

March Beef Cattle Management Calendar

Weed Control:

- If you are constantly having to spray, you need to change management: raise grazing or clipping height, use high density grazing, more animals in small acreage for short duration < 7 days, rest pastures longer 14 to 90 days
- Consider spot spraying weeds, follow label recommendations
- Multi-species and high density grazing helps control weeds
- Adding goats and/or sheep to your grazing changes weeds to valuable forbs

Livestock:

- Feed high magnesium mineral to prevent grass tetany
- Proper phosphorus fertilization enhances forage magnesium uptake and lowers the risk of grass tetany
- Soil potassium levels that are too high can kill cows by increasing the incidence of grass tetany
- Young calves learn from their mother, exposing calves to feed and forage with mother improves intake

Grazing:

- Drought management-graze top third of pasture stockpiling every paddock.
- If rotation stopped during the winter, begin pasture rotation before forage gets ahead of cattle.
- Rotate quickly through pasture, practice take half leave half principle (i.e. at turn in, graze no lower than 3", 4" is better)
- Slowly introduce livestock to tall fescue if they come from an area that does not have tall fescue
- Limit graze winter annuals (winter annuals cost approximately \$50/acre less than hay)
- Consider prescribed burning native warm season grasses, consult North Carolina Forestry Division for a burn plan and permit

Soil Fertility:

- Consider costs prior to fertilizing
- 100 cows on 1 acre for 11 days provides equivalent of 150 lbs. of 19-19-19 fertilizer
- Value of manure from one cow is over \$200 per year
- High density grazing four or more animals per acre improves manure distribution
- Spread waste hay, mud, and manure from feeding areas

Seeding or Renovation:

- Clean and calibrate drill
- Smooth and reseed hay feeding areas and heavy traffic areas
- Evaluate legume stands for reseeding
- Certified red clover seed typically lasts 3 years, where common only lasts 2 years
- Place small seed at ¼ to ½ inch depth
- Planting too deep is a common problem
- Slow down for more precise seeding

Management:

Spring Calving Herd

- For a January 10-March 30 calving season, bulls need to go in April 1-June 20. Conduct breeding soundness exams and make sure bulls are in good condition.
- Cows need to be in moderate to good condition to rebreed early. You may need to

start feeding your best hay and put them on your best grazing now. Supplement as needed according to forage test results.

- Start breeding heifers about a month before the cowherd.
- Castrate, dehorn and implant calves at birth.

Fall Calving Herd

- Remove bulls March 23 to end calving season about December 31.
- Keep bulls in a small pasture with strong fences. Feed bulls enough to keep them in good condition for next year's breeding.
- Spot check cows to see if most are bred. By now, there should be little activity.
- Vaccinate for clostridial disease, castrate, and dehorn late calves or those missed in early working.