Year after year OQBN has shown a premium to those animals enrolled in the program. In 2018 OQBN calves averaged \$12.89 per hundred weight over calves market with no preconditioning. This translates to almost \$65 per head advantage because you are capturing the price advantage of dehorning, castrating, vaccinating, and weaning.

So quit leaving money on the table when it comes to marketing your calves. Do what is right for your calves and the beef industry by making your calves more attractive to those buyers who are looking to fill pot loads of calves. If you have any questions about these management practices or OQBN please see your county's OSU Extension office.

## **Assistance for Flood Damages—Livestock**

*Scott Clawson, Area Ag Economics Specialist*

If it's not one thing, it's another. Droughts, ice, tornados, and all the other bells and whistles of living in Oklahoma make their presence known from year to year. Now we have flood waters to deal with. These contrary weather conditions are plaguing much of the agriculture community. The Midwest corn and soybean crops are behind the 8-ball, and here in northeast Oklahoma the impact of flood waters on pastures and livestock will be significant in places. Fortunately, there are two programs via USDA that may provide some relief.

First is the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP). In short, LIP is designed to cover livestock mortality because of catastrophic events. Floods in this case. Commercial livestock that died because of the recent floods and are deemed eligible for the program could be in line for a payment. Payments are calculated at 75% of fair market value and adjusted for normal mortality rates. These prices for beef cattle, after the 75% adjustment, are shown below. Two important issues need to be addressed sooner than later. The first is that producers need

2019 LIP Adjusted Payment Rates	
Description	2019 Payment Rate
Bulls	\$1,191.93
Cows	\$916.87
Calves under 400 lbs.	\$471.80
400-799 lbs.	\$661.19
800 lbs. +	\$969.18
Source: <a href="https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdafiles/FactSheets/2019/livestock_indemnity_program-fact_sheet.pdf">https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdafiles/FactSheets/2019/livestock_indemnity_program-fact_sheet.pdf</a>	

to contact their FSA office in the first 30 days of the loss then submit the application within 60 days. The second is that documentation is needed of the loss. More simply put, contact your local FSA office as soon as possible if you have experienced livestock losses to determine eligibility and documentation needs.

Second is the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP). Many producers will remember, and maybe smile a bit, the 2014 payments from the Livestock Forage Program. That program is designed to tackle forage and grazing losses due to drought. ELAP is designed to provide support in areas not covered by LFP and LIP. Applied to our current situation, this is for grazing losses because of floods. This program follows the same initial reporting timeframe as LIP, 30 days to file a notice of loss.

In both cases, contact your local FSA office to discuss your eligibility and how these apply to your situation. For information on livestock or forage management steps, contact your local OSU Extension Educator.



## Oklahoma Hay Market Report

### Eastern Oklahoma

June 10, 2019

Size	Description	Price
4x5	Mixed grass	\$50-65

via usda ams



## Fertilizer Prices

### NE District

	\$/ton	\$/ton	\$/ton
Fertilizer	Average	High	Low
Urea	\$433	\$435.00	\$431.00
DAP	\$448	\$461.00	\$435.00
Potash	\$385	\$385.00	\$385.00

2 dealer average as of 6/10/19



## Value of Gain Calculation

### OK Weighted Average Summary 6/7/19

Weight	\$/lb	Value/hd	Added lb.	Added \$	\$/lb Added
371	\$ 1.8031	\$ 668.95			
429	\$ 1.6454	\$ 705.88	58	\$ 36.93	\$ 0.64
474	\$ 1.5811	\$ 749.44	45	\$ 43.56	\$ 0.97
525	\$ 1.5310	\$ 803.78	51	\$ 54.33	\$ 1.07
569	\$ 1.5190	\$ 864.31	44	\$ 60.54	\$ 1.38
621	\$ 1.4744	\$ 915.60	52	\$ 51.29	\$ 0.99
725	\$ 1.3722	\$ 994.85	104	\$ 79.24	\$ 0.76
767	\$ 1.3459	\$ 1,032.31	42	\$ 37.46	\$ 0.89
825	\$ 1.2938	\$ 1,067.39	58	\$ 35.08	\$ 0.60
874	\$ 1.2375	\$ 1,081.58	49	\$ 14.19	\$ 0.29
926	\$ 1.2027	\$ 1,113.70	52	\$ 32.13	\$ 0.62
966	\$ 1.1729	\$ 1,133.02	40	\$ 19.32	\$ 0.48
1018	\$ 1.1270	\$ 1,147.29	52	\$ 14.26	\$ 0.27

#### Long Stocker Run

Starting	
371	\$ 668.95
Ending	
966	\$ 1,133.02
Total Gain	Δ Value
595	\$ 464.07
VOG	
\$ 0.78	

#### Short Stocker Run

Starting	
371	\$ 668.95
Ending	
525	\$ 803.78
Total Gain	Δ Value
154	\$ 134.82
VOG	
\$ 0.88	

#### Heavy Stocker Run

Starting	
725	\$ 994.85
Ending	
966	\$ 1,133.02
Total Gain	Δ Value
241	\$ 138.18
VOG	
\$ 0.57	



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