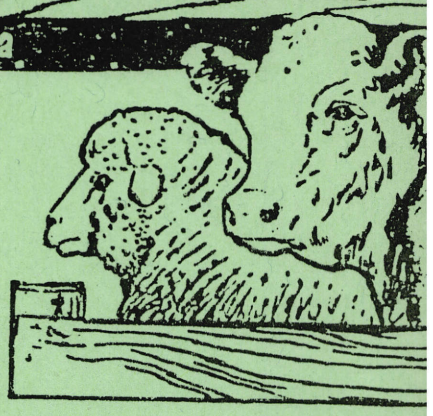
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EXCELLENCE IN RANGE MANAGEMENT

Andy McBride, local Ferndale rancher, was awarded the Excellence in Range Management Award at the California Cattlemen's State Convention in Sacramento. Jim Clawson, past president of the California Section of the Society for Range Management (SRM), presented the placard to Walt Giacomini, as Andy McBride wasn't able to attend the Convention.

Each year the California Section of SRM recognizes a rancher for excellence in range management. These are ranchers that demonstrate exceptional skill and knowledge in practicing sound stewardship of their rangelands and other grazing lands.

Andy McBride was an early pioneer in controlled grazing on rangeland. He credits his early interest in controlled grazing to Allan Savory, an international range consultant, who spoke at the International Stockmen's School. Using controlled grazing Andy has increased his stocking rate by 25% and reduced brush encroachment by 10%. Using this method of grazing he has improved both the quality and quantity of his pasture.

Andy McBride has shared his time and knowledge with other ranchers in California and Oregon. There have been many ranchers, Extension, and Society for Ranch Management tours on McBride Ranches. McBride Ranches have also hosted many Humboldt State University and College of the Redwoods student field trips to observe how controlled grazing works in practice.

The Society for Range Management is an international organization formed in 1948 to promote the study, management, and use of all rangeland resources. Its members include ranchers, scientists, educators, land managers, students, businessmen and other interested people.

SEPARATION OF USDA QUALITY AND YIELD GRADE

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the separating of beef carcass quality grades and yield grades. In past years if a slaughter plant wanted to grade beef carcass, they had to mark carcasses with both the quality and yield grade. Now the graded carcasses can be marked either for quality or yield grade or both grades. These changes allow packing plants to "hot fat trim" carcasses on the kill floor before chilling. Previously, the carcass could only be trimmed of excess fat after chilling and after the quality and yield grades were determined. The new rules provide more flexibility to packers for merchandizing beef carcasses.

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Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Kenneth R. Farrell, Director of Cooperative Extension, University of California.

COPING WITH FOOT ROT

There is no easy cure for foot rot in sheep, but there are some practices you can follow to reduce the problem.

Foot rot is caused by one or more strains of bacteria that destroy the connective tissues between the hoof wall and the sole of the foot, causing them to separate. Other bacteria then invade the foot and cause inflamation and lameness--which are the major symptoms of foot rot. Bacteria enter the foot through cuts, irritated areas, or breaks in the hoof wall. These bacteria can live for months in the flesh of the hoof, but the bacteria only survive 2 weeks or less in soil. This is why its good to rotate pastures.

Foot rot is contagious and spreads by contaminating the grounds, pastures, corrals, sheds, barns, floors, and truck beds. Noninfected sheep being grazed or handled on contaminated premises readily pick up the infection.

Foot rot can be eliminated from an infected flock only if treatment is continued until every infected sheep has been cured or sold. This requires:

* repeated examination, trimming, and use of disinfectants
* strict isolation of infected and suspected animals
* disposal of carriers.

Trim each hoof as necessary to remove overgrown parts and to prevent excessive future growth. After trimming examine each foot carefully. Look for diseased or dead tissue, for infected areas, and for underrun horn. Tap on the sole with the back of the knife. If you find any abnormal or unusual condition, pare the hoof to expose the site of trouble.

There are three disinfectants that are commonly used in foot baths: copper sulfate, zinc sulfate, and formalin. These disinfectants promote hardening of the hoof and healing. Copper sulfate and zinc sulfate have no objectionable fumes, but they will corrode metals and nails, and they will dilute out when contaminated by mud and manure. Cooper sulfate will leave a green stain on the wool. Formalin won't dilute out, stain wool, or corrode metals; but it does have objectionable fumes.

The U.S.D.A. recommends a 10% solution when using formalin (2 gallons formalin to 18 gallons of water). Research at the Hopland Field Station has found a 5% solution is satisfactory. A 20% solution of copper sulfate is recommended (32 lbs of copper sulfate with 20 gallons of water). If the foot bath solution is changed regularly, a 10% solution can be used. Zinc sulfate is recommended as a 10% solution. Zinc sulfate is cheaper than copper sulfate. If you have trouble dissolving the zinc or copper sulfate in water, use hot water. If your water is hard, add vinegar.

A vaccine called Foot Vax is available for treating foot rot; it helps prevent infection and it does speed recovery. To start with the vaccine two shots have to be given six weeks apart, then there is a yearly booster given several weeks before the foot rot season. The vaccination isn't the total answer, but it is another tool in reducing foot rot problems.

NEW ASSIGNMENT

Evelyn Wunderlich, our County Director, is going on a six-month sabbatical leave starting March 1. Evelyn will be studying cottage industries, home-based businesses and small business developments. I will be Acting County Director while Evelyn is on sabbatic leave.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Feb. 25 *Humboldt-Del Norte Cattlemen's Spring Meeting, Fireman's Hall, Loleta starting at 5 p.m.*

March 28-30 *Stan Parson's Refresher Course, Eureka Inn. Contact Donna Moxon for details 839-001.*

April 8-9 *Northwest Forage Conference, Roseburg, Oregon*

SHUMANS' WIN C.B.C.I.A. AWARD

Mel and Lauren Shuman were selected as California Beef Cattle Improvement Association's Outstanding Commercial Producer for 1989. Their award was presented to them at C.B.C.I.A.'s 30th Anniversay Seminar held in Davis on February 18.

Lauren and Mel Shuman lease a 1700-acre ranch near Bridgeville, California. They run a 100-head cow-calf operation that orginated from Hereford and Shorthorn crossbred cows purchased in 1976. After purchasing the original cows they put identification tags on them and started keeping individual records. In 1979 they started selecting yearling bulls with good growth rates that had successfully completed C.B.C.I.A. sponsored performance tests. They put special emphasis on using Red and Black Angus bulls that are structurally sound. Through this program average calf weaning weights increased 119 pounds in 1980. One of their goals has been to increase calf weights, and they have gone from a calf weaning weight of 453 pounds in 1976 to 610 pounds in 1988. Another goal they have had was to shorten the calving interval, and they are currently calving 90% of their cows in 60 days.

The Shumans' current goals are: to maintain a superior cow herd, use performance tested bulls, manage their land resources wisely, and maintain accurate performance records.

Lauren Shuman is currently a Director of C.B.C.I.A. and is First Vice President of the Humboldt Cattle Women's Association and their Beef Promotion chairperson.

The Shumans' will be competing in the Beef Improvement Federation's Award Program for Outstanding Commercial Producer.



WINTER SUPPLEMENTS

With the snow and freezing temperatures we've had these past six weeks, it's important to feed adequate amounts of supplements. Energy and protein are normally deficient on winter pastures-- protein is deficient if there isn't any or a low level of green forage to go with the mature feed. In the snow packed mountain area, some of the mature, standing feed has been flattened to the ground making it harder to be grazed by cattle. Many cows are calving, and this has caused additional stress on cows.

Some points to keep in mind when supplementing are:

* feed three day ration every three days--this allows all cattle to eat, even the shy ones
* research has shown cattle need 1/4 to 1/2 pound of roughage per 100 lbs of body weight just to make the rumen function, for example, a 1000 lb cow requires 2½ to 5 lbs of hay per day
* if hay is fed on the ground, the location should be changed each time
* during cold weather feeding hay generates more heat due to digestion than feeding blocks or liquid supplements
* molasses blocks are good supplements if there is plenty of old grass to go with it
* calcium and phosphorus supplements may be needed when feeding low quality feeds--especially for young calves and nursing cows that are rebred
* cows in poor condition, thin and losing weight, will probably not cycle or rebreed
* a rule of thumb for maintenance requirements is 2 lbs of roughage per 100 lbs of body weight--a 1000 lb cow would require 20 pounds of hay.

Supplements are important this time of year. It is especially critical for cows with young calves at their side. To keep cows calving on a yearly basis, you only have about 82 days after calving to get the cow cycling, so she can be bred again. If there is adequate feed for the cows, this usually isn't a problem.

SCOURS - THE CALF KILLER

Scours cause more financial loss to cow/calf producers than any other disease -related problems. Calves in a confined environment seem to be more susceptible to scours than calves out on the range.

Calf scours is not a disease - it is a clinical sign of a disease which can have many causes. Scours are characterized by diarrhea, and in all diarrheas, the intestine either fails to absorb fluids and/or intestinal secretions are increased resulting in loss of essential fluids from the body.

A calf is approximately 70% water at birth. If the calf begins to lose fluids - through diarrhea - he dehydrates rapidly. This dehydration and loss of certain body chemicals (electrolytes) produces a change in body chemistry and severe depression in the calf. Even though infectious agents may cause the primary intestinal damage, death from scours is usually due to electrolyte loss, changes in body chemistry and dehydration, rather than invasion by an infectious agent. The infectious agent is important, however, from the standpoint of prevention.

Scours are more deadly to younger calves than older calves. The younger the calf the greater the chance of death. If scours are a problem on your ranch, consult your local veterinarian for a treatment program. Scours can be a serious problem especially if the calves go untreated.

Gary Markegard
Farm Advisor

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