

Mississippi Beef Cattle Improvement Association

Mississippi Beef Cattle Improvement Association—Productivity and Quality



Upcoming events:

- October 12—Cattlemen's Exchange: EPDs and Sire Selection, Winona, MS, EE Ranches Cafeteria, 7:00 p.m.
- October 16—Beef Cattle Field Day, South Mississippi Experiment Station, White Sand Unit, Poplarville, MS, 9:00 a.m.
- October 18—Cattlemen's Exchange: Genetics and Reproduction, Verona, MS, North MS Research & Extension Center
- October 21-22—North Mississippi Grazing School, Prairie, MS
- October 22-24—Artificial Insemination Short Course, Prairie, MS
- October 26—Hinds Community College Bull Test begins
- October 28—Cattlemen's Exchange: Initial meeting, Clarke/Lauderdale County, Meridian, MS, Stockyards, 6:30 p.m.
- November 1—Cattlemen's Exchange: Initial meeting, Covington/Jeff Davis/Simpson County, Collins, MS, Covington County Extension office, 6:00 p.m.
- November 11—Fall BCIA Bull Sale, Hinds Community College Sales Facility, Raymond, MS, 12:00 p.m.
- November 15—Cattlemen's Exchange: Forages, Jones/Perry County, Calhoun, MS, Community Center, 6:30 p.m.
- November 18—Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station annual production sale, AgriCenter, Mississippi State University

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BCIA Bull Sale to Feature 47 Performance Backed Bulls

The Fall 2004 Mississippi BCIA Bull Sale is set for Thursday, November 11 at 12:00 noon at the bull sale facility at Hinds Community College in Raymond. Bulls will be available for viewing starting Wednesday afternoon on November 10. The Hinds Community College Ag Club will offer hamburgers for sale for lunch on sale day.

The sale will feature 47 bulls from across the state. Breeds of bulls will include 38 Angus, 7 Hereford, 1 Charolais, and 1 Red Angus. Catalogs are now available online on the BCIA website at http://msucares.com/livestock/beef/mbcia/bcia_bullsale.html. Print copies of the catalog are being mailed out this month. To request a catalog, contact Jane Parish or Blair McKinley at 662-325-3516.

BCIA members are encouraged to post sale flyers and assist in promoting the sale. Special thanks goes out to Hinds Community College for their help with the sale and to Steve Pittman and Mississippi Serum Distributors, Inc. in Jackson for donating ear tags for the sale.



Consignors

- Monogram Farms
- Wayne Hughey
- Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station
- Evans Angus Farm
- Boyles Farm
- Richardson Angus Farm
- Carson Farms
- Woodpile Ranch
- McDaniel Farm
- Ingram Cattle Company
- Waggoner Farms
- Unity Creek Farm

Cattle Short Reproduction Short Course Planned for January

The Mississippi State University Extension Service will conduct a Cattle Reproduction Short Course for beef and dairy producers in January. This day and a half long short course will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 11, 2005 and from 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, January 12, 2005. It will be broadcast over interactive video from Mississippi State University to distance education sites throughout Mississippi. Topics will include reproduc-

tive diseases, calving management, estrous cycle, estrus synchronization, heat detection, artificial insemination, heifer development, bull fertility and management, fall versus spring calving, and developing a controlled breeding season. Call Animal and Dairy Sciences Extension at 662-325-3516 for a list of distance education sites and registration information. Registration forms will appear in the November BCIA newsletter. The registration deadline is January 4, 2005.

Annual Cow Cost—According to Cattlemen’s Exchange



Are your cows paying their way?

If you have not attending a multi-county Cattlemen’s Exchange meeting yet, it is worth checking out. These interactive producer groups are cropping up around the state with Extension and BCIA facilitators helping to guide discussions and provide expertise where appropriate. Each local group decides what topic or topics will be the focus of discussion at the meetings. Producers then share ideas and ask each other questions about their operations in a roundtable format.

The Verona-based group is the longest running Cattlemen’s Exchange program. It encompasses several counties and has been meeting once a month for well over a year now. Starting in July, producers in Montgomery and surrounding counties began meeting in Winona on the second Tuesday of the month. The newly formed Jones/Perry County group kicked off its first meeting in Calhoun tackling cost of production. Two additional Cattlemen’s Exchange groups Clarke/Lauderdale Counties and Covington/Jeff Davis/Simpson Counties are slated to hold initial meetings this fall.

Cost of production

One topic that has been covered recently at three of the Cattlemen’s Exchange groups (Winona, Verona, and Calhoun) is cost of production. Each group came up with a list of expense categories for their operations. Then they decided as a group what they thought they spent annually per cow in each category.

Here are some of the results.

	<u>Winona</u>	<u>Calhoun</u>
Feed	\$60	\$40
Fertilizer	\$50	\$45
Lime	\$10	—
Fencing	\$10	\$2
Water	—	\$4
Soil Test	\$0.25	—
Seed	\$15	\$18
Chemicals	\$6	\$10
Land	\$40	\$5

“... reducing winter feed costs was quickly identified as a good place to start (lowering production costs).”

Equipment	\$100	\$50
Bull	\$15	\$10
Hay Rings	\$2	—
Feed Bunks	\$3	—
Mineral	\$25	\$12
Hay	\$100	\$45
Fuel	\$10	\$6
Facilities	\$20	—
Fly Control	\$3	—
Vet. Medicine	\$25	\$20
Repairs	—	\$10
Supplies	—	\$5
Insurance	—	\$5
Commission	—	\$20
Beef Checkoff	—	\$1

Other cost items that were discussed included labor, advertising, and death loss. The cost numbers generated at the Cattlemen’s Exchange group discussions are ballpark figures. Yet they still point out some interesting things. 1) Nutrition related costs make up a significant percentage of cash outlays. 2) There can be wide variation in costs from one farm to the next.

Do I really want to know?

One comment that came up as each group started talking about cost of production was whether or not they really wanted to know how much they were spending on each cow each year. The guesses up front on annual cow cost ranged from \$150 to well over \$650. The total estimated annual cow cost was \$530 for Winona and \$306 for Calhoun. The Verona group estimated annual cow cost at \$616. Of course, these values are group estimates. Actual annual cow costs will vary from operation to operation depending on resources and management. By evaluating production and financial records, each producer can determine annual cow cost and identify areas where efficiency can be improved.

Areas to cut costs

When the Winona group totaled up their pro-

Annual Cow Cost (Cont.)

duction costs and looked at places to lower expenditures, reducing winter feed costs was quickly identified as a good place to start. Hay and protein/energy supplementation alone account for roughly \$190 of annual cow cost according to the Verona group. Practical ways to reduce winter feed cost include implementing better grazing management and reducing hay storage and feeding waste. Matching cool-season forage production plans to animal needs is another approach that can help manage winter feeding expenditures.

Equipment expenditures were an area of concern identified by all three groups. It was generally agreed upon that certain equipment items were more essential than others. Pros and cons of equipment ownership were discussed. Cost of hay production versus cost and availability of hay for purchase was addressed as well.

BCIA Membership Update

Membership in Mississippi BCIA has increased throughout the year. Current paid membership totals for 2004 are as follows:

<u>County</u>	<u># of Members</u>
Attala	2
Calhoun	2
Carroll	3
Chickasaw	2
Clarke	1
Copiah	2
Forrest	1
Greene	1
Hinds	4
Jefferson	1
Lauderdale	1
Lawrence	2
Lee	1
Leflore	1
Madison	2
Marion	1
Monroe	1
Montgomery	2
Neshoba	3
Newton	1

Production versus profitability

Of course, cost of production is only one side of the equation. The income side also influences profitability. A focus on increased production does not always equate to increased profitability. Bigger is not always better if it does not more than cover additional costs incurred.

Production efficiency and value are important determinants of profitability. Ultimately a question that should be asked is, "Is each cow paying her way and contributing to the profitability of the operation?". It is the bottom line when expenses are subtracted from returns that determines how effectively dollars are spent. Increasing the value of production may justify additional expenses. The only way to know is to keep track of costs and returns and evaluate the operation using this information.

"... Production efficiency and value are important determinants of profitability."

Oktibbeha	4
Pike	1
Prentiss	2
Rankin	1
Smith	1
Tippah	1
Walthall	2
Wilkinson	1
Yalobusha	1
Tangipahoa Parish, LA	<u>1</u>
Total	49

These members are located throughout the state and represent both commercial operations along with nine different breeds of seedstock cattle.

Our association continues to look for new ways to educate and serve commercial and seedstock beef cattle producers in Mississippi. Mississippi BCIA programs and activities are based on producer input and needs. Recently launched local Cattlemen's Exchange groups are just one example of this. Ideas on how Mississippi BCIA can better serve its membership are always welcome.



Mississippi BCIA serves both commercial and seedstock producers across the state.

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Send questions or comments about this newsletter to Jane Parish, Extension Beef Specialist, Mississippi State University Extension Service



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Visit MBCIA online at
<http://msucares.com/livestock/beef/mbcia/>

MBCIA Membership Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

County: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

(Check one) Seedstock: Commercial:

Cattle breed(s): _____

Completed applications and \$5 annual dues payable to Mississippi BCIA should be mailed to:

Mississippi Beef Cattle Improvement Association
c/o Jane Parish, Extension Beef Specialist
Box 9815, Mississippi State, MS 39762

BCIA Management Calendar—October 2004

GENERAL

Summer pasture quality rapidly declines from now til frost. Graze permanent summer pastures closely, and plant winter forages where appropriate. Watch nutrition closely when grazing stalks and stubble and be prepared to supplement. Do not feed urea on soybean stubble. Remove cattle from sorghum crops after the first frost because of the risk of prussic acid poisoning. Keep proper free-choice minerals and clean water available for cattle at all times. Continue monitoring supplemental feed prices. Corn and by-product feeds such as cottonseed are often less expensive in the fall. Test the quality of stored forages if not already done. Watch body condition, and group the herd into winter-feeding groups such as mature cows with average condition, thin mature cows, and first-calf heifers. Match forage and feeding programs to the nutritional needs of each group. Keep up with lime and fertilizer needs. Maintain a complete herd health program in consultation with a veterinarian including internal and external parasite control and vaccinations. Remove any remaining fly tags. Continue good production and financial record keeping.

SPRING CALVING—January, February, March

Pregnancy check herd females identifying and culling less productive or problem cattle. Finish weaning late calves using weaning strategies that minimize calf stress. Implement calf preconditioning, marketing, or retained ownership plans as appropriate considering seasonal price risks and breakevens on calves. Weigh calves and calculate adjusted weaning weights and ratios. Seedstock producers

should send weaning records to breed associations for processing. Assess weaning percentage (calves weaned/cows exposed to breeding) and cow efficiency (calf weight/cow weight). Identify and cull bulls that have sired calf groups that are well below the herd average for growth performance and carcass traits. Implement a nutritional program to get thin cows in proper body condition before next calving. Use weaning weights to put a heifer selection and development program in action to reach target breeding weights (65% of expected mature weight) by the start of the next breeding season. Heifers will likely need to grow at a rate of 1 to 1.5 lbs. per day. Separate bred heifers from the cows and provide adequate supplemental nutrition as fall forage quality declines. Establish permanent identification (tattoos or brands) for bred heifers that will remain in the herd.

FALL CALVING—October, November, December

Keep calving supplies on hand, including calf identification tags and obstetric equipment. Move fall-calving heifers and cows close to handling facilities and observe cattle frequently. After calving, plan to move cow-calf pairs to clean pasture. Tag, castrate, dehorn, and implant calves as appropriate. Consult with a veterinarian for scheduling pre-breeding vaccination needs. Weigh yearling cattle and calculate adjusted weights and ratios. Plan for herd sire needs by evaluating bulls and arranging breeding soundness exams. Consider the Fall 2004 BCIA Bull Sale as a source of bulls with performance information. The sale is scheduled for noon on November 11, 2004 at the Hinds Community College Sales Facility in Raymond.