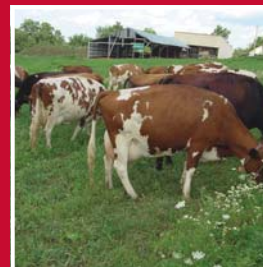


FIELD & FEEDLOT



NORTHWEST AREA EXTENSION

SEPTEMBER 2009 ISSUE

Extension Web Sites

Ag Decision Maker

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/>

Beef Center

<http://www.iowabeefcenter.org/>

Manure Management

<http://www.agronext.iastate.edu/immag/>

Pork Center

<http://www.ipic.iastate.edu/>

ISU Extension Dairy Team

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/DairyTeam/>

Ag & Beef Update

By Beth Doran, ISU Extension Beef Field Specialist

Clay County Fair Displays

ISU Extension will host the Ag Learning Center during the Clay County Fair. The Ag Learning Center is a building on the western side of the fairgrounds that has staffed displays featuring new developments in agriculture. The building will be open 9 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily. Feel free to drop by and visit with NW area ag field specialists about your issues and concerns. See you at the fair!

This year's displays include:

- ISU's New Regional Organization
- ISU Beef Center
- ISU Pork Industry Center
- ISU Dairy Milk Quality, Safety and Sustainability Initiative
- Economic Importance of Iowa Livestock Industries
- Iowa Learning Farm
- ISU New Century Farm
- ISU Beginning Farmer Center
- Grain Bin Safety
- Integrated Crop Management News
- Master Equine
- Aronia Berries
- High Fructose Corn Syrup
- Annie's Project

Score Your Cows At Weaning

Weaning time is a good time to "score" your cows. There are several things to consider.

Pregnancy – Feed costs are still too high to winter an open cow, and fertility is the most important economic trait. Open cows should be culled.

Weaning Weight of the Calf – The most efficient cow is one that can wean half her weight without creep. Individual weaning weights not only help identify the older and growthier calves, but also can be used to evaluate the dam for her milking ability and ability to breed and calve early.

Body Condition Score of the Cow – A heavy weaning weight is great, but not at the expense of cow body condition. Thin cows with big calves are not the answer. In the era of high feed costs, cows need to be maintain their body weight and be easy-keeping.

Udder Quality – A sound udder is critical. Check the udder to make sure all four quarters are functional, balanced, and strong and high in their attachment. Teats should be evenly spaced, short, and pencil-shaped. Life is too short to cope with a poor uddered cow at calving!

Structural Soundness – There are two common types of lameness – arthritic joints and hoof problems. Excess hoof growth can lead to curled toes. A good hoof should be genetically designed - not managed with foot trimming! Remember that a cow that can't walk off the trailer cannot be legally marketed.

Eyes – Skin color and sun exposure have a direct relationship to cancer eye in beef cattle. Cattle with light skin pigmentation and white faces tend to be more susceptible to the disease. Consider culling animals with early symptoms of cancer eye. Extreme cases will result in carcass condemnation.

Age – Check the teeth of thin cows as they need them to graze and eat efficiently. And check the ages of cows. Most cows are productive up to 10 years of age. After 10 years, the cow is on "borrowed" time and usually production lags. Be sure to market her while she can still walk off the trailer.

Disposition – Chute scores are one way to evaluate temperament, and the animal is evaluated while in the chute and leaving the chute. However, another way to evaluate temperament is to score the cow as you work with her daily (calving, moving and feeding). Is she easy going or a "rip" to be around?

Calf Quality – Do her steer calves gain rapidly, have high cutability carcasses and quality grade average Choice or higher? Will her heifer calves "out produce" her? That is a true sign of genetic improvement.

Updated Beef Publications

Below are the titles and website addresses for updated ISU publications.

- **Live Cattle Basis** – B2-42
<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/livestock/pdf/b2-42.pdf>
- **Feeder Cattle Basis** – B2-43
<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/livestock/html/b2-43.html>
- **Computing a Pasture Rental Rate** – C2-23
<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/wholefarm/pdf/c2-23.pdf>

Check for Late Season Crops Diseases

By Paul Kassel, ISU Extension Field Agronomist

Check for Corn Diseases

Eyespot

Eyespot was a common leaf disease in corn this year. Cool weather in July promoted the development of this disease. The effects of this disease on corn grain yields are not well known. Extension plant pathologists recommended fungicide treatment to fields where there were numerous eyespot lesions on the ear leaf and above. Check corn fields in the late summer to observe the effectiveness of the fungicide on your fields (if you applied fungicide), or observe how much eyespot progressed if no fungicide was applied.



Gray Leaf Spot

Check fields for gray leaf spot (GLS). Gray leaf spot is much more common in southern Iowa/southern Corn Belt. Warm humid weather favors GLS development. Therefore, GLS should not have

much impact in northern Iowa this year. However, some fields did develop some GLS lesions in late August.

Leaf diseases such as eyespot and GLS will cause the most damage when:

- The disease develops earlier in the season.
- The disease progress up the plant quickly.
- Significant amounts of leaf area are covered with lesions shortly after pollination time.

Take some time to check your fields for eyespot and GLS development and make notes for next year. Also, check test plots in your area and evaluate other hybrids for leaf disease development.

Check for Soybean Diseases

Sudden death syndrome (SDS)

Sudden death syndrome has shown up in northwest Iowa fields this summer. We have seen it in previous years and we are seeing it this year also. Sudden death syndrome is caused by a Fusarium species that is present in Iowa soils. This fusarium species may survive on corn residue—therefore rotations away from soybean will not control this disease.



Sudden death syndrome tends to be worse with early planting dates. Also, SDS is worse when soybean cyst nematode is present. Sudden death syndrome is more prevalent in highly produc-

ive soils that may be poorly drained. Cool weather in the summer (as in July of 2009) will cause SDS to be more prevalent. Therefore, SDS can show up under some high yielding situations.

Check your fields for SDS. The disease will likely appear (but not always) in heavy poorly drained soils. Look for brown spots on the leaves, but between the veins of the leaf (called interveinal chlorosis). Sometimes the leaves will fall off and the leaf stem will stay attached. Roots will have root rot and will have very few lateral roots. The pith or the center of the stem will remain white.

Brown Stem Rot (BSR)

Brown stem rot can appear this time of year also. There may be interveinal chlorosis, but usually not. Brown stem rot will not cause a root rot. However, the major identifying factor of BSR is the stem. The pith in the center of the stem will appear brown and segmented.

Brown stem rot can be managed with a rotation away from soybean and with resistant varieties. Sudden death syndrome can be managed by resistant varieties, slightly later (within reason) planting dates and improving soil drainage.

There are several articles in Integrated Crop Management News that may be of interest. This recent article may answer some questions about SDS in 2009 found at: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/2009/0821yang.htm> The following article may be of interest when identifying SDS and BSR. <http://extension.agron.iastate.edu/soybean/topicpage2.html>

An article from last year on SDS and other summer diseases of soybean can be on the <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/>

PQA Plus, TQA and Site Assessment Programs

By Jerry Weiss, ISU Extension Swine Field Specialist

Iowa Pork Producers Association (IPPA) and the National Pork Board are encouraging all producers to become Pork Quality Assurance (PQA) Plus-certified and achieve PQA Plus Site Status. They suggest producers achieve PQA Plus certification by June 2010 and to complete a site assessment by December 2010. Some swine harvesting facilities are asking producers to achieve these goals by December 31, 2009. Several packers are also asking producers to become certified in the Transport Quality Assurance (TQA) program as well.

With these goals in mind IPPA will pick-up the educational cost of these PQA and TQA programs. ISU Extension Swine Specialists will conduct these quality assurance training sessions within the next few weeks. The ones in Northwest Iowa will be Wednesday, September 9 at Northwest Iowa Community College. The TQA session will be from 10am—noon and the PQA Plus session from 1pm—3pm. Dave Stender will be presenting these two sessions. Call to register at (712) 225-6196.

Another session will be held at the Sac County Extension Office in Sac City, September 22. PQA Plus session will run from 10am—noon and TQA from 1pm - 3pm. Contact Jerry Weiss at (712) 335-3103. Pre-registration is recommended for both sessions.

Iowa Pork Producers association is also offering \$100 rebates to Iowa pork producers completing PQA Plus Site Assessments prior to December 31, 2009, on a first-come, first serve basis as funding is available. This program began July 10, 2009.

More than 9,100 Iowa producers and swine employees were certified in PQA Plus and 4,325 had received TQA certification as of July 28, 2009.

I would encourage producers and employees to complete these requirements prior to the harvest season. If you have any questions, give me (Jerry Weiss) a call at (712) 335-3103 or (712) 358-1491.

Lower Commercial Fertilizer Prices Changes Manure Economics

By Tom Olsen, ISU Extension Farm Management Field Specialist

Over the last 2-3 years, the steep increase in commercial fertilizer prices has created quite an interest in acquiring manure, particularly liquid swine manure and turkey litter, to replace the commercial counterpart. At last year's prices, swine manure in particular was far less than half the price of fertilizer given the only cost was the

cost of application. In fact, in many cases, the manure cost was considerably less than the cost of the nitrogen crop need alone, with the phosphorus and the potash “thrown-in”, so-to-speak. Application made economic sense applying for the nitrogen need on a corn crop in a corn-soy rotation with enough P and K for the following soybean year. Even in a continuous corn situation, with manure applied each year, the “bonus” P and K was an economic soil builder. In many cases, paying a significant fee above hauling to acquire the manure or hauling longer distances and/or both made economic sense. The other production penalties for manure (compaction, additional tillage, less uniform yields) were more than outweighed by the “cheap” fertility.

Now that the price of NH₃ and DAP have dropped by more than half from the highs (Potash is still holding up there) and the expected price for corn has dropped by more than \$1.00/bushel, rational manure use has changed. Without getting into great detail, a few take-home messages are listed below:

- Examine Soil Tests
- Establish benchmark fertility needs and commercial fertilizer costs
- Test Manure and check on application cost including distance surcharges
- Use the manure value calculator: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/livestock/xls/b1-65manurecalculator.xls>.

As an example, a manure testing at 40-25-35/1000 gal. applied at \$.0125/gal. for close-up application compared to \$400/T NH₃, \$400/T DAP, and \$720/T Potash, “roughly” looks like:

- Applied to Corn in a Corn-Soy rotation, makes very good sense, even over a fair distance (2-3 miles, maybe as high as \$.03/gal.), decent 2 year nutrient balance
- Applied to Continuous Corn, OK sense, if P and K is needed, can no longer justify for the N alone, up to \$.02/gal.
- Continuous Corn, Very High P and K, willing to mine the soil a bit, NH₃ only is much cheaper (same would be true for the Corn-Soy rotation)

Turkey litter with a test of 60-60-40/T at 75% available is no longer a bargain at \$40/T applied.

Note: The examples are based on nutrient balance without consideration of the other production factors mentioned earlier.

The above comments are not recommendations, but merely to give a ball-park idea as to how conditions have changed. Manure is still good stuff when used appropriately.