

THE LEADING EDGE

CATTLEMAN

Mississippi/Alabama Cattle Producers



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Leading Edge Cattleman Program Mission Statement:
"To improve profitability, management skills, and cattle of beef producers in participating counties."

 County Cattlemen's Association President

 Extension Agent

Leading Edge Participating Counties:

<u>Alabama</u>	<u>Mississippi</u>
Bibb	Chickasaw
Fayette	Clay
Greene	Lee
Hale	Lowndes
Lamar	Monroe
Pickens	Noxubee
Sumter	Oktibbeha
Walker	Webster
Tuscaloosa	Winston
Marion	Calhoun

Leading Edge Continues

Ed Williams
 Oktibbeha County Extension Director
 Starkville, MS

Welcome to the second and last issue of Leading Edge Cattleman for the 2005 Year. We have fallen behind in our commitment to have four issues per year and we apologize. As many of you know there have been many changes with Extension in both Mississippi and Alabama that have taken time and resources. That said we plan to redouble our efforts to get you timely information that you can use in the quarters to come.

Fenceline Weaning

Fall weaning is well underway across the Southeast. Many producers have weaned and sold calves by now. Perhaps it would be a good time to rethink our weaning strategies for the next calf crop, options that could improve the number of pounds weaned by 20 pounds or more.

In his weekly newsletter September 23, 2005, Dr. Glenn Selk of Oklahoma State University points to some California researchers who weaned calves with only a fence separating them from their dams. Termed "fenceline weaning", the practice shows promise for increasing pounds of weaned calves.

When these calves were compared to calves weaned totally separated from their dams

several differences in behavior and outcome were observed.

First, calf behaviors were different in the two groups. Both groups of calves were monitored for five days following weaning. These calves and their mamas spent about 60% and 40% of their time, respectively, within 10 feet of the fence during the first two days of the weaning process. During the first 3 days, the fenceline-weaned calves bawled and walked less, and ate and rested more. The differences disappeared in behavior with separated calves by the fourth day.

Beginning 7 days after weaning, all calves were managed together. After 2 weeks, fenceline-weaned calves had gained 23 pounds more than the separate-weaned calves. This difference persisted. After 10 weeks, fenceline-weaned calves had gained 110 pounds (1.57 lb/day), compared to 84 pounds (1.20 lb/day) for separate-weaned calves.

No differences were reported in incidence of sickness between the two groups. However, it is generally observed that calves that eat more during the first days after weaning stay healthier.

According to Selk, "A follow-up study demonstrated similar advantages of fenceline contact when calves were weaned under drylot conditions and their dams had access to pasture." Selk recommends considering fenceline-weaning as a management practice. Dr. Selk cites his information source as Price et.al. [Abstracts 2002 Western Section of American Society of Animal Science.](#)



2005
Mississippi
BCIA Fall Bull
Sale

Dr. Jane Parish
MSU Extension Beef
Specialist



Do not miss the Mississippi Beef Cattle Improvement Association annual fall bull sale on Thursday, November 10, 2005 at the Hinds Community College Bull Sale Facility in Raymond. Bulls will be available for viewing starting the afternoon of November 9, and the sale starts on November 10 at noon. The BCIA sale highlights many of the successful AI breeding programs in Mississippi. Bull breeds offered in the 2005 sale include Angus, Charolais, Gelbvieh, Hereford, Santa Gertrudis, and Simmental.

This sale is a great opportunity to acquire genetics from sons of some of the leading AI sires in the country. For catalogs or more information on the BCIA bull sale go to http://msucares.com/livestock/beef/mbcia/bcia_bullsale.html or call Jane Parish at (662) 325-7466.

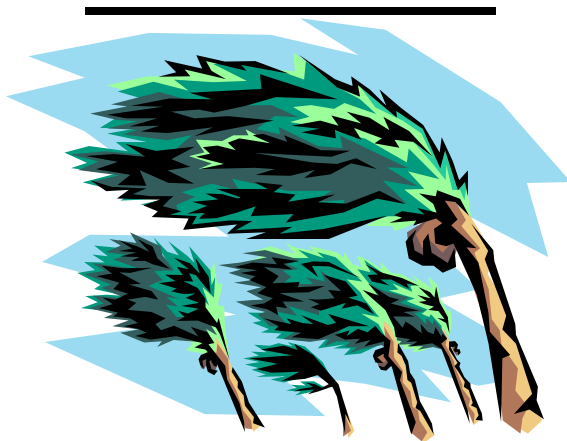
Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station Annual Production Sale
Thursday, November 17, 2005
MSU Agricenter/Horse Park, Mississippi State, MS; Horse Sale 10:00 a.m., Complementary lunch at 12:00 noon, Cattle Sale 1:00 p.m.

The MAFES Annual Production Sale will feature registered Angus, Hereford and Charolais bulls from the MSU research herds. Bred commercial heifers from

MAFES Branch Stations throughout Mississippi will sell following the bulls. The horse offering includes registered Quarter Horses and Thoroughbreds. For a catalog or cattle information contact Jane Parish or Blair McKinley at (662) 325-3515. For horse information contact Peter Ryan at (662) 325-2938. Cattle sale information is available online at

<http://msucares.com/livestock/beef/mafesbeef.html>

and horse sale information is available at <http://www.msstate.edu/research/equine>



Livestock Hurricane Recovery Website

Livestock-related hurricane relief and recovery information is posted online on the Mississippi State University Extension Service beef cattle website at

<http://msucares.com/livestock/beef/hurricane.html>

This website contains public service announcements, contact information for many organizations assisting in livestock relief and recovery efforts, livestock disaster publications, updated answers to frequently asked questions, and press releases relevant to beef cattle producers. For example, information on routing of donations and supplies, USDA Farm Service Agency disaster area declaration information, and animal shelter information is kept current on this website

Cattlemen's Exchange

"Lively discussions on topics that matter to producers."



Cattlemen's Exchange is a joint venture between the Mississippi State University Extension Service and the Mississippi Beef Cattle Improvement Association. Cattlemen's Exchange groups are located throughout Mississippi and meet on a regular basis.

This program is designed to address in-depth issues and management practices for more progressive beef cattle producers. Meetings are typically held once a month, and topics for discussion are based on input from producers at the previous meeting. These meetings are very interactive, and there are no meals or refreshments. Group marketing and purchasing efforts are just some of the potential outcomes of this unique educational program.

The website for more information is:

<http://msucares.com/livestock/beef/exchange.html>

Section 18 Granted for Maverick Herbicide

Dr. John Byrd
MSU Extension Weed Specialist

EPA has granted the section 18 label request for Maverick use on bermudagrass and bahiagrass pastures to control johnsongrass in Mississippi. Since EPA felt the occurrence of purple and yellow nutsedge and other sedges in pastures "has not met the criteria for an emergency

situation," they denied the request to also use Maverick for sedge and nutsedge control. Treated pastures should contain johnsongrass prior to treatment.

Maverick can be applied at 1.33 oz product per acre and may be treated twice each season with a minimum of 40 days between applications. The maximum amount applied should not exceed 2.66 oz per acre. Do not graze or harvest hay within 14 days after application. Treated fields can only be rotated to wheat. A maximum of 10,000 acres can be treated in Mississippi. Applications can be made by ground equipment only.

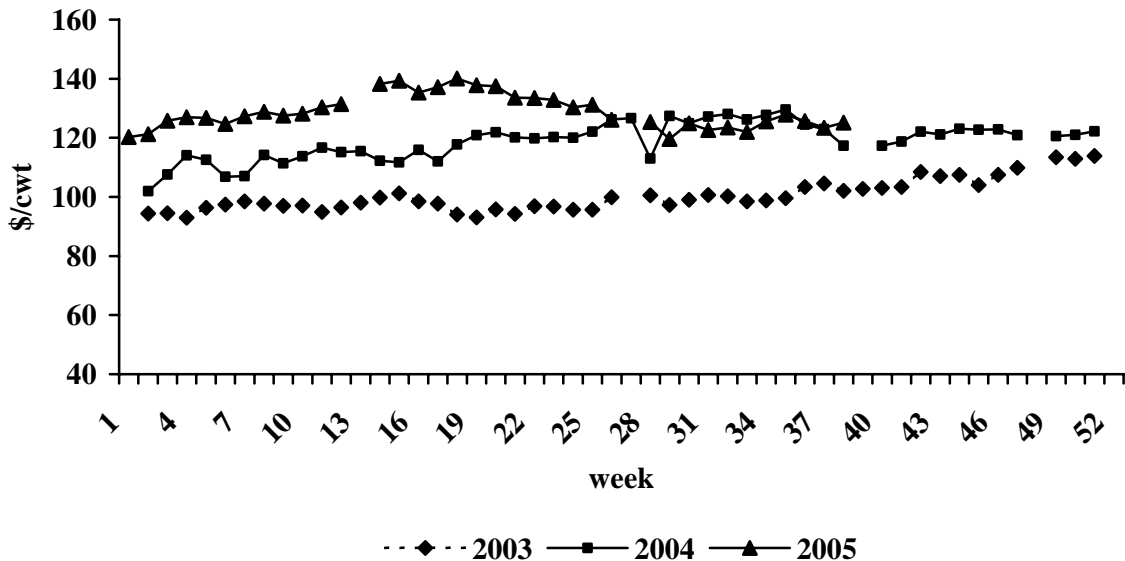


Cattle Market Situation and Outlook

by Dr. John Anderson
MSU Extension Service
Agricultural Economist

Cattle prices so far through 2005 have remained quite strong at all levels of the industry. Healthy demand for beef and historically low cattle numbers continue to support cattle prices at relatively high levels. Through the third week of September, feeder steer prices (700 – 750 pounds) in Alabama averaged \$103.55 per hundredweight. Stocker steer prices (450 – 500 pounds) over that same period averaged \$128.82 per hundredweight. Figure 1 shows weekly average calf prices for 2005 compared with the previous two years. Prices have come down some from highs established in late spring but have been remarkably stable (actually improving slightly) through August and September.

Figure 1. Weekly average prices for 450 – 500 pound steers at Alabama auctions: 2003 – 2005



Currently, futures markets continue to reflect the market's expectations for continued high prices. During the last week of September, several delivery months for both Live Cattle and Feeder Cattle futures contracts reached new life-of-contract highs. Aggressive marketings by feedlots in August and September have kept market-ready fed cattle numbers current.

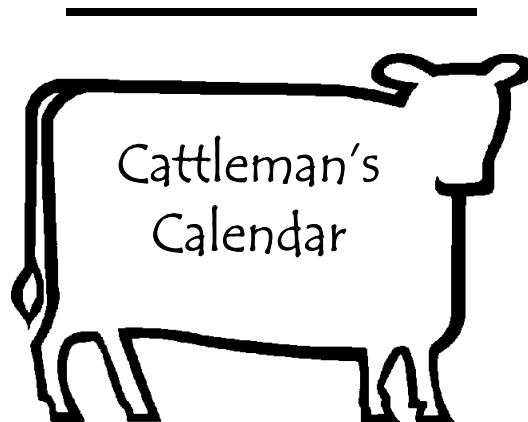
Feeder cattle prices have also been supported by steadily declining corn prices. At the same time cattle futures contracts were setting new contract highs, December Corn futures were establishing new life-of-contract low prices. Despite poor growing conditions in Illinois and Missouri, the national corn crop is turning out to be very large. This should help to keep feed prices relatively low throughout the coming marketing year.

With low feed prices, a small calf crop, and relatively stable wholesale beef prices, calf prices should remain good throughout the fall. Prospects for good wheat pasture grazing in Oklahoma will also provide good support for prices on grazing-type calves. While these high prices are very good for cow/calf producers, they are likely to keep margins on cattle grazing and feeding very tight. However, this has basically been the situation for those sectors of the industry since at least last fall.

Looking a bit longer term, with brood cow numbers headed up, next year's calf crop should be bigger than this year's. Continued herd expansion will continue to keep some heifers off of the market, meaning that the slightly larger calf crop may not have that big of an impact on available feeder cattle supplies. Still, the effects of herd expansion on supply will probably be felt, at least to a small degree, as early as next year. It won't be surprising if 2005 is the best year that cow/calf producers see in a while, though 2006 should still be very good by any historic measure. Of course, a lot of things can happen to influence the market, possibly offsetting the effect of increased cattle numbers.

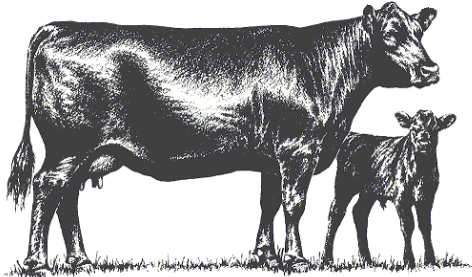
On the demand side, one big unresolved issue is trade with Japan. Beef exports remain well below pre-BSE levels. Getting an agreement with Japan is a key step in getting exports back to something ap-

proaching a normal level. An agreement will come eventually, and when it does, it will be a positive factor for cattle prices. Just how positive depends on how quickly Japanese consumers return to US beef once access to that market is restored.



- **Oct. 5-16 Mississippi State Fair**, Jackson, MS
- **Oct. 7-8 Cow Creek Ranch Bull Sale**, Aliceville, AL
- **Oct. 15 Grandview, Triple H Opportunities for the Future 2005**, Louisville, MS
- **Oct. 15 Hays Bros. Angus Fall Gathering Sale**, Arcadia, LA
- **Oct. 22 Debter Hereford Farm Production Sale**, Horton, AL
- **Oct. 27-29 MSU Artificial Insemination Short Course**, Prairie Research Unit, Prairie, MS (limited to 25 participants, contact Mike Howell at 662-566-2201)
- **Oct. 29 Kingstree Ranch Production Sale**, Carthage, TX
- **Nov. 1,8,15 Louisiana-Mississippi-Alabama Beef Cattle Genetics Short Course**, 6-9 pm, hosted over interactive video network in selected locations. Nationally known experts from six states. Registration is \$15. Contacts: Alabama – Lisa Kriese-Anderson phone (334) 844-1561 or email

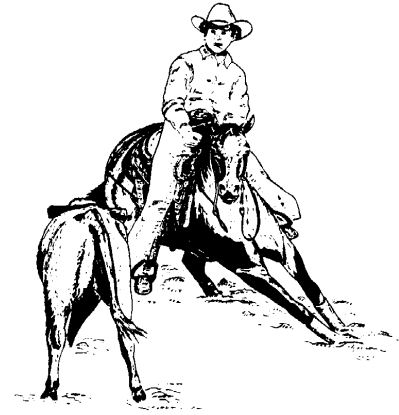
kriesla@auburn.edu; Mississippi Blair McKinley/Jane Parish phone (662) 325-3691/ 325-7466 or email bmckinley@ads.msstate.edu or jparish@ads.msstate.edu



- **Nov. 3 Grandview Plantation Bull Sale**, Como, MS
- **Nov. 7 Three Trees & Twin Valley Bull Sale**, Woodbury, GA
- **Nov. 10 BCIA Bull Sale**, 12 noon, Raymond, MS
- **Nov. 17, Mississippi State University MAFES Production Sale**, Horses at 10 a.m., Beef Sale at 1 p.m., MSU Agri-Center, Angus, Charolais and Hereford bulls and commercial bred heifers. call 325-3515 or go to website (all one line): <http://msucares.com/livestock/beef/mafesbeef.html>
- **April 18-21, 2006 (national meeting) the Beef Improvement Federation Annual Convention**, Pearl River Resort, Choctaw, MS, contact Dr. Jane Parish or Blair McKinley, 325-3515.

BEEF IMPROVEMENT FEDERATION

Representing 40
State and National
Beef Organizations



Local News and Events

(Fill in you local info here)