# Southwest MFA Agri Services Newsletter



### **Importance of Feeding Minerals**

#### December 2013 Volume 1, Issue 3

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#### Special Points Of Interest

 Now Selling QLF Liquid Feeds

Livestock require more than just a "mineral" block present at all times to M meet their nutritional requirements. In Trace mineral blocks do not contain any so of the macro minerals with the exception of salt. The macro minerals a producer to needs to consider supplementing free to choice include calcium, phosphorous, salt of sulfur. magnesium and consultant.

macro and micro or trace minerals. Macro minerals are required in a larger

amount in the diet whereas trace

minerals are needed in smaller amounts.

Macro and trace do not emphasize the

importance of the mineral, as all minerals are important for the body to function

properly.



Calcium and phosphorous are often discussed together due to the relationship they share in the body's functions, mainly in the formation and SERVICES maintenance of the skeletal system.

Jordan Boone, Cassville Assistant Manager

A proper mineral program Calcicontributes to several in a factors within any cattle probo p e r a t i o n . B o d y funcmaintenance, growth, syster reproduction and a incluhealthy immune system norm are just a few of these amo factors. Minerals are categorized into that

Calcium and phosphorous should be fed in a 2:1 ratio to avoid any potential problems. Calcium's more specific functions include aiding the nervous system with muscular movement, including the heart. Deficiencies are normally seen in cattle that are fed high amounts of concentrate feed and in cattle that are grazing small grain pastures.

Phosphorous differs in the fact that it is needed by the ruminant microorganisms to promote energy utilization. Phosphorous deficiency is the most common out of any mineral for grazing livestock; resulting in decreased animal performance, poor reproductive efficiency and low milk production.

Magnesium is also essential in energy metabolism as well as aiding the nervous impulses. svstem with Magnesium deficiency is often associated with grass tetany, however most cases of grass tetany are not due to magnesium deficiency. Grass tetany is more often contributed to an over abundance of potassium in lush pasture, but the easiest way to fight it is with an abundance of magnesium. Signs magnesium of deficiency include anorexia, convulsions or muscle twitching, excessive salivation, and calcification of soft tissues.

*...Continued from Front Page* Salt is only required at the rate of 1 oz. per head per day and is the most overfed mineral. When salt is fed in block form, consumption has shown to

decrease in half, due to the animal not gorging. Salt's function is to aide in the regulation of bodily fluids, as well as muscle movement and nerve actions.

Sulfur is a macro mineral that is not as big of a concern in most cattle. Sulfur is most prevalent in water, molasses, turnips, radishes, beet pulp and feeds containing corn distilling byproducts such as corn gluten. Sulfur is needed by the ruminant microorganisms for the synthesis of B vitamins. Although sulfur deficiency is extremely uncommon, clinical signs include anorexia, emaciation and excessive salivation.

As far as supplementing free choice mineral, the most important thing to be aware of is to know what the forage being consumed contains as far as levels of minerals. The following table shows the percentages of minerals present in Missouri forages and feeds.

Feedstuff:	Calcium	Phosphorous	Sodium	Potassium	Magnesium
	%	%	%	%	%
Fescue Hay	0.41	0.30	0.02	1.96	0.16
Alfalfa Hay	1.40	0.28	0.05	2.43	0.28
Corn Silage	0.25	0.22	0.01	1.14	0.18
Soybean	0.25	0.60	0.04	1.97	0.27
Meal					
Corn	0.07	0.95	0.26	1.40	0.40
Gluten Feed					
Soybean	0.53	0.18	0.03	129.00	0.22
Hulls					
Corn	0.30	0.32	0.01	0.44	0.12

#### Mineral Composition of Feedstuffs Common in Missouri

Adapted from National Research Council. 1996. Nutrient Requirements of Beef Cattle, seventh revised edition. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

If you feel like you would like a laboratory test on your forage so you have a better idea as to what type of mineral to supplement, please feel free to stop in and see us for the details. I hope I have given a little insight about mineral and the importance of supplementing mineral to cattle. If you have any questions, please feel free to stop in and see us!

Jordan Boone (417) 839-9090 jboone@mfa-inc.com



### **Spring Fertilization**

#### Kevin Doss, Berryville Manager



Spring is just around the corner, and it is time to start thinking about fertilizer. Most of us in Northwest Arkansas should have a soil test included in our nutrient management plan provided by the Arkansas Natural Resource Commission (ANRC). If you do not have a recent soil test, it would be beneficial to have one done so that you can apply the appropriate amounts of fertilizer to your fields.

You folks that have been applying poultry litter are probably optimum or above optimum on phosphate. However, litter is usually low in potassium. With that said, you only need nitrogen

and potash. We need to fertilize our fields in the most cost effective way to maximize our results, and that starts with your soil test. There is no reason to put on a nutrient when you don't need it.

For those who have poultry houses, it would be good to rotate nitrogen or nitrogen and potash according to your soil test every other year. This helps eliminate some of the phosphate build-up on your farm.



On your hayfields, for every ton of hay taken off, you remove about 12 pounds of phosphorous and 55 pounds of potassium. It is important that you put those back on whether you use litter or commercial fertilizer.

We have several folks ask which is better: ammonium nitrate or urea? Well it is just like comparing a Ford and a Chevrolet; in the end they are both trucks. Ammonium nitrate and urea both end up in the soil as nitrate ( $NO_3$ ). We like to apply urea earlier in February – March because it takes more time and water to breakdown, and it will usually last longer. On the other hand, ammonium nitrate works faster, so we want to apply it in April – May as the temperature gets warmer.

As mentioned before, look at your farm plans or get a soil test done to see what nutrients you have or need in your soil. If you have any questions, or if we can help you in any way, call (870) 423-6333 or (870) 480-9382.

Kevin Doss (870) 423-6333 kdoss@mfa-inc.com

## Now Carrying QLF Liquid Feeds!

### **QLF Pasture Plus 34/6**

- Crude Protein 34%
- Vitamin A 20,000 IU/lb
- Vitamin D 5,000 IU/lb
- Vitamin E 10 IU/lb
- Plus many more nutritional supplements!

### **Increased Nutrition**

- Meet the needs of the rumen microbes.
- Enhance utilization of available roughage.
- Meet the nutritional needs of the cow.



Call for more details and pricing!

### **Interpreting Soil Sample Reports**

#### Eric Preston, SW MO/SE KS Regional Precision Sales Manager

Wheat planting is getting ready to be wrapped up and planning for corn fertilizer is getting underway. An important part of that planning process is getting soil sampling done. One thing that often gets overlooked during that planning process is soil sampling and interpreting the results in a confident manner. Soil reports can be intimidating when you are looking at a list of 100 random numbers. I am going to try and clear up some of the confusion of converting parts per million (ppm) into lbs/acre, understanding Bray P1 & P2, and CEC.

#### *Converting Parts per million (ppm) to lbs/acre*

Results for the major and minor elements are reported in parts per million (ppm) on an elemental basis. An acre of mineral soil 6 to 7 inches deep weighs approximately 2 million pounds. Therefore, to convert parts per million readings to pounds per acre, multiply by 2.

For an example: Your P1 reading is 15 ppm and your K reading is 130 ppm. Then 15 x 2 = 30 lbs/acre P205 readily available and 130 x 2 = 260 lbs/acre K20 available in the soil. This makes reading the numbers have more meaning when it is in a familiar term.

#### Bray P1 & P2: What are they and how do they work together?

The P1 (weak Bray) test measures phosphorus which is readily available to plants. The optimum level will vary with crop yield and soil conditions, but for most field crops, 20 to 30 ppm is adequate. The P2 (strong Bray) test measures readily available phosphorus plus a part of the active reserve phosphorus in the soil. A level of 40 to 60 ppm is desired for good yields of most crops.

The relationship between the P1 and P2 test levels (P1:P2 ratio) can help evaluate the phosphorus status of the soil as well as identify a soil condition that contributes to poor crop performance. The following comments will apply to the P1:P2 ratio in most areas:

- 1:1 Very Low to Low Poor history of fertilizer use adding P2O5 will tend to widen the ratio. Many times the available P2 increases faster than the standard available P1 indicating an increase in the reserve.
- 1:1 Low to Medium Low reserve. Fe and Al "P" bond is very tight a lime application will release P and increase the Ca availability. Generally, the ratio will widen as a result of the lime application.
- 1:2 with P1 Medium to High. Ideal range with reserve as high as the P1 availability.
- Greater than a 1:2 ratio. Some may be as high as 1:20 or greater. One or more of the following principles may apply:
  - 1. Response to starter may increase as ratio increases.
  - 2. Presence of free lime in the soil may be indicated.
  - 3. Increasing response to the use of sulfur and zinc. (Use 1 part of zinc with 2 to 4 parts of sulfur. A maximum of 8 pounds of SO4–S may be used in a starter band.)







### ...Continued from Page 4

- When the P2 is over 50 ppm, one can expect greater response to Zn.
- The amount of P205 which will be required to increase the P1 reading is dependent on soil texture (or cation exchange capacity), soil pH, and level of P1 and P2. An average value would be 9 lbs of P205 required to raise P1, reading 1 ppm.

#### What is Cation Exchange Cite CEC and what does it mean for your soils?

Cation Exchange Capacity measures the soil's ability to hold nutrients such as potassium, magnesium, and calcium as well as other positively charged ions such as sodium and hydrogen. The CEC of a soil is dependent upon the amounts and types of clay minerals and organic matter present. The common expression for CEC is in terms of milliequivalents per 100 grams (meq/100g) of soil. On most soils, it will vary from 5 to 35 meq/100g depending upon the soil type. Soils with high CEC will generally have higher levels of clay and organic matter.

For example, one would expect soil with a silty clay loam texture to have a considerably higher CEC than a sandy loam soil. Although high CEC soils can hold more nutrients, good soil management is required if these soils are to be more productive.

CEC is very closely tied with soil type and is very difficult to change on a large

scale. It is very important to manage your low CEC soils differently than your high CEC soils to maximize both soils productivity.

Soil reports are a great source of information and a management tool. Hopefully these small pointers can help you understand some of that information better. Using the information to manage your fertility program should increase productivity and profitability of your farming operation. For more information ask your local Southwest MFA Agri Services location about how they can help your soil fertility program.

**Eric Preston** (620) 674-1775 epreston@mfa-inc.com

#### SOIL ANALYSIS REPORT

				NEUTRAL AMMONIUM ACETATE (EXCHANGEABLE)				INFO SHEET: 487359					
ORGANIC	P	HOSPHORU	JS	POTASSIUM	MAGNESIUM	CALCIUM	SODIUM	pH	CATION	PERCENT	BASE S	ATURATION	I (CON
LO.L	(MEAK BRAY)	P, (STRONG BRAY)	OLSEN BICARBONATE P	к	Mg	Ca	Na	SOL B	NDEX CEC.	% K	% Mg	% Ca	% H
percent RATE	ppm RATE	ppm RATE	ppm RATE	ppm RATE	ppm RATE	ppm RATE	ppm RATE	1.1	maq/100g				
4.2 н	28 H	<mark>40 н</mark>		150 н	161 н	995 м		5.2	6.4 <mark>10.2</mark>	3.8	13.2	48.8	34.2
4.9 vн	<mark>21</mark> ) M	<mark>32</mark> м		174 vн	137 н	726 L		5.2	6.5 <mark>7.9</mark>	5.6	14.5	45.9	34.0
6.1 vн	<mark>35</mark> vн	<mark>65 vн</mark>		143 н	162 н	1083 м		5.5	6.3 <mark>9.6</mark>	3.8	14.1	56.4	25.7
4.1 н	2 VL	5 VL		70 L	95 м	988 м		5.6	6.7 <mark>7.7</mark>	2.3	10.3	64.2	23.2





### **Importance of Protein During the Winter**

#### Jackie Modlin, Cassville Manager

In the winter months, the quality of grass has declined, as well as the animal's forage intake and total energy. During this time, the protein content of grass and some summer grass pastures are insufficient and cannot uphold healthy animal production, making it vital to maintain and keep protein intake high.

Providing protein creates energy which allows the rumen to work properly and consistently. If there is a shortage of protein, then there is a loss of energy that will require more time for the rumen to digest food. The first nutrient to be limited when grass quality declines is in fact

protein. If the hay quality does not meet requirements for a farmer's operation then providing additional protein would provide energy that would allow the rumen to digest the nutrients at a quicker pace, and in the long run, supply a large intake of nutrients

During the winter months, the majority of the breeding cows are pregnant, and grass cannot provide the correct amount of nutrition needed. A calf that is being carried will only receive the nutrients needed as long as the pregnant cow has received her share of nutrients. A mother cow that has been fed well and supplied with the proper amount of nutrients will birth a healthier calf. In this case, the logical option would be to provide a protein lick or mineral to supply the pregnant cow with more energy during the winter months. If you are not sure if your grass is providing the correct amount of nutrition for your herd, MFA offers hay quality testing, which is discussed in the following paragraph.

Testing the hay quality is another valuable necessity when it comes to nutrients during the winter months. A farmer can feed hay to their livestock everyday, but if it does not supply the livestock with the nutrients needed, the animal can starve to death on a full stomach. That is why MFA supplies the opportunity to check our customers' hay quality to provide supplemental needs to their livestock. When testing the hay quality, our area feed salesman takes a sample and sends the sample to Golden City to be tested. If the protein from the hay is not very high, then we suggest taking a look at other



sources of protein, such as protein tubs, a salt mix, liquid feed or a mineral to determine which one is appropriate for your operation.

We supply a large variety of mineral and multiple selections of protein. All are great sources for supplemental needs and will provide your livestock with their necessities. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. At MFA we strive to keep our customers satisfied.

Jackie Modlin (417) 847-3115 jmodlin@mfa-inc.com

The South West newsletter is coordinated by Jared Hyder and MacKenzie Oswald. It is printed through MFA in Columbia, MO. If you have any agronomy, feed, seed, animal health, or grain topics you would like us to address, please call Jared at (417) 451-3578 or send an e-mail to jhyder@mfa-inc.com or moswald@mfa-inc.com.



#### Jody Boles, Feed ASM

The perfect storm is going to bring a record corn crop to the U.S., the largest on record. This storm also has brought the youngest and smallest beef cow herd to the U.S. since the very early 1950s. Canada and Mexico have also reduced their beef cow herds. So what does a record corn crop and a small herd mean to you in Southern Missouri? It mean this is the year to creep feed your calves and add weight to your calf crop.



What should you feed your calves? MFA has fed over 10 million calves with Cattle Charge in the last twenty years with outstanding results. Cattle Charge converts feed to gain with

a 4:1 feed conversion. You can put 3 lbs per day on your calves by pushing them with Cattle Charge, and this is the year to push calves.

Cattle Charge at \$300.00 per ton will cost you \$1.80 per day for 12 lbs of feed giving you 3 lbs of gain per day, provided you supply quality pasture or hay. What is a 1 lb of beef worth? 500 pound calves bringing \$1.70 per lb. At 3 lbs daily gain x \$1.70 = \$5.10 - \$1.80 for feed cost gives you \$3.30 per calf per day over feed cost. Therefore, 10 calves x \$3.30 x 30 days = \$990 extra for you.

Are you concerned about the labor cost in feeding the calves as well? Let's use \$12.00 per hour and say it takes you 30 minutes per day to feed your 10 calves for 30 days. In labor you have 15 hours of feeding your calves at \$12.00 per hour so you have \$180.00 worth of labor. With your \$990.00 extra - \$180.00 labor = \$810.00 you made by feeding your calves for at least 30 days.

Superior Livestock Auction reported in 2012 they sold over 2 million head of cattle, of which 700,000 roughly were feeder calves. It was



reported that wean vac45 calves sold for \$13.00 per cwt. over unweaned calves. MFA Health Track is a wean vac45 program that you all can take advantage of for your calves this fall.

How can you find out about more creep feeding options or how to take advantage of the extra value of a weaned calf with MFA's Health Track? Please call me, Jody Boles, at (573) 631-6969 or your local MFA store for more information. Prices of feed change weekly, and these values differ depending on if you buy medicated or non-medicated Cattle Charge, as well as if you buy in bulk or bag. Thank you for your interest and business with MFA.

Jody Boles (573) 631-6969 jjboles@mfa-inc.com

We hope that all of our customers had a very Happy Thanksgiving! Everyone at Southwest MFA Agri Services would like to wish you a very Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year! May all your travels be safe! And all the time spent with family and friends be blessed!



## Calves and the Elixir of Life - Colostrum

Chuck Hubbert, Retail Livestock Representative



I was writing an article on raising calves and ended up spending too much time on colostrum. Then I got to thinking that it needed to be an article of its own—it is that important. I know that it can be a challenge for some farmers to do more than what they are already doing. It never hurts to examine your practices to see if there are simple things you can do to improve your operation. Here are some of my thoughts on colostrum.

#### Dairy Cattle

Since I started working for MFA, I have to say that colostrum feeding is my number one recommendation when it comes to raising calves. If there is a problem raising calves, I start here. Getting enough good quality colostrum in the calves as soon as possible is the most important goal. This starts with the cow.

- Nutrition: Is she in good flesh during the dry cow period? Is she on a quality dry cow mineral?
- Animal Health: Have you vaccinated the cow with the right shots to produce colostrum that covers the spectrum of challenges the calf will have until it can produce its own antibodies? Do you use *Orbeseal*® to help prevent leakers? Has she been healthy?
- Environment: Is she comfortable? Does she have protection from extreme conditions (heat, freezing rain, mud, overcrowding, etc.)?

All of these things can affect the cow and the quality of her colostrum.

Next is the handling of the colostrum. The equipment needs to be clean as all the other equipment on your farm that handles milk for human consumption. The udder needs to be cleaned and prepared for the milking unit just like the other cows. With colostrum, like the calf, timing is critical. The earlier the cow can be milked the better. She will start to dilute her colostrum rather quickly. Only good colostrum should be kept. We at MFA can sell you a colostrometer if you would like one. Like forage testing, it helps you get an idea of the nutrient content of your colostrum. Colostrum can be frozen or stored in the fridge. Make sure it is still good before feeding, and thaw it slowly in warm water to avoid



cooking the important immunity proteins in the milk. Think of egg whites; I have seen hot water in milk barns hot enough to poach an egg (turn the clear fluid, white). Of course clean calf bottles, nipples and other milk feed equipment is critical for the newborn.

I have had farms that know they do not have good colostrum and find it easier to rely on colostrum replacers. They are not cheap, but they are convenient and are of very high quality. If the spread of Johne's is a concern, replacers are an easy option. MFA sells Land O'Lakes brand of colostrum. There are also supplements, but they should be fed <u>in addition to</u> poor quality colostrum to fortify it or be given if the cow may have not had enough.



**Continued On Page 9.** 

...Continued from Page 8 We sell a lot of colostrum supplements, and farmers claim to get by with it, but it is not ideal and not the same as a replacement. Some producers have also fed a

gallon of colostrum at the first feeding and have overcome poor concentration with volume. I would think getting the calf to eat at the next feeding could be a challenge, but getting colostrum in the calf is critical.

I am not a fan of letting the calf nurse. You really don't have any idea what the colostrum looks like, how much the calf is getting, or how clean her udder will be after calving. It is this recommendation that separates a dairy farmer from a beef farmer. If a beef farmer was raising his calves like a dairy farmer, he too would need to look at the colostrum and make sure they had enough. He doesn't take the calf away from its mother and raise it in a small environment with other calves, in the same place as calves have been raised for years. I am a fan of having the cow present when the calf first nurses a bottle. I have heard that colostrum absorption improves, but I can't quote you any studies. For this to occur, you almost have to have a supply of colostrum ready to go when the calf is born. I realize it is not possible to give every calf this kind of attention when it is all falling on a couple of people. Like I said earlier, you may not be able to do everything, but the more you do, the fewer problems you should encounter, and the healthier your calves should be.

#### **Beef Cattle**

Colostrum is just as important here as for the dairies. Once again, a high quality mineral will help create quality colostrum. That is the whole purpose behind the Ricochet line of products. Additives have been included to help improve colostrum quality, and the Ricochet Breeder cubes and Ricochet Cattle Cubes help keep the cows in better shape for calving. Vaccinating the cow for whatever is needed to produce colostrum that covers the spectrum of challenges the calf will have until it can produce its own antibodies is important. (It is not my goal to be vague here, but you do not want to vaccinate for more than what is necessary. Thus each farm is different on what they need to vaccinate for.) Keeping cows in good shape is not only good for colostrum production but will also improve her ability to breed back. The environment in which the calf is born is also important for the



cow and the calf. It is my opinion more beef farmers could save themselves from scour issues by moving cows ready to calve to new pastures more often. Using a Ricochet product or a CTI tub with Bio-Mos is beneficial here in helping to control scours because it binds to pathogens that cause scours. Clean grass is a



great place to calve cows but with bad weather, it doesn't take long before a grassy area is turned into a mud hole, and that is far from an ideal environment. A dry environment is also good. In the winter, rolling bedding out continually improve the odds of cows calving with clean udders in a clean area.

Some of us have seen calves that have been lost at birth, show up later (without colostrum) and live. This should not be our goal. Our goal should be to raise the best calves we can, and that starts with providing them with quality colostrum to start them out on the right path which should provide you, the farmer, with more production in the end with a minimal upfront investment. If you have questions, do not hesitate to call me at (417) 880-4358 or someone at your local MFA.

**Chuck Hubbert** (417) 880-4358 chubbert@mfa-inc.com

### Kill Next Year's Thistles Now for Better Hay in 2014

#### David Moore, CCA, Range and Pasture Specialist



Fall is definitely upon us now, and thank goodness we have some grass again! Most of our spraying for the year is behind us now. However, we can attack next year's thistle crop this fall.

The three primary thistles we have here in the four state area are the Bull Thistle, Musk Thistle and Canada Thistle. The Canada Thistle is harder to kill, so we do need to try and identify what type we have. I'll give a brief description of each:

The **Canada Thistle** is a perennial and grows from rhyzomes, so it tends to grow in patches or clumps. It does not typically grow a rosette in the fall, as do the Bull and Musk Thistle. The stems and flowers of the Canada Thistle do not have spines on them. Young leaves may have some fine hairs on them.

The **Bull Thistle** is a biennial, so it begins life as a rosette in the fall, then bolts upright in the spring. The rosette of the Bull Thistle is covered in coarse hairs. Stems and flowers have spines. The leaves arrange themselves in spiny "wings". This is the spiniest thistle we have here in Southwest Missouri.

The **Musk Thistle** is also a biennial, so look for the rosette in the fall. Musk Thistle rosettes lack hairs on the upper leaf surfaces and are often more pale green than the Bull Thistle. Stems and flowers have spines.

In a nutshell, if you see rosettes in the fall, we are dealing with the Musk or Bull Thistle. When looking at plants that have bolted upright already, if the stem has no spines, we are looking at the Canada Thistle.

If the vegetation in our pasture and hay fields will allow spray to reach the rosettes, then we can expect a fall spraying to reduce our spring thistle population greatly. We have to remember that we will be hitting Bull and Musk Thistle only in the fall. Canada Thistles can be addressed next spring.



Canada Thistle



**Bull Thistle** 



**Musk Thistle** 

*...Continued from Page 10* A November/early December application (when the temperature is 45° or above) of 2 pints of GrazonNext HL per acre or 2 ounces of Chaparral or 1.5

quarts of Grazon P+D per acre will do a nice job. Don't forget to use either Torrid or Astute as your surfactant. This means the difference between success and failure. The proper rate for either is 1 quart per 100 gallons of solution. To spot spray mix 2 ounces of GrazonNext HL and ½ ounce of Astute per gallon of water.

I am often asked, "At what point should I sacrifice my clover to kill my weeds?" After looking at many of these fields, I have come to the conclusion that if you are asking the question, then it is time to spray now. A healthy, weed free grass stand will produce more pounds of beef than a weedy field with clover. After the weeds are controlled, and residual herbicide has dissipated, we can reintroduce clover.

Fall is also a great time to soil test. Knowing what nutrients are lacking and what the pH is can help us to formulate a plan for healthy grass stands. High fertilizer values and two big drought years in a row have had a big impact on the health of our grasses, and it wasn't a good impact. Act now so we can go into spring in better shape than we are today...

David Moore (417) 942-9541 dmoore@mfa-inc.com

### **Winterize Your Waterers**

#### **Ben Murray, Farm Supply Manager**

By the time you sit down to read this, temperatures will be on their way down as winter approaches. If you have not already done so, now is the time to get your pressure waterers ready before the cold weather really sets in. There are some simple checks and repairs to perform now that will save you headaches later.

Now is the time to do the repairs, especially if you had trouble last year. Replacing thermostats and heat elements during 40-50 degree weather is better than waiting until it is 20 degrees, snowing and a blowing wind. Make sure to seal around the bottom of the waterer and pad. This will help keep the cold out, keep it from freezing and lower your utility bill.

Leaky valves create a mess and cost you money in wasted water. Often the repair is as simple as replacing the diaphragm on the plunger. If the valve has this problem on a frequent basis, the orifice size needs to be checked. Much of the area is serviced by rural water districts. It is not uncommon for line pressure to be above 60-70 psi, especially at night when use is low. Most valves are designed to operate at 40-50 psi. Using a smaller orifice will help, or sometimes a pressure reducer is required.

Proper water level is important on the Mira-Fount and other energy-free waterers. If the water level is too high, it is difficult for livestock to use and promotes icing around the drinker balls. If the water level is too low, the



cold air gets in and freezes the unit. The proper level will leave just enough gap around the drinker ball (slight movement of the ball in the opening) for the waste water to drain back as the animals drink.

Addressing these problems now will save you the trouble of doing so on a dark, snowy night.



**Southwest Locations** 

Cassville: (417) 847-3115 Neosho (417) 451-3578 Wheaton: (417) 652-3526 Berryville, AR: (870) 423-6333

Check Us Out on the Web at www.southwestmfa.com!!!!

# **Upcoming Events...**

Learning to Insure Your Dairy Margins Workshop December 2, 2013 Mt. Vernon

Missouri Cattlemen's Association Convention & Tradeshow January 2 - 4, 2014 Lake of the Ozarks Heart of America Dairy Expo January 24, 2014 Springfield, MO

The Western Farm Show February 21-23, 2014 American Royal Complex Kansas City, MO