



UNIVERSITY OF  
**FLORIDA**

**Cooperative Extension Service**

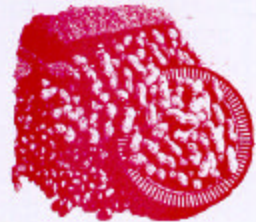
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

## Okaloosa Field and Livestock Report

Okaloosa County Extension Service

5479 Old Bethel Road

Crestview, Florida 32536-5513



Issue 120


April 2003

May – June 2003

### Dates to Remember

- May 8**      ***Forage Field Day***  
WFREC – Jay  
See Enclosed Flyer
- June 3**      ***Natural Resources Field Day***  
WFREC - Jay  
Registration \$20.00 by May 25<sup>th</sup>
- June 5**      ***Vegetable Field Day***  
WFREC – Quincy  
See Enclosed Flyer
- June 7**      ***2003 Perennial Peanut Field Day***  
Moultrie, Georgia
- June 10**      ***Forestry Stewardship Workshop***  
Chipley  
Call (850) 638-6180

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**BEEF CATTLE MANAGEMENT CALENDAR**



**May**

- Remove bulls.
- Harvest hay from cool season crops.
- Plant warm season perennial pastures.
- Fertilize warm season pastures.
- Check mineral feeder.
- Check for spittlebugs and treat if necessary.
- Apply spot-on agents for grub and louse control.
- Check dust bags.
- Vaccinate and implant with growth stimulant any later calves.
- Reimplant calves with growth stimulant at 90-120 days, when you have herd penned.
- Dispose of dead animals properly.
- Update market information and refine marketing plans.
- Remove bulls May 21 to end calving season March 1.

**June**

- Last date for planting sorghum.
- Check mineral feeder, use at least 8% phosphorus in mineral and not over 2½ to 1 calcium to phosphorus ratio.
- Check pastures and hay field for spittlebugs, mole crickets, and armyworms.
- Treat if necessary; best month for mole cricket control.
- Check dust bags.
- Watch for evidence of pinkeye and treat.
- Utilize available veterinary services and diagnostic laboratories.
- Get heifers vaccinated for brucellosis if not already done.
- Pregnancy check cows.

- Update market information and plans.
- Make first cutting of hay.
- Put bulls out June 1 for calves starting March 11.
- Reimplant calves at 90 to 120 days with growth stimulant.

Source: Animal Science Newsletter, May 2003



### **Buyer Beware – Telemarketers are in the AG Business Too!**

It happens every year, generally in the spring, but it can happen at any time. An unsuspecting grower gets a phone call and is presented with a 'wonder' product that is his or her answer to weed control. The product name is often coded; something like SP124, SM409, etc., etc. This past week SK142 was a product name brought to my attention. These people who call are very good, and present a good argument and seem to know what they are talking about. They will often ask for a credit card number

and will ship the product directly to you. In addition, the price sounds great.

The catch you ask? snake oil? Well here are a couple of things to make you scratch your head.

- 1) how come I never heard of it before?, not mentioned in grower meetings, etc.
- 2) why doesn't a distributor carry it?
- 3) if it's so good, why is it so cheap?
- 4) what kind of a name is SK142?

Actually the product is generally a legitimate herbicide, but not the wonder product you are led to believe. Remember that all pesticides have a twenty-year patent life and after that time anyone can market the product, but must use a different trade name. So, the "wonder product" is an old herbicide with a new name. 2,4-D is a common material used in these marketing schemes. I was even asked about a wonder product for pecans. The marketing person claimed 4 years worth of bareground weed control under the trees. I checked with the agent, he checked and found out the firm was in Georgia but home base for the company was in Long Island, NY. They finally sent a product label and it was prometon. Prometon is the active ingredient in Pramitol, which has been used for years as a soil sterilant. In essence the grower may have gotten 4 years worth of weed control but all the pecan trees would have died from the prometon.

When someone gets a phone call of this type, the best thing to do is ask for specifics. Can you send (fax) a label? Do you have a web site? What is the active ingredient(s)? What is your EPA registration number? Also, ask for a phone number where they can be reached. In addition, if the product is 2,4-D or similar, are you really saving money? Remember that buying a pesticide over the phone has a lot of risks including purity or authenticity of the product, and lack of product support. Buyer Beware!

Source: G. E. MacDonald, Weed Researcher, University of Florida, Agronomy Notes, April 2003



## Why Do We Adjust Weights to 205 Days?

Did you ever wonder why we adjust weaning weights to 205 days? We adjust weights, of course, to make fair comparisons between animals of different ages. But, why use 205 days as the standard age? Seven months (30 weeks) is 210 days. Using 200 days would make the math easier and, in fact, they do adjust weaning weights to 200 days in other

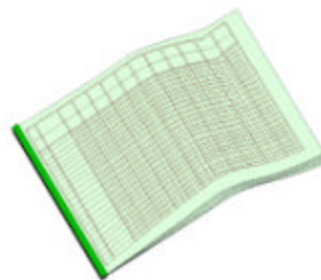
countries. So, what's the logic of adjusting weights to 205 days?

We need to go back about 60 years to start this story. In 1944 Marvin Kroger and J. H. Knox published a paper in the *Journal of Animal Science* (Volume 4, Page 285) titled, "A Method for Estimating Weaning Weights of Range Calves at a Constant Age." They had taken the weaning weights of calves at the New Mexico Experiment Station from 1936 to 1943 and used them to develop the formula for adjusting weaning weights to a constant age. The average weaning age of calves at the New Mexico Experiment from 1936 to 1943 was, you guessed it, 205 days.

In the days before computers and pocket calculators, Kroger and Knox included a chart for adjusting weights in their paper. It was easier to use the chart than adjust each weight with a pencil, so few people bothered to recalculate the formula for different average weights.

In the 1950's and early 1960's when state BCIA programs and breed association performance programs were getting started, adjustments from 200 to 250 days were used in various places. In the late 1960's when the Beef Improvement Federation was formed to standardize procedures, age for adjusting weaning weights was a controversial issue. The standard of 205 was adopted. One logic of the time was that you wean at 205, have a 20 day post weaning warm up period and have a 140 day post-weaning gain test to finish at a year of age ( $205 + 20 + 140 = 365$ ). Some of the people who supported the 205 standard, supported it because it fit well with the old 140-day bull test. Today most bull tests are 112 days long and there is no logic for 205 days other than it is the way we have always done it. You need to have some standard and 205 is as good as any.

Source: Ronnie Silcox, Extension Animal Scientist, *Livestock Newsletter*, January-February 2003, AS-1



## Cotton Seed Cost Calculator Now Available

A cotton seed cost calculator decision aid (Excel spreadsheet) has been developed and is available on the UGA Cotton Web Page or the Extension Agriculture and Applied Economics Web Page.

At either location, you can view, print, and/or save a PDF file which is the Instructions for the cost calculator program. The instructions have an embedded link in the title "Cotton Seed Cost Calculator".

Clicking on the title, you can then save or download the spreadsheet.

To calculate seed cost, data such as row spacing, seeding rate, seed count, and cost per bag is required to be entered in the spreadsheet. Up to 3 varieties may be compared on a single spreadsheet. Seed cost per acre is a function of row spacing, seeding rate, seed count, and

seed and tech fee cost per bag. With planting season ahead, this spreadsheet program should be a timely tool and decision aid for producers.

Source: Shurley, Jost and Brown, The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension, Georgia Cotton, March 21, 2003

**PLANTING TIP:** Do not plant small seeded varieties too deep. Small seeded varieties typically have less vigor and less “pushing power” than larger seeded ones. Routine planting depth for small seeded cultivars such as DP 458 B/RR and DP 555 BG/RR provably should not exceed 1 inch.

(Source: Brown, The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension, Georgia Cotton, April 23, 2003)



### New Varieties to Watch

Cotton varieties continue to change rapidly as older ones drop off the list and new ones are added. There are a few to watch this year to see how well they perform when planted across several acres in the southeast. DP 555 BG/RR, a stacked Roundup Ready/Bollgard variety, is a full season entry that has received a lot of press and is set to be planted on a large acreage in the southern cotton belt. It has shown very good yield potential, discount “avoidance” grades, and the potential need for an aggressive vegetative growth regulation program. ST 5303RR and 5599 BG/RR are two new mid-season varieties from Stoneville with the potential for excellent yields. ST 5599 has exhibited tolerance to rootknot nematode and research is still being conducted on the level of tolerance for ST 5303. “Tolerance” simply means that the variety is still able to grow and perform well even in the presence of root knot nematodes. These varieties were noted to have “sporadic” bronze wilt occurrence in a few locations in 2002. There may be other varieties to watch as the season progresses including limited field trials with Bollgard II and Liberty Link entries.

As has been the case over the past several years, we still advise producers to consider the following suggestions when planting a new variety for the first time:

- 1) Plant a limited number of acres of a new variety if this is the first time for it on your farm since some varieties will require higher levels of management than others;
- 2) Consult university variety trials to compare its performance over a 2- or 3-year period;
- 3) Let the university and consultants’ trials help to “weed out” varieties that might not fit your farming operation and soils;
- 4) Utilize company information for comparisons and potential returns;

- 5) Talk with local extension agents, specialists, and consultants about their experience with the new varieties and attend local extension and seed industry field days.

Source: D. Monks and D. Delaney, Alabama Cooperative Extension, Alabama Cotton Picksack Newsletter, April 2003



### **When do I need a foliar insecticide for thrips on seedling cotton?**

Thrips are an annual pest of seedling cotton and most growers utilize a preventive treatment at planting for control of these pests. However, some fields may also need a foliar insecticide treatment for additional protection. Fields should be scouted at least once a week for early season thrips. Seedlings are vulnerable to thrips attack until plants reach the 5-leaf stage and are growing rapidly. The threshold for thrips is 2-3 thrips per plant. Treatment will definitely be needed on fields where immature or wingless thrips are observed at threshold levels. The presence of immature thrips suggests the preventive treatment is failing. Damage from thrips includes crinkled and distorted leaves, delays in maturity, plant stunting, and potentially loss of apical dominance or stand loss.

Source: Roberts, The University of Georgia, Georgia Cotton, April 23, 2003

### **Watch Grasshoppers in Reduced-Tillage Systems**

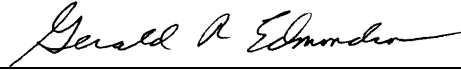
Grasshoppers have been an emerging pest, primarily in conservation tillage systems, for the past 4 to 5 springs. Only time will tell what the 2003 situation will be like. As of early April, high numbers have been reported from only one field. There is some likelihood that we could see a reduced problem this spring due to the wetter than usual fall and winter.



Grasshoppers emerge during the months of April, May, and June from eggs deposited in clusters in the soil the previous fall. Newly hatched nymphs are white but exposure to sunlight turns them the distinctive brown color shortly thereafter. Nymphs feed and grow for 35 or more days before becoming adults. Grasshoppers are much easier to control in the nymphal stage. Lower labeled rates of acephate (Orthene), Lorsban, Bidrin and pyrethroids will control the nymphs. Higher rates of these same materials will be required to give acceptable control of the adult stage later in the spring. Dimilin will give suppression of the nymphs and long residual to help with adults. No established threshold is available. Controls should be based on experiences the past few seasons and the stage or size of the cotton. Grasshoppers only damage cotton by causing stand losses up until about the fifth true leaf stage.

Source: R. Smith, Alabama Cooperative Extension, Alabama Cotton Picksack Newsletter, April 2003

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