

Distribution of this newsletter is limited strictly to e-mail.  
To receive this newsletter, please send your e-mail address to: [lee.county@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:lee.county@ag.tamu.edu)

## EFFECTS OF GRAIN OR GRASS FINISHING

Angus steers initially averaging 905 lb were either 1) grazed on mixed species pasture for 84 days followed by ryegrass-clover pasture for 219 days or 2) fed in drylot on 80%-corn ration for 168 days. Results were:

All of the above except final weight were significantly different. Grass-finished steaks were significantly more tender. But there were no significant differences in taste-panel juiciness, flavor intensity,

flavor quality, or overall palatability; grain-finished tended to have slightly more intense, more desirable flavor.

Cost of gain was \$0.07/cwt less for grass finishing. Based on the economic analysis in the paper, if a carcass price premium of 8% could be realized for grass finishing that system resulted in \$62/head more profit. However, without any premium grain finishing was \$25/head more profitable.

[Prof. Anim. Sci. 29:298; Univ. of California]

Trait	Grain	Grass
ADG, lb	2.95	1.68
Final weight, lb	1410	1353
Dressing %	63.1	58.4
Fat cover, in	0.51	0.40
Ribeye area, sq in	14.4	12.6
Yield Grade	3.6	3.0
Quality Grade	low Choice	high Select

## AGE EFFECTS ON PRICE

We all know cattle of the same weight are not priced the same. As an example, before the federal government shutdown on market reports the most recently available price range, in late September, for 600-700 lb steers at the Oklahoma City market was \$149.50-\$172.00.

Many factors enter into price including such things as type/breed, color, health, horns, etc. A factor not mentioned as often as these is age. My colleague, Dr.

Ted McCollum at the Texas A&M Center in Amarillo, noted some recent figures from the Apache, OK, auction.

Of cattle of similar weight, those identified as calves averaged about \$9/cwt lower price than those identified as yearlings, which are generally healthier and often come with more efficient, compensatory gain compared to calves.



[Dr. Stephen Hammack, Professor & Extension Beef Cattle Specialist Emeritus, Beef Cattle Browsing; available on-line at <http://animalscience.tamu.edu/academics/beef/browsing/>]

Volume 13, Issue 4  
October 2013

Lee County Extension News is a service of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Lee County.

Lee County Extension Office  
310 South Grimes  
Giddings, Texas 78942

979.542.2753; office  
979.542.2362; fax

<http://Lee.AgriLife.org>

e-mail: [lee.county@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:lee.county@ag.tamu.edu)

*Keeton Ehrig*  
Keeton Ehrig

Extension Agent  
Agriculture/Natural Resources

Portions of this newsletter are cited from the Texas A&M University Beef Cattle Browsing Newsletter, Dr. Steve Hammack.

*Tonya Poncik*  
Tonya Poncik

Extension Agent  
Family & Consumer Sciences

Education programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U. S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Court of Texas Cooperating.

## ANOTHER WAY TO USE LIQUID FEED FOR COWS

Liquid feed for beef cows is typically delivered by free-choice lick tank. Two studies evaluated adding liquid feed to hay. In the first study, 191 mature, dry, pregnant, wintering Angus cows received for 77 days either: 1) free-choice 35% CP liquid, 2) the same liquid added to bales at 10% of bale weight, or 3) 2.75 lb/day distillers dried grain plus solubles. The second study included 160 Angus and 20 Brahman X Hereford mature, dry, pregnant, wintering cows which received for 52 days either 1) free-choice liquid, 2) liquid added at 10% bale weight, or 3) liquid added at 15% bale

weight.

Liquid feed was added by tipping bales on end, pouring liquid into the end, keeping in place for 8 hours, and turning bales back on side. All cows received free-choice approximately (dry-matter basis) 9% CP, 45% TDN bermuda grass hay. When fed, hay was 1½ to 2½ years old and had been stored uncovered on dirt or asphalt surface. Hay was fed in pipe round bale feeders with feeding space of approximately 1.5 linear feet per cow.

Change in weight and Body Condition Score was not consistent across

treatments and studies. However, there were some statistically significant differences in hay waste. In the first study, hay waste from free-choice liquid (23.5%) was significantly higher than poured liquid (18.3%); DDGS (21.6%) did not differ significantly from the other treatments. In the second study, waste for 10% liquid (26.8%) and 15% liquid (23.9%) did not differ significantly but free-choice loss (31.7%) was significantly higher than both poured levels. The authors concluded that the pour method could reduce cost in supplementing beef cows.

## NEWLY-IDENTIFIED GENETIC ABNORMALITY IN ANGUS

Polymelia, also being referred to as developmental duplication or DD, a condition characterized by calves born with extra limbs, has been reported in American Angus cattle; it has been identified as being due to simple genetic recessive inheritance, likely involving a recent mutation. Approximately 6 percent of American Angus sires are estimated to be carriers of the responsible gene. Occurrence of the condition at birth is much lower than would be pre-

dicted from the estimated gene frequency in the breed. Therefore, in most cases embryonic death apparently occurs. Additional information can be accessed at <http://www.angus.org/Pub/DD/DDInfo.aspx>.

A recent presentation at the Beef Improvement Federation Annual Meeting and Research Symposium noted that all breeds have numerous mutations but that most are not problematic. Inbreed-

ing or linebreeding increases the chance that undesirable recessives are inherited from both parents. Outbreeding within a breed decreases that chance and crossbreeding eliminates it, unless the breeds involved in the cross have some common background in their creation. ([www.beefimprovement.org](http://www.beefimprovement.org))

[Beef Cattle Browsing; available on-line at <http://animalscience.tamu.edu/academics/beef/browsing/>]

## PREDICTING EFFICIENCY FROM DNA

A group of steers, 522 Angus and 395 Charolais, were used to determine accuracy of DNA markers in predicting Residual Feed Intake. When the predicting and predicted groups were more closely related, accuracy was 0.58 for Angus and 0.62 for Charolais.

When there was minimal pedigree relationship, accuracy was 0.29 for Angus and 0.38 for Charolais. Pooling data from the two breeds resulted in accuracy of 0.31 for Angus and 0.43 for Charolais. But when data from one breed were used to predict in the other, accuracy decreased to 0.10 to 0.22 depending on the prediction method. So, as has been shown in other research, utility of DNA markers is highest when the predicting and predicted groups are more similar.

[J. Animal Sci. 91:4669; Univ. of Alberta, Univ. of Guelph, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (Lacombe, AB), Colorado St. Univ.]

## WHAT DO MOTHERS THINK ABOUT FOOD FOR THEIR FAMILIES?

In a recent "Gate to Plate" survey, more than one thousand American mothers were surveyed regarding where food comes from and how it is raised. Some of the results:

- more than half of respondents indicated they believe it is important to feed hormone-free products, even at higher cost
- more than half thought it is important to buy "all natural" if possible, because it is more nutritious
- 7 out of 10 thought the family farm is dying
- 7 out of 10 thought farmers are an important source for information on food and farming, but only 1 out of 5 sought out farmers for such information

(<http://findourcommonground.com/>)

## HOW BIG IS A STEAK TODAY?

In the latest National Beef Quality Audit, the average ribeye measured 13.7 sq in. That results in an inch-thick steak weighing 15-17 ounces. Most ribeyes fall in the range of 11-16 sq in, though some are much smaller and some much larger.

A ribeye measuring 11 sq in should result in a steak weighing 12-14 ounces; the 16 sq in ribeye steak should weigh about 18-20 ounces.

Many consumers don't want more than the 12-14 ounce steak, not to mention the bigger ones. In fact, a staple item at many mid-price steak

houses is a 6 or 8 ounce portion.

Reducing thickness reduces weight, but also generally reduces eating satisfaction when grilling, especially in the hands of inexperienced or poorly informed cooks. In some cases, large



cuts consisting of multiple muscles are being separated into the component muscles; this also can have the added benefit of being able to trim any outside fat from the fabricated muscles. And some steaks are being cut in half or even smaller portions. Cattle weights show no sign of declining, or even stabilizing, so the industry will probably just have to develop more and better ways to use larger cattle.

[Beef Cattle Browsing; available on-line at <http://animalscience.tamu.edu/academics/beef/browsing/>]

## 'TIS THE SEASON FOR CRANBERRIES

It's fall and cranberries abound. Look at your local farmer's market or grocery store at the choices of bright red and juicy cranberries!

Cranberries pack a nutritional punch and are loaded with phytochemicals, Vitamin C and fiber. In fact, a ½ cup serving of fresh cranberries contains only 20 calories but has 2 grams of fiber and counts towards the recommended two cups of fruit we should eat per day. Dried cranberries are also a great choice and ¼ cup of dried is equivalent to ½ cup of fresh fruit.

Fresh cranberries, sold at most local grocery stores, are prepackaged in 12 ounce plastic bags. Cranberries do not ripen after harvest. When selecting cranberries, choose fruits that are shiny, plump and range in color from bright light red to dark red. Shriveled berries or those with brown spots should be avoided.

Once you are home, store cranberries in a sealed plastic bag in the refrig-

erator and consume as soon as possible. Cranberries can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 4 weeks, but remove any soft or discolored berries before storing. Once decay begins, other berries can quickly soften and decay also. Fresh cranberries may also be frozen for later use. To freeze cranberries, check the fruits and throw out any soft ones. Next, wash and drain well. Place in an airtight freezer proof bag and freeze for up to one year.

For most people, cranberries are too tart to be eaten raw and must be cooked. Cook cranberries only until they pop. Overcooking gives a bitter taste. Since cranberries are nearly 90% water, do not thaw frozen cranberries before cooking them. Thawing will result in soft cranberries.

Try adding cranberries to muffins or prepare a cranberry sauce. An easy recipe for fresh cranberry sauce is 2 cups of cranberries, 1 cup of sugar, and ½ cup of water.

Wash and sort the berries and place

all ingredients in a saucepan. Bring the berries to a boil, stirring frequently to dissolve the sugar. Boil gently for 10 minutes or so, or until the berries pop and their skins crack. Remove from heat and skim foam. Serve this favorite holiday sauce hot or cold.

Sweetening fresh cranberries to cut the tart flavor is another option. To avoid adding lots of sugar, try mixing cranberries with fruits like apples, oranges or apricots that have lots of natural sweetness.

For example, try a fresh cranberry-orange relish. Combine 1 lb. chopped cranberries with 1 lb. chopped oranges. Add 1 cup of sugar and mix well. Store covered in the refrigerator. You could even try this recipe with half sugar and half sweetener to reduce the amount of calories.

Dried cranberries which are often pre-sweetened can easily be added to oatmeal, cold cereals, homemade trail mix, or to a fresh green salad.

## FOOD SAFETY TIPS FOR HUNTERS

With hunting season just a few days away, here are a few tips to keep your harvested food safe this season.

### In the field:

First, never shoot, handle or consume any wild animal that appears sick.

Contamination can occur at any point during the processing of wild game. Take extra time and handle carcasses with care when field dressing.

Some things to consider: wear gloves when field dressing, remove all internal organs, discard any meat that is bruised, discolored, contaminated with feces or intestinal contents, contains hair, dirt or bone fragments.

Remove any bloodshot areas or

meat that was in contact with the bullet. Also, avoid contact with intestines, spinal tissues and lymph nodes of animals while you work. Do not use household knives or utensils, use knives designed for field dressing. Be sure to remove all foreign particles and loose hair.

When cleaning up in the field, be sure to properly dispose of the hide and remaining parts of the animal in an offal pit or in an approved area.

### Processing and storing wild game:

Be aware of cross contamination and temperature abuse, both will cause the meat to go bad. Cool carcasses quickly, keep them cool during transport and keep them out of direct sunlight. Cool the carcass by propping

the chest open with a clean stick and allowing air to circulate. Thoroughly clean and sanitize all equipment used in the processing of the animal. Wash your hands, knife, cutting boards often with warm soapy water.

Packaging and storing meat is very important in the overall quality of the product. For immediate use, store meat in the refrigerator and use within a few days. If freezing, divide the meat into smaller portions then package. It is recommended to use moisture proof wrap such as heavy wax paper, laminated freezer wrap, heavy duty aluminum foil or freezer-weight polyethylene bags for freezing meat products. Make sure to get all the air out of the packages prior to sealing them. Be sure to label the packages with contents and date.

## HOLIDAY MEMORIES CAN BEGIN IN THE KITCHEN

The Holidays are a time that young children can get excited about new foods and healthy eating, so get them involved in the kitchen. Young children like to imitate their parents, and this is especially true during meal planning and food preparation.

Young children can:

- wipe and help set the table,

- select fruits or vegetables for the meal,
- rinse vegetables and fruits,
- snap green beans,
- stir pancake batter, and
- help assemble a salad.

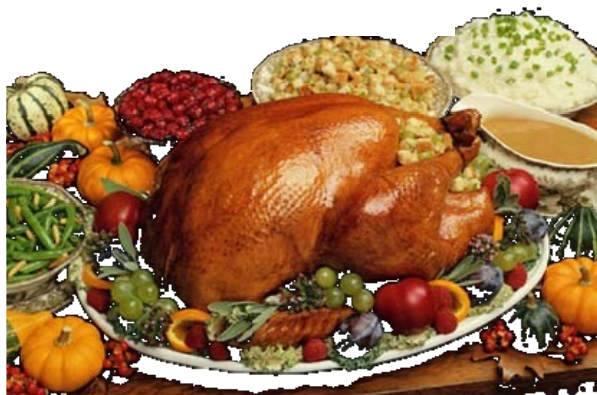
Parents need to remember some safety tips when children are in the kitchen:

- Cook with pots and pans on the back burners.
- Keep hot dishes where children cannot touch or pull them down on top of themselves.
- Children should not remove cooked food from the microwave.

- Keep knives and other sharp objects out of children's reach.

Watching children closely and giving them specific, child-appropriate tasks can help to increase your child's interest in new foods and food preparation. Dr. Sharon Robinson, Associate Professor and Nutrition Specialist with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, recommends that parents teach children to wash their hands with warm, soapy water before helping in the kitchen. This lifelong habit will keep children from getting sick or making others sick with a foodborne illness.

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service offers free and low-cost nutrition and health classes and other events. To find out what is available in Lee County, please contact Extension Agent Tonya Poncik.



Brazos Valley

# Soil Testing Campaign

for agricultural ground production acreage

**Oct. 28**

thru

**Nov. 26**



## Routine Analysis (R)

(pH, NO<sub>3</sub>-N, Conductivity and Mehlich III by ICP P, K, Ca, Mg, Na and S)

## R + Micronutrients (Micro)

(DTPA Zn, Fe, Cu and Mn)

Discount pricing valid only if routed through  
the Lee County Extension office on dates listed.

**KEETON EHRIG**

Extension Agent

Agriculture and  
Natural Resources

**979•542•2753**

Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

Soil sample bags and forms are available from:

**Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service**  
**Lee County**  
**310 S. Grimes, Giddings**

\* NOTE: Pricing valid only if routed through the Lee County Extension office on dates listed.

Sponsored by: Lee County office of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Lee County Livestock and Forage Committee, in cooperation with Burleson, Milam and Washington counties.

*Annual Lee County 4-H*



*Poinsettia*  
*and*  
*Pecan Sale*

**on sale now thru November 12**

Contact any

**Lee County 4-H Member**

or call the Extension office

**979-542-2753**



Proceeds from the fund raiser remain in  
Lee County, supporting membership  
participation in district and state-wide activities.

