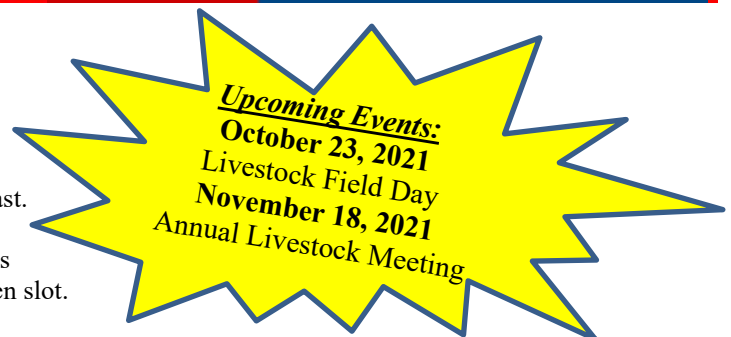


LIVESTOCK NEWSLETTER



Meat Processing Backup

If you have an animal that you are needing processed then more than likely you have discovered the extreme backup that USDA, NCDA, and custom meat processors are facing across the southeast. Before the COVID pandemic the average time to get an animal a processing appointment was around 30 days, now most processors have a wait time of 210 days or 7 months before they have an open slot.



What has caused this backlog? It seems that many producers were spurred into action to get their animal processed when COVID became a real issue. These same producers took multiple animals in when typically they take in on average of one animal per year. Another issue seemed to be the regulations that were placed on staff to keep the COVID virus from spreading. Making it difficult to perform their job, or the processing facility shutting down all together. Yet another issue that most processing facilities faced before the pandemic and now seemed to be heightened was their ability to find employees.

This serious backlog has caused a lot of farmers to keep livestock longer than they anticipated or searching for ways that they can process the animals themselves and determine how they can legally sell the meat. If you have ever processed a 1,300lb cow it is easy to understand most producers are willing to hang on to animals longer than usual in hopes for a processing appointment. However, there are some producers that had customer demands to meet and therefore began investigating the laws regarding home processing. The NCDA Meat and Poultry division states clearly, ***“Yes. You can slaughter animals that you have raised on your farm as long as the meat is for your family’s own personal use or the use of non-paying guests. You may not sell meat from animals you have slaughtered on your farm. You must use an inspected slaughter facility to sell meats.”***

We are all looking for an end to the excessively long wait times for processing appointments but at this time there doesn’t seem to be much let up for the inspected slaughter facilities. The best thing we can do is call well in advance for any animal you need processed, be patient, and be sure to keep your processing appointment.



<https://themeatingroom.home.blog/2019/02/03/meat-inspection/>

Breeding Soundness Exam for Bulls

For producers using retained herd bulls, a breeding soundness exam (BSE) is recommended prior to the start of breeding season every year, even if the bull was a successful breeder in the previous season. These tests should be accomplished, 30 to 45 days before breeding starts. Otherwise, you may have to settle for lesser stock if the bull does not pass.

Approximately 17% of bulls in the population that are tested are deemed unsatisfactory for breeding. These bulls, in theory, would get fewer cows pregnant, leading to fewer calves being born, and ultimately less income generated by the cowherd annually. If one average-fertility bull is expected to breed 25 cows, let's assume a sub-fertile bull could only breed half that many in the same time period. That means 12 cows came up open in this breeding group of 25, and the producer had 10 fewer 500 pound calves to sell at weaning. At just \$100 per hundredweight of calf, the one sub-fertile bull cost the producer \$5000, plus the purchase price of the sub-fertile bull, as well as a bull to replace him for the next calving season. The national average cost of a BSE is around \$75 – you do the math as to whether that pencils out in black on the balance sheet.

BSEs can be performed by a local veterinarian or two WNC breeding soundness exam events in the Spring and Fall are held at the WNC Regional Livestock Center. These two events have exams for \$65.00 that include: physical examination, reproductive examination, semen evaluation, vaccinations, and deworming.

WRITTEN BY: Dr. Harrison Dudley



Backyard Poultry



Image from: ucanr.edu

Predators are the number one cause for concern when discussing chickens. These birds are easy prey and can fall victim to a large number of predators including cats, dogs, skunks, opossums and hawks. The best way to protect the flock is adequate fencing the most effective and economic being electric netting. Don't forget the birds of prey are able to fly down into the fence and select a chicken, creating a zig zag pattern across the top of the fence will deter most avian predators.

To determine what size coop is appropriate, a good rule of thumb is that each chicken will need about 3 square feet of coop space. Another thing to remember is from the time they are chicks it takes the average chicken 6-8 months before they begin laying eggs. This timeline is dependent upon breed, care, and the time of year that you purchase your chicks. Chickens need 14-16 hours of daylight for the best egg production. If you see a drop in production more than likely daylight length is the issue. This can be remedied by providing one light bulb for every 40 square feet of pen space if the chickens are not free range.

Feed is another point of concern for most new chicken owners. This will be the number one expense when owning chickens but without adequate nutrition egg production will be poor. There are three categories of feed based on the chickens age. For young chicks a starter feed will be needed for around 6 weeks. Then they will transition to a grower feed for nine weeks. After that the chickens will then be on a layer feed for the rest of their productive life.

Disease most often occurs when birds are under stress from one or more factors at the same time. Numerous stressors can affect a bird's ability to fight off disease, including poor nutrition, an unclean environment, overcrowding, poor air quality, injury, poor management practices and poisons. Watch for signs of disease that may indicate a problem in your flock. Difficulty with breathing, gasping for breath, coughing, sneezing, watery eyes, reduced viability, decrease in egg production and feed consumption, bloody droppings and an increase in death losses are all indications of disease. Sick birds will often separate themselves from the rest of the flock, try to hide under something, avoid moving when approached, appear weak, or have ruffled feathers. If possible, separate the sick birds from the healthy ones to limit disease spread. Seek reliable assistance if you suspect a disease problem in your flock. Madison County Extension and a veterinarian are good starting points.

List of Livestock Veterinarians in WNC

Animals R Us
Dr. Beverly Hargus
Flat Rock, NC 28732
Phone: 828-693-7387

Email: animalsrusvet@hotmail.com

Atlas Mobile Veterinary Services
Dr. Vicky Bochynek
Pisgah Forest, NC 28768
Phone: 828-877-5020
Website: www.atlasmobilvet.com
Email: VBochynekDVM@gmail.com

FootHills Mobile Veterinary Service
Dr. Justin Jornigan
Marion, N.C.
Phone: 828-738-3883
Email: drj@foothillsmobilevet.com

Country Lane Animal Hospital
Dr. David McCracken
Clyde, NC 28721
Phone: 828-627-9100
Email: clanimalhospital@charter.net

Foggy Mountain Mobile Veterinary Services
Dr. Holly Parkins
Clyde, NC 28721
Phone: 828-593-9595
Email: fmvetservices@gmail.com

Smokey Mountain Mobile Veterinary Services
Dr. Mary Coker
Waynesville, NC 28785
Phone: 828-421-0030
Email: smokeymtnmobilevet@yahoo.com

WNC Diagnostic Lab
Dr. Richard Oliver
Phone: 828-684-8188
Email: richard.oliver@ncagr.gov

Cherokee Animal Care Clinic
Dr. Robbie McLeod
Whittier, NC 28789
Phone: 828-497-3401
Email: CherokeeAnimalCare@frontier.com

Mills River Animal Clinic
Dr. Mike Hernandez
Mills River, NC 28759
Phone: 828-768-5000
Website: www.millsriveranimalclinicnc.com
Email: cowdoctor887@yahoo.com

Cowee Cowgirl Mobile Large Animal Vet Services
Dr. Jessica Scruggs
Franklin N.C. 28734
Phone: 828-332-2924
Email: jmscrugg@ncsu.edu

Whiskey River Large Animal
Dr. Brittany Beil
Franklin, NC 28734
Phone: 828-524-1957
Website: WhiskeyRiverLargeAnimal.com
Email: WhiskeyRiverLA@gmail.com

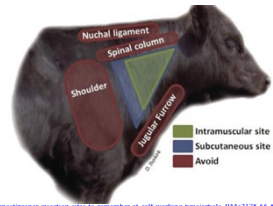




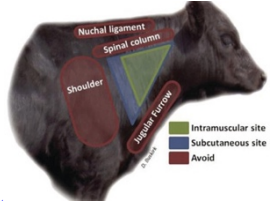


Image from: Robeson.ces.ncsu.edu

Fly Control

Flies are the root of a lot of problems from pinkeye to weight loss. Given these negative impacts, the control of flies is a must. Livestock producers have had good luck with a three step fly control protocol. This includes a free choice, loose mineral with fly control added, fly collection bait containers, and pour-on insecticides. There are many different brands of these loose minerals that have fly control and deciding which brand for you and your farm is personal choice but the mineral needs to have an Insect Growth Regulator (IGR). This IGR stops the flies from breeding in the manure. However, this is only step one in the protocol due to factors beyond our control such as neighbor flies, other fly breeding areas, etc. Step two in the protocol helps with the factors that we cannot control. The fly collection bait containers can be hung where cattle gather which may be under shade, near water tanks, or in their shelter. Capturing these flies and not allowing them to breed drastically reduces the fly population. Using a pour on, the last step in the protocol, may not be necessary toward the end of summer if the fly population is reduced with the other two methods. There are many pour on insecticide so choose the best one for your farm but with the understanding that their pour on lose their potency the more it rains since the insecticide is only on their hide. By using this protocol many livestock producers have seen a drastic decrease in flies that are tormenting their animals which in turn cost the producer money.

Common Diseases

Disease	Symptoms	Treatment	Picture
Bovine Viral Diarrhea (BVD)	Fever, depression, decreased milk production, lack of appetite, rapid respiration, excessive nasal secretion, excessive tearing, and of course diarrhea.	Vaccination before infection. Remove infected from the herd. There is no treatment of the disease once diagnosed only the management of symptoms.	 https://thezoo.com/landandlivestock/post/proper-injection-sites-to-remember-at-catt-working-time/article_044e2175-4666-5161-8398-8a2518708da.html
Bloat	Bulging of the area between the last rib and the hip on left side.	The gas pressure must be relieved quickly. Do not allow animals to graze mostly legumes (clover).	 https://whiteoakblog.wordpress.com/tag/bloat-in-goats/
Grass Tetany	Extreme nervousness, awkward gait, muscle spasms, and collapse.	Keep magnesium additions to mineral supplements available from May until October. If showing symptoms the animal must be given magnesium.	 https://6cisw4vxn-llvwhed.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Legumes2-2b1jimo.jpg
Foot Rot	Lameness which is followed by swelling of the foot, spreading of the toes and reddening of the tissue above the hoof.	Maintain drainage of lots and around water tanks to prevent mud accumulation. Antibiotic treatments can be used.	 https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt.edu/400/400-310/400-310_pdf.pdf
Pink eye	Excessive flow of tears, eye becomes cloudy. The animal holds the eye partially closed, rubs the eye and seeks shaded areas.	Separate infected calves from healthy calves. Control flies by spraying, dipping or dusting calves. Apply antibiotic ointments on the affected eyes under the direction of a veterinarian	 <small>— Cornell University USDA Cooperative Extension State Series • Bipwood.org</small>
Blackleg	The bacteria multiply rapidly and produce toxins in the muscles, killing the muscles (black dead muscles), causing blood poisoning and sudden death.	The seven-way blackleg vaccine. There is no treatment of the disease once diagnosed only the management of symptoms.	 https://thezoo.com/landandlivestock/post/proper-injection-sites-to-remember-at-catt-working-time/article_044e2175-4666-5161-8398-8a2518708da.html

What does Madison County Extension have available?

Available Items

- ~Soil Probe
- ~Hay Probe
- ~Sheep Shears
- ~Heavy Duty Clippers
- ~Ear Tagger
- ~Livestock Pregnancy Testing Kits

Rental Space

- ~Freezer Storage Space
- ~Cold Storage Space
- ~Dry Storage Space
- ~Loading Dock



Image from: www.medium.com

Available Services

Farm Visits Include but not limited to:

- Plant/Weed Identification
- Pasture walk throughs
- Collect soil samples
- Collect hay samples
- Assistance in pregnancy testing livestock

FUN FACTS:

- ◆ In 2016 Madison County had 5,800 reported cattle in the county.
- ◆ The average farm size in Madison County is 89 acres.
- ◆ The Madison County 4-H Livestock Judging team won 2nd place at the NC State Livestock Competition in 2019.
- ◆ There are approximately 5 million sheep in the United States.
- ◆ Steers can gain about 2lbs per day during the summer.

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