

Virginia Cooperative Extension Animal & Poultry Sciences

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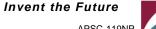
Livestock Update

Beef - Horse - Poultry - Sheep - Swine December 2015

This LIVESTOCK UPDATE contains timely subject matter on beef cattle, horses, poultry, sheep, swine, and related junior work. Use this material as you see fit for local newspapers, radio programs, newsletters, and for the formulation of recommendations.

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Scott P. Greiner, Extension Project Leader Department of Animal & Poultry Sciences



Dates to Remember

SHEEP

DECEMBER

5 - 2015 Virginia Sheep Producers' Association Fall Bred Ewe & Doe Sale. Rockingham County Fairgrounds in Harrisonburg, VA.

<u>Contact:</u> Information on the 2016 test and sale may be attained from Scott Greiner, Extension Sheep Specialist, Virginia Tech, phone 540-231-9159, email <u>sgreiner@vt.edu</u>, or visit the VT Sheep Extension website http://www.apsc.vt.edu/extension/sheep/index.html

BEEF

DECEMBER

12 - Virginia BCIA Culpeper Senior Bulls Sale. Culpeper Agricultural Enterprises located at 10220 James Monroe Hwy., Rte. 29 just south of Culpeper, VA.

<u>Contact:</u> For video clips as well as catalogs and detailed information on the bulls visit the website <u>www.bcia.apsc.vt.edu</u>, or phone Virginia BCIA at 540-231-9159 or Glenmary Farm at 540-672-7396.

December Herd Management Advisor

Scott P. Greiner Extension Beef Specialist, Virginia Tech

As 2015 comes to a close, now is an excellent time to reflect on the year you experienced with your cattle enterprise. As you review receipts, it is important to keep the big picture in focus. The key to making significant changes is identifying the weaknesses in important areas which have a major impact on your bottom line and addressing those which will have the largest impact. Production and economic records are the necessary tools to identify the variables where the smallest change will have the greatest impact on your profitability. Likewise, it is important to understand which key investments will have the potential for the biggest return on investment (items such as facilities, fencing, genetics, etc.). As you take advantage of the short days to work on your enterprise records, what pieces are you missing? The 2016 record year starts in less than a month.

Spring Calving Herds (January-March)

General

- Begin preparation for calving season by checking inventory and securing necessary supplies (ob equipment, tube feeder, colostrum supplement, ear tags, animal health products, calving book, etc.)
- Evaluate marketing options for calves not yet sold.
- Evaluate cull cow marketing strategy, take advantage of seasonality in cull cow price.
- Conduct forage tests to determine nutritional content of hays.

Nutrition and Forages

- Evaluate body score cows that you identified as thin and gauge if your management is making adequate progress.
- Continue strip grazing accumulated fescue growth as needed.
- Continue to manage first-calf heifers separately; give them the best forage. Thin mature cows could be added to this group.
- Feed lower-quality hay to dry cows, saving the best hay for calving season
- Continue to feed high Se trace mineral salt. A forage/hay analysis can reveal what other minerals should be supplemented.
- Harvest impacts on feed costs have taken affect. Work to contract or lock-in winter feed needs at the most economical price.

Herd Health

In consultation with your veterinarian, finalize vaccination and preconditioning protocol for calf crop.

Reproduction

Cull open, old and thin cows and cows with problem udders, eyes and soundness issues.

Genetics

- Make plans for winter and spring bull-buying season. Evaluate potential sources for bull purchase.
 Using herd genetic goals, establish benchmarks and selection criteria for bulls to be purchased. Secure new natural service sires in ample time to acclimate to your management and environment prior to breeding season.
- Identify replacement heifers using objective measures including genetic background, dam
 performance, and individual performance, along with phenotype. Keep only heifers born in defined
 calving season.

Fall Calving Herds (September-November)

General

- Calving season is completed for most. Continue to observe late calving cows frequently.
- Calving records should be complete and up to date.
- Monitor calves for scours.
- Begin breeding season.
- Conduct forage tests to determine nutritional content of hays.
- Initiate breeding season.

Nutrition and Forages

- As the breeding season begins, remember that maintaining or gaining weight have a major impact on pregnancy rate. As available forage becomes scarcer and of lower quality, be prepared to supplement as needed.
- Offer high magnesium mineral. Generally, fall calving cows are not as predisposed to grass tetany. As cows transition from grazing to hay or silage, hi-mag minerals can be discontinued.
- Use strip grazing as a tool to increase the efficiency of utilization of cool season pastures by cows post-calving.

Herd Health

- Consult with your veterinarian concerning pre-breeding vaccination schedule for cow herd, yearling heifers, and bulls. Plan early to allow 30-day vaccination window prior to breeding season.
- Begin planning vaccination and preconditioning protocol to be used for calf crop at weaning
- Castrate commercial calves if not done at birth, consider castrating bottom end of male calves in seedstock herds.
- Monitor calf crop for health, have treatment options on hand.

Reproduction

- Reproductive tract score and measure pelvic area on yearling replacement heifers.
- Implement plans and protocols for breeding season following pre-planned calendar and synchronization program. Confirm schedule with AI technician, have supplies and semen on hand. Take time to be precise with protocols for synchronization, estrus detection, and semen handling.
- Breed heifers 2-4 weeks ahead of mature cows to allow longer post-partum interval prior to second breeding season
- Use 48 hour calf removal for thin cows and first-calf heifers at beginning of breeding season

- Schedule and conduct breeding soundness exams on herd sires, including annual vaccinations prior to turn-out.
- Manage bulls properly during the breeding season. Observe frequently to confirm breeding activity and soundness, and monitor cows for repeat estrus. Avoid commingling mature and young bulls, as older bulls will be dominant. As rule of thumb, yearling bulls should be exposed to number of cows equal to their age in months (ie. 18 month old bull with ~18 cows).

Genetics

• Finish collecting yearling performance data (weight, height, scrotal, ultrasound) in seedstock herds.

Record-Selling Angus Bull at the 2015 Hokie Harvest Sale

By Dr. Dan Eversole, Dept. of Animal and Poultry Sciences

The 2015 Livestock Merchandising Class at Virginia Tech entertained a standing-room-only crowd of over 500 supporters, alumni, and friends in the Livestock Judging Pavilion at the 21st Annual Hokie Harvest Sale on Friday, October 30th. It was a beautiful day and pleasant evening for a cattle sale that featured 43 lots of purebred and commercial beef cattle being offered at public auction to 156 registered buyers from Pennsylvania, Illinois, Georgia, North Dakota, South Carolina, North Carolina, West Virginia, and Virginia. Mr. Aaron Ray Tompkins, Ennice, NC streamed the entire sale live over the internet at Cowbuyer LLC. This year's offering grossed \$136,450 and featured 19 head of commercial bred females and 28 cattle representing three different purebred breeds – Hereford, Simmental, and Angus.



Lot 16-Record selling Angus Bull

The breeding-age bull division of 7 yearling bulls captured considerable excitement when Lot 16 sold for \$13,800, which is the record-selling price for bulls sold in any previous Hokie Harvest Sale. This Angus yearling bull is sired by EXAR Denver 2002B and stems from a grand dam who has made her mark in the VT program as the \$10,000 valued 'Rita 317' donor cow. He stands among non-parent bulls in the upper 10% on CED, WW, YW, \$W, and \$QG. This popular herd-sire prospect was purchased by ADL 7 Hunting Ranch of Fincastle, VA.

There were 5 spring-calving pairs in the cow/calf division, which averaged \$4,540. Lot 2 was the sale

topper at \$7,700. This four-year-old Angus cow is a daughter of B/R New Day 454 and posts a progeny WR 2@104, YR 1@108, and REA 1@107 with a calving interval of 366 days on two head. She is a highly productive, low birthweight cow who sold to Hill Crest Associates of Delaplane, VA for \$4100. Her January bull calf, sired by EXAR Denver 2002B, tipped the scales at 1,055 lbs and ranks in the top 10% among non-parent bulls for WW, YW, RE, and \$W. He sold to Pride Arrington of Glade Spring, VA for \$3600.

Six pairs of fall-calvers were in high demand among Angus and Simmental breeders with Angus pairs averaging \$4,267 while the Simmental pairs averaged \$3,433. Clyde Bays, Huddleston, VA paid the top price of \$4400 for a four-year-old B/R New Day 454 daughter (Lot 7) nursing a VAR Index 3282 bull calf born 10/16/15. Echo Valley Farm, Danville, VA purchased Lot 8 at the identical price for a productive daughter of S S Rito Rito R011 2R12 nursing a fancy heifer calf by RB Tour of Duty 177 born 9/13/15. Lot 9 commanded the highest bid in the Simmental division. This four-year-old daughter of Nichols Manifest T79 and her September heifer calf by HPF Optimizer A512 sold to Marvin Pence, Browntown, VA for \$3600.

The 19 head of commercial bred heifers and cows, mostly Angus or SimAngus breeding, drew considerable interest among cattlemen. The seven bred heifers averaged \$2,850 while the 12 commercial bred cows averaged \$2,413. Bidding was lively and numerous buyers swept the ring on female groupings. ADL 7

Hunting Ranch, Fincastle, VA and Joshua Boothe, Floyd, VA were the volume buyers on these productive bred females due to calve next spring.

This was the second largest class of merchandising students in the 21-year history of the Hokie Harvest The 97 students which comprised nine Sale. committees did a superb job of preparing for the sale and all gained 'hands-on' experience in sale management, budgeting, cataloging, advertising, livestock photography, clerking, and health requirements. Special thanks are extended to Col. Ken Brubaker Sales and of Marketing, Harrisonburg, VA for guest lecturing and serving as the sale consultant and auctioneer. In addition to Aaron Ray Tompkins of Cowbuyer LLC, a huge 'thank you' is



extended to our guest speakers Tom Burke, American Angus Hall of Fame, Smithville, MO, Julie and Martin Macqueen, High Road Livestock Photography of Covington, VA, Chris Terembes, Executive Sires of Charlottesville, VA and Dr. Terry Swecker of the VT College of Veterinary Medicine for sharing their expertise and time to support this year's class and the Hokie Harvest Sale. Students Landon Bays, Bedford, VA, Laura DeBusk, Blackstone, VA, and Alexa Turner, Gilbertsville, PA served as bid-takers for the sale while Turner Jones, Abingdon, VA and Alex Weller, Staunton, VA worked the ring. Kent Firestone, Upperville, VA served as the student clerk in the block.



Alexandra Dodd-Halter breaking her sale calf

The Food and Beverage Committee served a delicious, complimentary BBQ dinner to nearly 475 guests. Hannah McDonald, Cross Junction, VA and Dustin Richardson, Galax, VA, both of whom are members of the departmental Block and Bridle Club, spearheaded this committee of 12 members who learned about meal planning, food safety, and quality control.

Public interest in the Hokie Harvest Sale continues to be overwhelming in favor of hosting future student-run livestock sales. However, as many of you know who host annual production sales, purebred and commercial animal inventory numbers need to remain

strong to continually offer quality livestock at public auction. Funds generated from Hokie Harvest Sales continue to provide funding critical to the survival of departmental programs. We are hopeful to host the 22nd Annual Hokie Harvest Sale on Friday, October 28, 2016. Many thanks to all of you for your past support and interest in our beef teaching program. Mark your calendars now and we hope that you can 'Come and Experience the Harvest'!

<u>Annual Virginia Fall Bred Ewe Sale to be Held December 5</u>

The 2015 Virginia Sheep Producer's Association Fall Bred Ewe & Doe Sale will be held Saturday, December 5 at 1:00 PM at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds in Harrisonburg. Yearling ewes and does, ewe lambs and doe kids, along with mature ewes and does will be sold. All yearling and mature ewes and does will be sold as guaranteed pregnant. Breeds offered will include Suffolk, Hampshire, Dorset, and crossbreds (including whether dams). All does will be registered meat goats or meat goat crossbreds. For a sale catalog or more information visit the VSPA website http://www.vasheepproducers.com/.

2015 CULPEPER SENIOR BULL SALE

By Scott P. Greiner Extension Animal Scientist, Beef Virginia Tech

The 58th annual sale of the Virginia BCIA Culpeper Senior bulls will feature 62 fall-born yearling bulls on Saturday, December 12, 2015 at 12:00 noon at the Culpeper Agricultural Enterprises located at 10220 James Monroe Highway on Route 29 just south of Culpeper, Virginia. These 62 fall-born bulls represent the top end of the 86 Angus, Gelbvieh, Gelbvieh Balancers, Simmental and SimAngus, bulls currently being developed.

The majority of the bulls selling are sired by trait-leading, highly proven AI bulls of each breed. All bulls selling meet minimum genetic requirements (EPDs) to sire calves for the VQA Purple Tag Feeder Calf Program. Bulls have been screened for reproductive and structural soundness, and sell with the BCIA enhanced guarantee for soundness and fertility. Complete performance information will be available on all bulls, including growth, maternal, and carcass EPDs, detailed test performance information, and ultrasound data. Many of the bulls will sell with genomically-enhanced EPDs, and all SimmAngus bulls will be genotyped for homozygous black status.

Again this year, we will feature video clips of each of the bulls available for sale. These video clips provide buyers a good opportunity to preview the bulls prior to sale day, and can be found on the BCIA website www.bcia.apsc.vt.edu. Virginia BCIA would like to thank Southern States and Mike Shanahan of Shanahan Cattle Promotions for their support of the video feature.

Based on positive feedback, the sale will be available via the internet through DV Auction at www.dvauction.com. Producers will be able to view and purchase bulls over the internet with live streaming video in conjunction with the sale.

For video clips as well as catalogs and detailed information on the bulls visit the website www.bcia.apsc.vt.edu, or phone Virginia BCIA at 540-231-9159 or Glenmary Farm at 540-672-7396.

Virginia Livestock Hall of Fame Inducts Five

By: A.L. (Ike) Eller, Jr.

Five Virginia livestock industry leaders were inducted into the Virginia Livestock Hall of Fame on September 24, 2015 at Blacksburg, Virginia. Portraits of honored individuals were unveiled and hang in the gallery at the Alphin-Stuart Livestock Arena on the campus of Virginia Tech.

Those honored include the following:

- **Dr. Olive Kendrick Britt**, (honored posthumously) formerly of Maiden, Virginia. She was Virginia's first female veterinarian to specialize in equine medicine and was honored as Virginia's Veterinarian of The Year in 1993. Her pioneering work in the field of equine medicine opened doors for other women veterinarians.
- Richard H. L. Chichester III of Falmouth, Virginia, and a Virginia Tech Dairy Science alumni, is one of the
 most renowned individuals in the cattle genetics industry and is recognized worldwide. Under his
 leadership and management Select Sires became the largest beef and dairy cattle artificial
 insemination organizations in the world. He was honored as the 1994 Dairy Shrine Guest of Honor and
 was the 1995 World Dairy Expo Industry Person of the Year.
- **Dr. Gary L. Minish** of Keswick, Virginia, impacted the development of leaders in the livestock industry, the improvement of academic programs of animal science and agriculture, and the evaluation and production of beef cattle throughout the U.S. and abroad. His career as a teacher, judging team coach, department head at Virginia Tech and dean at Southern Illinois University impacted students and producers worldwide.
- Allen F. Harper of Suffolk, Virginia served as Extension Agent, Extension Swine Specialist, and Director of the Tidewater Agricultural Research and Extension Center. He made many important contributions to the swine industry through his leadership of the Virginia Pork Industry Conferences and his research in swine nutrition and management in the area of lessening environmental impact.
- **Dr. David R. Notter** of Blacksburg, Virginia, a teacher and researcher in quantitative genetics at Virginia Tech, contributed to genetic improvement in sheep and beef cattle and the management of global animal genetic resources. He received the American Society of Animal Science Breeding and Genetics Award in 1998 and the International Animal Agriculture Award in 2015.

A total of Fifty-five outstanding individuals, who have made significant contributions to Virginia's livestock industry and its people have been enshrined in the Virginia Livestock Hall of Fame since its beginning in 2009. The portraits of each are displayed in the Alphin-Stuart Livestock Teaching Arena on the Virginia Tech campus.

Intercollegiate Livestock Judging Program Revived at Virginia Tech

Bain Wilson Youth Livestock Educator/Livestock Judging Team Coach Virginia Tech

The Department of Animal and Poultry Sciences at Virginia Tech has taken steps to revive the intercollegiate livestock judging program. This program was started at Virginia Tech in the 1940's, but has not been active since 2009. Intercollegiate livestock judging has been a staple extracurricular activity offered by agricultural colleges since the 1910's and has served to develop many of the leaders of animal agriculture throughout Virginia and the country. Virginia Tech has been fortunate to have influential leaders of the intercollegiate livestock judging program, including Drs. Gary Minish and Dan Eversole. In the past, Virginia Tech has had high individuals at both the American Royal and Chicago International Livestock Exposition.

At the college level, most livestock judging contests require contestants to place 12 classes of livestock and defend the placings of 8 of those classes with oral reasons. Intercollegiate livestock judging provides students the opportunity to increase their exposure to the livestock industry through experiences that cannot be obtained in the classroom. Team members have the opportunity to visit state and nationally prominent livestock operations and the ability to form lasting connections within the livestock industry. Livestock judging serves to develop critical decision-making and communication skills that build confidence and leadership, often translating to career success. Participation on the Virginia Tech livestock judging team is not limited to only students majoring in Animal and Poultry Sciences, but is open to all undergraduates interested in the livestock industry.

The intercollegiate livestock judging program will be led by Dr. Bain Wilson, an instructor hired by the Department of Animal and Poultry Sciences in September. Dr. Wilson is a native of North Carolina and recently graduated with his Ph.D. from the University of Illinois, where he studied beef nutrition. As an undergraduate, Dr. Wilson competed in livestock judging at Black Hawk College in Kewanee, IL and at Kansas State University. While in graduate school, Dr. Wilson had the opportunity to coach the 2011 National Champion 4-H livestock judging team from Illinois. In addition to coaching the Virginia Tech livestock judging team, Dr. Wilson will teach the Livestock Evaluation course, be involved with beef extension programming, conduct applied research in beef cattle nutrition and management, and serve as an advisor to the Block and Bridle Club.

The 2016 livestock judging team will compete throughout the spring and fall semesters. Plans are for the team to travel to the Dixie National, Jackson, MS; Purdue Block and Bridle Contest, West Lafayette, IN; and the National Meat Animal Evaluation Contest, Lincoln, NE in the spring. Fall contests will include: Keystone International Livestock Exposition, Harrisburg, PA; Stockman's Contest, Michigantown, IN; the American Royal, Kansas City, MO; and the National Collegiate Livestock Judging Contest held at the North American International Livestock Exposition, Louisville, KY. For more information about the Virginia Tech intercollegiate livestock judging program, contact Dr. Bain Wilson at tbwilson@vt.edu or (540) 231-5253.

Virginia 4-H Nets Several Wins at National Contests

The Virginia 4-H Livestock Judging Team and the Virginia 4-H Livestock Skillathon Team placed first and third at the recent North American International Livestock Exposition in Louisville, Kentucky. The event is the world's largest purebred livestock show.

Livestock Judging Team

The Livestock Judging Team competed against 34 other teams in the 91st National 4-H Livestock Judging Contest and was high team overall with 2,525 points, followed by teams from Illinois and Georgia, respectively. The first-place finish as the 2015 National Champion 4-H Livestock Judging Team makes the team eligible to represent the U.S. in next year's Royal Highland Show in Scotland, along with the second-place and third-place teams.

Including this year Virginia has won the event eight times, most recently in 2007.

Virginia also placed first in cattle, fifth in swine, third in sheep and goat, and third in reasons.

The team members included:

Hannah Craun of Bridgewater, Virginia; Caley Ellington of Broadway, Virginia; Sarah Harris of Buchanan, Virginia; Blake Hopkins of Louisa, Virginia; and Matt Ferrari (alternate) of Purcellville, Virginia.

Individual awards were garnered by Blake Hopkins who placed fifth overall, eighth in sheep and goat, and 12th in beef cattle; Hannah Craun placed third overall, second in beef and performance cattle, and 11th in reasons; and Sarah Harris placed eighth in reasons, ninth in beef cattle, and 17th overall. Craun, Hopkins, and Harris were also named All-Americans for placing in the top 20 overall.



2015 National Champion 4-H Livestock Judging Team.

<u>Seated</u> (I to r): Hannah Craun, Blake Hopkins, Sarah Harris, Caley Ellington.

<u>Standing</u> (I to r): Doyle Wolverton (sponsor), David Roper (coach), Todd Conway (sponsor).

"The teams performed phenomenally well overall and individually," said David Roper, 4-H Youth Livestock Extension Specialist with Virginia Cooperative Extension and Coach of the Livestock Judging Team. "I am very proud of all the work the students put into this competition and how they represented the state."

The livestock team will travel to Europe in June 2016 and will be fundraising for the trip until then. In addition to participating in the Royal Highland Show, the group will have the opportunity to visit several other European countries to learn about their agriculture systems.

Livestock Skillathon Team

The Livestock Skillathon team also performed well at the expo and included:

Gracie Bailey of Woodstock, Virginia; Tiffany Heishman of Strasburg, Virginia; John-Robert Helsley of Edinburg, Virginia; and Hailey Shoemaker of Edinburg, Virginia.

Jerry Funkhouser of Edinburg, Virginia, served as the team's coach.



2015 Virginia Skillathon Team (Shenandoah County).

<u>Seated</u> (I to r); Gracie Bailey, Woodstock, VA; Hailey Shoemaker, Edinburg, VA; Tiffany Heishman, Strasburg, VA; John-Robert Helsley, Edinburg, VA; <u>Standing</u>: Jerry Funkhouser, Edinburg, VA (coach).

The team placed second in identification and quality assurance, and sixth in evaluation, and third overall.

Individually John-Robert Helsley placed first in quality assurance, second in identification, and third overall. Hailey Shoemaker placed eighth in quality assurance and 10th overall. Gracie Bailey placed 18th overall.

The Livestock Skillathon contest is multidisciplinary and challenges 4-Hers livestock husbandry skills. This year was the 17th contest. Virginia has won the contest five times previously.

The <u>Virginia 4-H Foundation's</u> 4-H Livestock Youth Development Endowment provided support for the teams' travels this fall.

For more information about supporting these teams or any Youth Livestock Event in Virginia,

<u>Virginia State 4-H Livestock Team wins Southeast Regional Contest</u>

David Roper Extension Youth Livestock Specialist Virginia Tech

The 2015 Virginia State 4-H Livestock Judging Team competed at the Southeast Regional Livestock Contest in Raleigh, NC on October 31st. The contest was held at the North Carolina State University teaching farm and included 22 teams from Indiana, Maryland, Tennessee, and North Carolina. The 2015 Virginia State 4-H Livestock Team was comprised of 10 members and was selected based on individual placings at the State Livestock Judging Contest held in June at Virginia Tech. The 2015 Virginia State 4-H Livestock Judging team members include: Caley Ellington, Broadway; Hannah Craun, Bridgewater; Sarah Harris, Buchanan; Cassidy Simmons, Staunton; Sara Jane French, Cumberland; Jenna Kibler, Edinburg; Hailey Shoemaker, Edinburg; Blake Hopkins, Louisa; Mathew Ferrari, Purcellville; and Cole Reeves, Churchville. Team members practice and travel together throughout late summer and fall, attend contests in Maryland, Indiana, North Carolina and at the National Contest held in Louisville Kentucky as part of the North American International Livestock Show and Exposition.

Before the Southeast Reginal Contest, the team competed at the Stockman's Livestock Judging Contest in Indiana and finished 11th (tied for 10th). However, the trip to NC was a successful weekend and served as a breakthrough for the team. A total of 8 individuals traveled to NC, allowing them to compete as 2 teams under the 4-H livestock judging format. As teams, the Virginia A team finished 1st in cattle, 3rd in sheep, 3rd in goats, 2nd in swine, 1st in reasons, and 1st overall. Additionally, the Virginia B team finished 3rd in reasons, and 4th overall. Several team members also were successful as individuals; cattle division: Sarah Harris (1st), Caley Ellington (6th), Jenna Kibler (7th); sheep division: Caley Ellington (3rd); goat division: Sara Jane French (4th), Blake Hopkins (7th), Sarah Harris (8th), swine division: Caley Ellington (1st), Sarah Harris (9th); reasons division: Caley Ellington (3rd), Hannah Craun (4th), Sarah Harris (5th), Cassidy Simmons (6th); overall: Sarah Harris (1st), Caley Ellington (4th).