

Southwest MFA

Agri Services Newsletter

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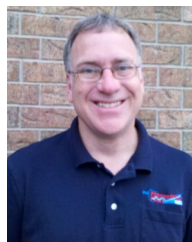
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Weaning

A Life Transforming Experience

Chuck Hubbert, Retail Livestock Representative



I am amazed at what lengths some producers will go to in order to keep stress during weaning to a minimum. I believe it is of critical importance, and the changes can be simple and cheap. If you have not thought about it or you want to double check your own practices, here are some thoughts. It is also important to note that this is low stress for the calves and for the farmer involved.

Dairy

I don't believe there is the level of stress that the beef counterparts have, but I believe it is still essential to keep stress to a minimum. During the milk phase of their life, a good, high protein milk replacer, fed at the right level should double their weight. Most protocols have their milk cut in half the last week before weaning and calf starter intake should soar. Starter intake is key to weaning calves well. Do not move them during this period. If you have raised calves in the same place for years on end, a pour on wormer may be in order. With dairy heifers, fly control is important at all stages to prevent mastitis. Please continue to keep them bedded. This was always my motivation for moving them on. A good weaned calf will adjust nicely to group housing and will be able to compete at the feed bunk.



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...Continued from Front Page That said, I am a fan of putting completely weaned calves in little groups before turning them into a larger group. The pens should be clean, spacious and well ventilated with protection from the sun and bad weather. Make sure there is plenty of bunk space and plenty of clean water. Most researchers say that a calf is a ruminant at 400 pounds which may be a good yard stick to determine if they are still babies. Speaking of rumination, feeding forage before this time can be done, but it is for your benefit, not the calves. It does give them something to do, but grain feeding stimulates rumen development. A good high protein starter will keep them growing right—skeletal growth, not fat or potbellied. Research shows textured feed stimulates intake better than pellets or feed with fines.

Beef

With beef calves, low stress weaning starts long before you pull them off their mommas. In our MFA Health Track Program, we have found that giving a vaccination during the “first working” (2-4 months of age) starts the process, and giving the calves the second vaccination 2 weeks before weaning finishes the immunization process with great success. However, that may not be low stress on you. If getting the calves up once and starting the process is what best works for you, then realize our data shows you will have more sickness, although not anywhere near as much sickness as the person buying unweaned calves at the sale barn. The MFA Health Track protocol is an excellent example to follow for a vaccination schedule. Some fly control can be gained from the use of wormers, but monitoring or providing other fly control measures to keep production losses to a minimum may be needed.



Creep feeding also helps in the weaning phase. Knowing what feed is can make a huge difference in leaving their mothers. The same can be said with grazing. I have seen really good success when a plan is created to use a fence to wean calves on lush grass. I still feel that grain feeding is a key component in keeping calves growing and healthy during this phase. I have been amazed at the value Cattle Charge adds to this phase of the calf's life. It has been fortified with all the ingredients that we know help with the stress, growth, and health of the calf. It is a must for 2 weeks. From there, keeping them growing is the key. Make sure there is enough room for everyone to eat and there is easy access to plenty of good water to drink. I am amazed at who is willing to background calves because their cow calf counterparts do not want to mess with it. Backgrounding calves has always made money. Why give it up to your neighbor?

I cannot refute weaning according to the “sign” nor can I explain it. I do think it makes a difference. I have also been told that the “sign” is when there is help to get them up. Avoiding bad weather, heat, dust, mud, etc. is a must. Avoiding the “sale barn atmosphere” while you are working your calves is helpful, too. I have one couple that has been in the business for decades that wean their calves in a lot, then get them out within a couple days to avoid “dust pneumonia”. They wean in August. Make sure that the area that you wean them in is clean, spacious, and well ventilated with protection from the sun and bad weather.

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...Continued from Page 2 I hope this has helped you take some time to think about your operation and ways you can reduce the level of stress for you and your calves. Good husbandry practices have always made sense. Every so often it is a good idea to reevaluate what you are doing to make sure it is beneficial to your operation. And keep them growing! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call me.

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Planting Winter Annuals for Pasture

Kevin Doss, Berryville Bulk Plant Manager



Winter annuals can be used as hay, silage or pasture. Pasture is the primary use; however hay cutting can sometimes be obtained from April to May. Small grains should be cut in the dough stage to gain the highest quality of hay, but because it is harder to dry in the spring, silage wrapping is a good option. Winter annuals should not be grazed until it is around six inches tall to prevent uprooting from grazing.

Wheat is the most widely grown winter annual in the U.S. In Arkansas most no-till wheat is for grazing. Winter wheat is usually less expensive than rye.

Rye is probably the most grown annual in northwest Arkansas. It is unique because it can reseed itself to some extent. Rye grows in cooler temperatures than any other winter annual. On average, rye makes more forage in late fall, winter and early spring than wheat, oats or annual ryegrass.

Triticale was developed by crossing wheat with rye. It retains the high palatability of wheat with the vigor of rye. It seemed to work really well for us last year.

Annual ryegrass is a very good winter annual. It will reseed itself if allowed but reseeding is recommended. Broadcasting works well if your ground is bare enough. Just remember, it needs good soil contact. Broadcasting on the ground with good cover usually doesn't work well. For those who do not have access to a no-till, they can mix the ryegrass with fertilizer which works well. Ryegrass matures later than wheat, rye or triticale; therefore you will see more growth in the early spring.

For your fall seed, or if we can help you in anyway, call (870) 423-6333 or (870) 480-9382.

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What About Alfalfa?

Mike Collins, Cassville Employee

Alfalfa is the number one forage cash crop in Missouri. It is the Queen of Forage, but can you justify Alfalfa in your operation? A producer needs to calculate the costs they have in a bale of hay; that includes rented land, fertilizer, lime, and the cost of mowing, raking, and baling the hay. After calculating the costs, you can compare your numbers to the cost of growing Alfalfa and decide if it fits into your forage production plans. A producer's biggest expense associated with producing hay is the ownership of the equipment.



When deciding if Alfalfa is the right choice, a producer needs to ask the following questions:

What will you feed it to?

What is the market value if you are selling it as forage?

Are you willing to cut hay in April?

Will you educate yourself on how to feed high quality forage?

Will you sample the forage to analyze the quality of your hay?

Will you spray for insects?

Are you willing to mow hay three or four times?

Are you willing to commit to a higher level of management, for example, regular soil sampling?

One of the benefits in Alfalfa is that it is the best supplement to use for livestock. An Alfalfa producer's main management goal is stand longevity and quality forage. A new product on the market is Roundup Ready Alfalfa. If a producer is considering this option, they must keep in mind weed pressure, quality, yield, stand longevity, marketability and establishment. Roundup Ready is easier to manage for weed control, but the seed cost is more expensive. A side note: At the 2013 Ozark Empire Fair Hay Show, five of the top eight places were WL Roundup Ready varieties.

If you are going to grow hay, grow the highest quality with the greatest return on your investment. Consult with your local MFA for any questions or information needed.

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Control Next Year's Thistles This Fall

David Moore, CCA, Range and Pasture Specialist



We basically have two types of thistles in our area – musk and bull. Both are biennials. Seeds from this year's thistles will germinate this fall and form a rosette. Next spring this rosette will enlarge and the plant will bolt upright and bloom again. With the number of thistles we have had this year, we need to anticipate a huge crop next year.

By spraying 1 quart per acre of GrazonNext HL late this fall (November 10 – December 20) we can eliminate the vast majority of next year's thistles! This works best in pasture and hay ground that is grazed low enough that the rosette is clearly visible and accessible to herbicide application. For best results, spray when daytime temperatures are 45 degrees or higher.

A major side effect of this application is that it also controls a large portion of our winter annual weeds, which may or may not be emerged and visible at the time of application. This was very apparent on the thistle plot I sprayed last year (December 5, 2012). The picture below clearly shows a line where the treated field meets the check strip. Before you even notice the absence of thistles and winter annuals, you will notice a significant (2-3 times) increase in grass in the treated area!



Take advantage of this slower time of year - spray 1 quart of GrazonNext HL per acre plus As-tute surfactant (1 quart per 100 gallons of water). The net result will be fewer weeds and more grass! It also takes some pressure off of you next spring when there are many things that need your time and attention...

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Cattle Working Facilities

Jared Hyder, Neosho Manager and Southwest MFA General Manager



In today's world everyone has a reality TV show, but I think some of the most entertaining stories come from the farm. When you're here at the feed store, we always get a good laugh about some crazy cow or wild bunch of calves having a jail break, or some other sort of "rodeo" that happened when farmers were trying to catch and work their cows. If only farmers had someone to hang around with a video camera running every second, we could all enjoy a laugh after we have calmed down and picked up the pieces from one of these unplanned events.

When I was a teenager, I recall a situation like this on our place. We had a couple of economy panels and some T-posts with a make-shift corral to catch some of my Dad's calves and work them. Just as can be expected, this ended up with a jail-break. We had to get the horses up, saddle them and give chase. Not that this was a pain because I enjoyed doing this at the time, but when it was all said and done, we turned one calf through a fence which ended in a broken leg.

That calf today with the current price for a 750 lb steer is worth \$1,100. The economic loss of that calf is one issue, but more importantly the stories we hear of people getting hurt severely and hospitalized is a bigger concern. Getting back to my topic, it is easy to justify new livestock equipment on your farm with whatever reason you want to use. It seems the biggest issue is convincing your better half to hand over the checkbook.

Although we don't have a lot of inventory on the lot at whichever MFA you may do business with, that doesn't mean it is not easily available. Inventory space seems to be an issue when it comes to serving every customer with the variance of every operation being a little different. This has curtailed our large ticket farm supply sales to be ordered on a customer by customer basis. This allows MFA to give you a better price by not keeping thousands of dollars on hand, and you get to build your own corral system. So if you are thinking about buying a head gate, squeeze-chute, tub, or alley system, come in and we can help you design your system to better suit your particular application as well as get you a specific price to suit your particular budget. Also keep in mind some of the representatives you see at the farm shows are available, and if needed, they can come to your farm and lay out a system if that would help. Give us a call.



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What to do About Age Source and Verification for Cattle

Mike John, Director of Health Track Services, MFA, Inc.



I think most cattle people these days know that something changed in regard to tag programs for calves and feeder cattle earlier this summer. Some might be tempted to view this as a sign that there is no reason to participate in these programs anymore. My belief is that would be a big mistake. There are several reasons these programs exist and have created value for the producers that participate. Only one of those reasons has changed, and it happens to be the one component of the programs that actually has the least amount of value. That component was Age and Source Verification (ASV).

Age and Source Verification means that a cow calf producer has enrolled their calves into a program that requires a third party to inspect calving records and/or collect documentation from the operation supporting the producers claim that the calves were born from cows that they own or manage and that they can document when at least the first calf was born. The reason for this certification was to be able to export beef products from the US to Japan. I know that seems like a lot of effort for one country, but prior to the discovery of the first BSE cow in the US, there was a \$1.4 billion market for your beef in Japan. After the BSE discovery, the Japanese changed the rules and wanted to make sure they didn't import any beef from animals over 20 months of age. Therefore we created programs that could determine when calves were born (Age) and a process to make sure that documentation followed the certified cattle as they moved through the production chain. The (Source) part of ASV wasn't actually a requirement of the Japanese government, but rather was created to assure that ASV certified cattle could indeed be traced back to the "ranch of origin" to verify the age claims through percentage audits by the third party representatives. Continuing to have access to export markets adds approximately \$250 per head to cattle finished in US feedlots, so yes, it's important. During these last few years, packers have been paying for documented ASV cattle to meet their export demands to Japan. The value has been around \$35/head and sometimes seasonally higher. I think there has also always been additional value from ASV in that feeder cattle buyers know that these calves come from ranches that keep good records and are willing to allow downstream owners of their calves to know where they came from (Source). I honestly don't think the value of that will ever go away, and in fact will increase in the future. However, now the rules have changed. The government of Japan has now rescinded their 20 month restriction and have agreed to allow US beef imports from cattle 30 months of age and younger. This is great news for US producers because it will take some cost out of the system and allow for much more beef product to go to Japan. That is very profitable for all segments of the beef industry. One example is that Tongue can sell for as much as \$13/lb. in Japan.

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It has nowhere near that value domestically (I'm not eating it!). Now that they have expanded the available pool of acceptable tongues, US total profit will go up. However, as far as ASV value goes, packers can now use the standard USDA graders assessment of age through dentition (looking at their teeth) as they have always done because the difference between "A" and "B" maturity just happens to be – you guessed it – 30 months. That means that they don't need to pay for "AGE" verification anymore. But if you stop listening (or reading) there, you will miss the most important part of the story.

Superior Livestock has sorted the value of calves sold through their system for several years, and they can measure the value of the claimed attributes that each set of calves have. Examples of these would be vaccinations, weaned or unweaned, breed characteristics, ASV, etc. MFA has had the Health Track program in place since January of 2000. All of that time, the requirements have included that calves must be weaned at a minimum of 45 days, fed a standard diet for at least the first 2 weeks post-weaning (Cattle Charge), vaccinated at least twice, de-wormed, castrated, and treated for external parasites. We didn't just pull that protocol out of thin air either. The Texas Ranch-To-Rail program identified how much value those attributes have to cattle feeders. Those calves have lower pull and death rates, consume more dry-matter/hd/day, grade better and perform better. Therefore, VAC 45 calves, as they are now commonly called, have established a value simply based on verification that they have been through that protocol. Superior said that cattle like Health Track cattle last year averaged \$13/cwt more than un-weaned, un-processed calves. At its heyday, ASV was never worth much more than \$2.50/cwt. When I first started working with MFA, industry support for pre-conditioning and Vac 45 programs was scarce. Today, you can't pick up an industry magazine or read an industry E-newsletter without reading about the merits of those practices.



So, don't throw the baby out with the bath water! Don't stop utilizing pre-conditioning and Vac 45 processing tools just because there is no longer an established value for ASV! The price of calves now and in the next few years should be incentive enough to keep them healthy and gaining before and after they are sold.

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Gear Up Now for Brush Control

David Moore, CCA, Range and Pasture Specialist



Late summer and early fall is a great time to spray brushy species. We usually look at a window from June through the end of September as an effective time to spray the perennial, woody weeds. Late August and through September may even be a tick better, as the plant prepares itself for winter. During this time frame it moves nutrients and carbohydrates from the above ground portions of the plant to the root zone. As a result, we get very good movement of herbicide along with these nutrients. Thus, the plant itself assists you in your efforts to control it.

Choosing the correct herbicide, as always, is critical for success. Remedy Ultra, PastureGard HL (Remedy Ultra + Starane) and Surmount (Tordon + Starane) are common choices. Use the list below to choose the correct herbicide:

- Remedy Ultra 2-4 pints per acre – Beech, Elderberry, Hedge, Maple, Oaks, Russian Olive, Sumac, Willow
- PastureGard HL 1.5 pints per acre – Hedge, Poison Ivy, Sericea Lespedeza
- Surmount 2-3 quarts per acre – Ash, Beech, Cottonwood, Dogwood, Elm, Hackberry, Hawthorne, Mulberry, Persimmon, Sumac

Check the label for specific rates for each species. A good combination for multiple species is 1–1.5 quarts of Remedy Ultra plus 1–1.5 quarts of Surmount. Don't forget to add 1 quart of Astute surfactant per 100 gallons of water. Use of a good quality surfactant is as important as choosing the correct herbicide.

For fencerow spot spraying, I like to use a 2% mix of Surmount – 2.5 ounces of Surmount per gallon of water, plus surfactant. Another good choice for killing bigger trees (up to 6" in diameter) is to apply a basal bark treatment. Mix 1 quart of Remedy Ultra with 3 quarts of diesel fuel. Using low pressure, coat the bottom 2-3 feet of tree trunk all the way around the tree, just to the point of runoff. This can be done any time of year. Any size tree can be killed out by cutting and treating the stump with Tordon RTU.

Call your local MFA location for more information.

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Tips to Help You Maximize Calving Performance

Jordan Boone, Cassville Assistant Manager



With the fall months creeping up on us, now is a good time to start planning your fall breeding season. However you breed your cows and heifers, there are a few factors that always seem to be either the key to success, or the root of all evil in a failed calf crop. In this article I want discuss a few of these issues so that you may start planning for a successful breeding season and more importantly, a better calving season the following fall.

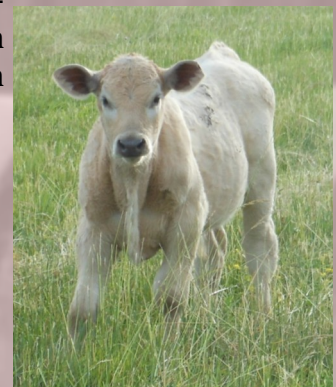
In my opinion, the number one factor in a successful cow-calf operation is nutrition. Some would argue genetics based on EPD's (expected progeny differences) because their herd has been chosen strictly for the positive genes they possess. However, I assume no highly ranked herd with quality EPD's has a poorly managed nutritional program.

To reach optimum efficiency within a nutritional program, producers need to strongly evaluate their operational expectancies. Here are three points to evaluate.

1. Forage management and utilization.
2. Establishing a sound mineral program. Quality mineral programs should include more than salt and trace mineral blocks. MFA Hi-Mag during the spring, MFA Fescue Equalizer in the early to late summer months, and MFA Super 10 throughout the fall and winter months are recommended. Hi-Mag and Fescue Equalizer are available with Altosid to vastly decrease horn fly problems, but the key to fly control is to get a jump start on them before they become an issue.
3. Supplement feed during demanding times of the season.

Two of the most important factors concerning nutrition are BCS (body condition score) and PPI (postpartum interval), which is the number of days from calving and the cow reaching an estrus cycle. BCS has a direct effect on the cow's ability to become pregnant, carry to term, calve without any physical problems and to reach estrus after calving. A good protocol to follow when checking BCS on your cows and heifers would be described as the following:

1. Late summer/early fall
2. At calving
3. 45 days after parturition
4. Weaning
5. Beginning of breeding season
6. 90 days prior to calving



An efficient cow calving every 12 months leaves only 70 to 95 days to have a cow bred back to maximize profitability. These 70 to 95 days are our PPI or postpartum interval. In order to reach a more consistent calving window, the PPI needs to be within a shorter time frame, or about 80 days.

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The second determining factor in a successful operation is a sound vaccination schedule. The most common infectious causes of misconception and aborted calves are Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis (IBR), Bovine Viral Diarrhea (BVD), Parainfluenza 3 (PI-3), Bovine Respiratory Syncytial Virus (BRSV), Vibriosis, and Leptospirosis. These diseases can be prevented by two vaccines, a 5-way respiratory and a vibriolepto. A clostridial (bacterial) vaccine should be given annually to cows to prevent blackleg, red water, and overeating disease. Bacteria that cause clostridial diseases reside in the soil and intestinal tract, and in times of stress and other conditions, they pose a serious threat to your herd's health. When properly vaccinated, the mother cows will give the calf immunity to these diseases through the time of weaning. Suggestions I do recommend when vaccinating is to keep your vaccine cool until it is ready to be used, pay close attention to manufacturer's labels, and vaccinate 30 days prior to breeding.



On paper, vaccinations don't look cheap, but when you pencil out the math, it averages about \$4.00 per head. This is cheap insurance. Let's say you run 100 cows and you invest \$400 total in vaccinations. If you save one calf, not only did the vaccine pay for itself, it made you money.

Nobody knows your operation better than you. These are just a few key points and tips to help you make the best decision in your operation. Please keep these topics in mind the next time you go out to check your cows, and please feel free to contact your local MFA if you have any specific questions regarding any of these topics.

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ATTENTION

We will be having Beef Producer meetings September 10-13, 2013 with topics of weed control, animal health, HealthTrack marketing, and winter feeding options. If you have an interest in attending, contact your local MFA store to **RSVP** for a time and date for a location nearest you.

Difference in Lime Quality?

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



It has been a very interesting spring and mid-summer. This time last year, we were terribly dry and this year, the rivers and creeks are flooding. It is amazing what just a few short months will make, but I guess that is just living in SE Kansas or SW Missouri.

In this article I would like to talk about the difference between Effective Calcium Carbonate Equivalent (ECCE) and Effective Neutralizing Material (ENM)

The 2 basic factors that are used to figure both ECCE and ENM is Calcium Carbonate Equivalent (CCE) and particle size.

The CCE of a liming material is determined by chemically reacting agricultural lime with an acid. The amount of acid the liming material neutralizes tells how much CCE a liming material contains. On an equivalent basis (pound for pound), the different liming materials found in nature are capable of neutralizing different amounts of acidity.



The fineness of a limestone material affects how rapidly the lime will react in the soil and how thoroughly it can be mixed in the soil. A great deal of research has been conducted to determine the effect particle size has on the reactivity of lime. The smaller the particle size, the more effective the liming material. As particle size is reduced, the surface area of the particles per pound of lime greatly increases. This allows more of the liming material to react faster. On the other hand, larger particles generally have a more long-lasting effect. A rating system was developed to show the effectiveness of different particle sizes to neutralize acidity. The rating is based on the amount of lime that would likely be expected to react in soils in a one-year time period. Sieves are used to determine particle size.

ENM

In Missouri the term Effective Neutralizing Material (ENM), is used to figure lime quality which is in turn how we decide how much lime is needed for a recommendation. ENM per ton of liming material is calculated using the Calcium Carbonate Equivalent (CCE) and particle size efficiency ratings. Here is the equation that is used to figure ENM.

$$\text{ENM} = \text{CCE} \times \text{fineness factor} \times 800$$

The 800 is a constant that refers to the pounds of effective calcium in one ton of pure lime.

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ECCE

In Kansas, Effective Calcium Carbonate Equivalent (ECCE) is used to classify quality of lime. ECCE is the measure of the effectiveness of liming materials and is calculated as the product of the purity value (CCE) and the fineness value divided by 100. For example, if the purity is 80 percent and the fineness value is 75 percent, then:

$$\text{ECCE} = (80 \times 75)/100 = 60\%$$

In conclusion these numbers are a way of finding the most cost effective way of buying lime. The higher the ENM or ECCE, the more effective and faster acting the lime application will be on changing soil pH. I hope this information can help you get your lime application for this fall planned. If you need more information, you can contact your local MFA Agri Service location.

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Fall Recipe - Crock Pot Apple Butter

By the time this newsletter comes out, it will be September, and by the time the next newsletter comes out, it will be December! Wow, where has the year gone?! Between now and then, APPLES will be ripening and waiting to be picked. I'm sure many of you freeze the apple slices for apple pies among other things, but there is also something else you can do with the apples before (or after) you freeze them...APPLE BUTTER! Who doesn't like the smell of warm apple butter cooking down on a cool crisp fall day? I know I sure do. The recipe that follows is one that is incredibly easy. All you need is a crock pot and all those apples you picked!

Crock Pot Apple Butter (yields approximately 6 pints)

Ingredients:

5 quarts of apples, peeled, cored and finely chopped (For frozen apples, I use one 1-gallon bag)
4 c. sugar
1/4 tsp cloves
4 tsp cinnamon
1/4 tsp salt

Directions:

Process apples in food processor
Mix all ingredients in crock pot.
Cook on high for 1 hour, turn down and cook on low for 6 to 8 hours.
Pour into clean hot pint jars, add hot lid and ring and wait for the wonderful "ping!" of a sealed lid.



FFA Spotlight - Neosho FFA

Charity Coberley, Neosho FFA Reporter & Mariah Lauthern, Neosho FFA Secretary

Neosho FFA Continues Tradition of Success

Some people think that FFA is just living on a farm, but it is much more than that. FFA is an organization that is very involved in its community. As the Neosho FFA Chapter, we strive to volunteer our time to help others. Our chapter participates in various activities such as Food for Thought, Canned Food Drive, Food for America, Petting Barnyards, We Care Fair and so much more.

One of our ways to reward those members who give up their time to participate in these events and who help better the chapter, is to take them on a trip when school gets out. At the end of every year these students get to go to Silver Dollar City and spend the day having a good time. This is a way to show these members that all the time they give up is really appreciated, and to also try and get other members encouraged to be involved.

This summer, seven Neosho FFA members got the chance to go to Washington D.C. for the Washington Leadership Conference (WLC). During this, the members were able to meet people from all across the nation, make new friendships, and experience some truly motivating stories. On the first day you get to meet your roommates for the week and your community group leader, and interact with the other members. Throughout the week the students went to large group sessions (everyone was in one room for these), and some sessions were also in our community groups (these were just small groups of people). They also got to tour the city of Washington D.C. One of the days that stood out the most was the day of the Poverty Dinner. This day was filled with heart wrenching stories of the struggles people face every day. We heard stories from people who didn't know how they would pay the bills, or be able to feed their family. On the way into the ballroom, where dinner was held, you were handed a strip of paper. Each color represented a different class/rank. During dinner that night, some were able to move up a class, while some had to move down. That night was one you don't forget. "The poverty dinner really makes you realize how much we really do have. I felt a change in people that night, and it was one for the better. I don't regret my decision to go to WLC; it was a life changing experience and its one I will never forget. I recommend anyone who gets the chance to go, should." -Matt Ramsay, Neosho FFA member.



Pictured (L-R): Trenton Vaughn, Shelby Scroggins, Carinna Nash, Charity Coberley, Matt Ramsay, Kate Anderson, and Ryan Ivey

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Every spring, we have teams that compete on various contest teams. The team members work together to learn about a certain subject for a contest team. Students may spend anywhere from one to eight hours studying at practices every week. As the Neosho FFA chapter, we have been very successful in this area. We have won the National FFA Agronomy contest four times. Agronomy is a contest team that involves crop identification, anywhere from seeds to a mature plant. This year our Forestry team won State, and is moving on to Nationals this fall. At State, Zayne Aldrich was first, Nik Manley was seventeenth, Kaitlyn Sage was eighteenth, and Megan Jones was twenty-third. This team is coached by Mike Aldrich, one of Neosho's Ag teachers. Zayne Aldrich comments on the state win, "The day we judged at the State contest, I was extremely confident that we had done well. Talking to the two girls on our forestry team, I discovered they had a rough day, but I still had hope that our scores would be high enough to win. When my team found out we had won, we were in front of G&D's Steak House. As a team we were so excited. We were jumping up and down and giving people hugs. I'm sure we got some weird looks, but we didn't care. We were State champs!!!" As a chapter we are supporting our team and hope they bring back another National championship.

The Neosho FFA chapter is more than just being enrolled in an agriculture class, it's a second family who strives to become their best and be successful. From learning about animals, caring for plants, or donating our time to better our community, we do our best. It's a great experience for the students to open up opportunities they never had before and gives them great memories along the way. With record-breaking enrollment in our chapter, we are looking forward to another successful year!

Farm Fest 2013



The 2013 Ozark Farm Fest will be October 4-6 at the Ozark Empire Fairgrounds in Springfield, MO from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. daily. MFA will have a corporate booth set up in the center of the WEST Annex.

Please stop by and visit with us! We will have information on Health Track, Mineral Calculators, Creeping Calculators, Dairy, Equine, Wildlife and Beef. Other vendors in our booth will include Gallagher, Applegate, and Tru-Test.



Please stop by with any questions you may have, or just to chat awhile. We will be more than happy to assist you in any way we can!

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...

Ozark Farm Fest

Empire State Fairgrounds

Springfield, MO

October 4 - 6

Beef Meetings

September 10-13

Please RSVP

More Details on Page 11