

Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences

Marion County Extension Service
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MARION COUNTY LIVESTOCK NEWS

JANUARY 2006



Equine Education Courses

Marion County Extension will offer 2 Equine Care and Technology courses, **Basic and Advanced**, beginning Monday, **January 23rd, 2006**.

Basic topics include: anatomy and conformation, equine nutrition, herd/health and first aid, handling horses and restraint, breeding, foaling, as well as barn management and farm safety.

Advanced Course This course is designed to expand the knowledge of equine industry professionals. Classes for this course change each year and have included such topics as advanced reproduction, animal welfare, horse farm economics, genetics, ethology-the study of equine behavior, performance horse lameness, advanced equine nutrition, and preventative medicine, etc.

Each course consists of nine sessions. Classes will meet at Central Florida Community College beginning Monday night January 23rd, 2006, from 6-9 p.m. The Community College is located on SR 200 in Ocala. Cost for each class is \$60.00.

For more information contact Mark Shuffitt at (352) 671-8400, or the Continuing Education Department of Central Florida Community College at (352) 237-2111.

Foaling Workshop II

February 7th, 2006

8:30 am – Noon

Marion County Agriculture Center

**Broodmare Nutrition:
“Feeding the Pregnant Mare & Foal”**

**Knowing the Risks:
“Foaling & Neonatal Illnesses”**

**New Updates & Guidelines:
“Broodmare & Foal Vaccinations”**

Speakers:

Kelly Spearman, UF Dept. of Animal Sciences
Dana Zimmer, DVM; UF/IFAS Extension Vet.
Mark Shuffitt, Marion County Extension

NO CHARGE

Reservations are required for planning.
Call Helen at 671-8400.

23rd Annual Florida Cattlemen's Institute & Allied Trade Show

**January 19, 2006
Osceola Heritage Park
off Highway 192 East of Kissimmee**

“BASICS FOR THE FUTURE”

8:00 am – **TRADE SHOW OPENS**

8:45 am – **Welcome**

Dr. Jimmy Cheek, UF/IFAS
Vice Pres for Ag and Natural Resources

Joe Marlin Hilliard III, President
Florida Cattlemen's Assoc

TOPICS

Basics of Pasture Fertilization

Dr. Jerry Sartain, UF/IFAS – Soil and Water Science

Recent Developments in Cattle Marketing

Mark Harmon, Joplin Regional Stockyard,
Joplin, MS

Forage and Nutritional Management

Dr. Findaly Pate and Dr. John Arthington
Ona, REC

The State of The State

Charlie Bronson
Florida Commissioner of Agriculture

Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) Update

Dr. Todd Thrift
UF/IFAS Department of Animal Sciences

Panel Discussion

**State and Federal Regulations –
Changing the Way You Do Business**

Wade Grigsby, Mike Milicevic, Dr. Tom Holt, Don
Robertson, Mark Harmon, Mark Donaway

REGISTRATION

Please RSVP to your County Agent if you plan to
attend!

Beef Cattle Management Tips

JANUARY

- ⇒ Buy only performance tested bulls with superior records.
- ⇒ **Attend the 50th Annual Ocala Bull Sale**; January 10th, 2006; Southeastern Livestock Pavilion
- ⇒ Apply lime for summer crops.
- ⇒ Check for lice/treat if necessary.
- ⇒ Control weeds in cool season pasture.
- ⇒ Begin grazing winter pastures when approx. 6” high. Rye should be 12”-18” high.
- ⇒ Check and fill mineral feeders.
- ⇒ Put bulls out for October breeding season.
- ⇒ Make breeding herd lists for single sire herds.
- ⇒ Observe cows: record heat, breeding abnormalities, discharges, abortions, retained placentas, difficult calvings, etc.
- ⇒ Observe cows for calving difficulties.
- ⇒ Observe calves for signs of scours.
- ⇒ Make sure bulls have adequate nutrition; so they will be in good condition for the breeding season.
- ⇒ Discuss herd health with your veterinarian and outline a program for the year.
- ⇒ Watch for grass tetany on winter pastures.
- ⇒ Increase magnesium levels in mineral mixes if grass tetany has been a previous problem.
- ⇒ Vaccinate cows and heifers against vibriosis and leptospirosis prior to the breeding season.

FEBRUARY

- ⇒ Top dress winter forages, if necessary
- ⇒ Check and fill mineral feeders
- ⇒ Put bulls out with breeding herd
- ⇒ Work Calves:
 1. Identify
 2. Implant with growth stimulant
 3. Vaccinate
- ⇒ Provide adequate nutrition to lactating cows
- ⇒ Check calves for signs of respiratory disease
- ⇒ Cull cows that did not calve
- ⇒ Check for lice, treat if necessary

John Mark Shuffitt
Marion County Extension Service

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To Breed or Not To Breed?

J.M. Shuffitt

Few things in this world are more awe inspiring than watching a broodmare give birth. The anticipated foal, which began as an idea of mating just the right sire and dam bloodlines, will represent not only his ancestry but also the knowledge and skill of his breeders, owners and trainers.

However, the decision to breed your mare should not be taken lightly. There are many considerations that need to be taken into account before making the commitment to breed your mare and raise the resulting foal.

Why do I want to breed this mare?

“Because she’s a mare”

“I want to make some money.”

“It’s less expensive than buying a foal.”

“She’s my first . . . only . . . favorite mare.”

“I can get a free . . . reduced stud fee.”

“My mare has won tons of blue ribbons.”

These are just some of the reasons I’ve been given as motivation for breeding a mare. Just because she’s a mare and capable of bearing a foal does not mean, she should be bred. It is extremely important to take a critical look at your reason(s) for wanting to breed a mare. Consider the outcomes. Are you prepared to invest the additional time, energy and resources necessary, especially if the events associated with breeding a mare and raising a foal don’t work out exactly as planned? Will you be prepared to take your horse to the next level if you are unable to sell him as a weanling or yearling? Do you have the expertise, time and space to train an additional horse, or will you have to send him to a trainer?

Next, look at your mare **objectively**

- **How old is the mare, is she a maiden or has she had foals previously?** – Mares are usually bred when they are four years old or older. Consider how well developed she is and what condition she is in for her age. You will want your veterinarian to perform a breeding soundness exam (BSE).
- **How’s her conformation?** – Does she have any serious faults? Evaluate your mare for balance, muscle, structure and quality. Look at her head, neck, chest, legs, back, hind quarters and feet. Is she a good example of her specific breed? Additionally, watch her track. Does she walk in a straight line or does she wing-in, wing-out or interfere?

- **What kind of disposition does she have?** – Would you want a foal with the same type of temperament? Does she have any bad habits (biting, kicking, wood chewing)?
- **How’s her health?** – Is she current on her vaccinations and deworming? Does she colic frequently? Does she have a shiny, slick coat, plenty of energy and the correct body condition? Is it difficult to keep her in good condition?
- **Does she carry any undesirable genetic characteristics such as HYPP?**
- **Has she been inspected or performance tested by her breed association?**
- **Now take a look at her bloodlines.** What do you know about her ancestry? Look for proven competition history of parents and siblings. Does she have a good individual performance record? What about the performance of previous foals?
- **How are your finances?** Some of the things you will have to pay for include: stud fee, transportation costs, standard medical care, additional or emergency medical care, increased feed costs, boarding fee, foaling fee, etc.
- **Consider other risk.** Your mare could abort. The foal could die. You could lose both the mare and foal.
- **What about the sire?** Get the best sire, not the cheapest. Evaluate his conformation and temperament. Will he compliment your mare? Evaluate his individual performance record, as well as his breeding record. Does he consistently settle mares? Are his previous foals competitive?
- **Will it be live cover or artificial insemination?** For live cover, you will need to know the rules of the breeding shed as well as how many days notice to give when scheduling a breeding. For artificial breeding, will the semen be fresh, cooled or frozen? You will need to know what day(s) the stallion is collected and how long it takes to get the semen delivered to your farm. How many covers or collections are allowed per heat cycle?
- **Consider the contract.** Is it a “live foal” or “no guarantee” contract? If “live foal”, what definition is used? What’s included? When is payment due? What do you have to do and/or provide? Get help if you don’t understand!

Regardless of whether you’re breeding one mare because you want to enjoy the experience of raising and training your next horse or you’re breeding for the yearling market, the better job you do of critically and honestly evaluating the reason(s) you want to breed your mare and raise a foal, the more likely you are to have a successful and enjoyable experience.

50th Annual Ocala Bull Sale Report

The Ocala Bull Sale is held each year on the second Tuesday of January at the Southeastern Livestock Pavilion in Ocala. Grading takes place beginning at 8:00 am on the day before the sale.

All bulls are evaluated on weight, condition, conformation, scrotal circumference and EPD's then assigned a grade from A+ to C. Bulls that do not score a C grade or higher are sifted from the sale.

One hundred twenty one bulls representing eight breeds sold for an overall average of \$2,082 at the 2006 Marion County Cattleman's Association Annual Graded Sale in Ocala. This year's sale toppers were lot #141 an (A) graded Hereford bull consigned by Woodard Hereford Farms of Springfield, TN and lot #1 an (A-) graded Angus bull consigned by Baker Farms of Troy, TN sold for \$3,900 each. Additionally, lots #139 an (A) graded Hereford bull out of the Woodard Hereford consignment, lot #10 an (A-) graded Angus bull offered by Double C Farms of Marshallville, GA and lot #31X a (B) graded bull from the Rafter G Bar Livestock Inc. of Groveland, FL sold for \$3,700 each. Lot #70 an (A-) graded Brangus bull consigned by Maranatha Ranch of Morriston, FL and lot #11 an (A-)

graded Angus bull offered by Double C Farms brought a price of \$3,600 each. Thirteen other bulls sold for a price of between \$3,000 and \$3,500. In addition, 14 bulls sold for between \$2,500 and \$2,900 and 19 bulls brought a price of between \$2,100 and \$2,400.

This year three **A** graded bulls averaged \$3,500. Twenty-seven **A-** bulls brought an average price of \$2,573. Twenty-nine **B+** bulls brought an average price of \$2,014, thirty **B** graded bulls averaged \$1,800 and twenty-four **B-** graded bulls averaged \$1,896. Eight **C+** bulls averaged \$1,750.

Breed averages were as follows:

- ⇒ 25 Angus sold for an average of \$2,880
- ⇒ 6 Red Angus sold for an average of \$1,766
- ⇒ 8 Brangus sold for an average of \$2,688
- ⇒ 6 Braford sold for an average of \$2,183
- ⇒ 34 Charolais sold for an average of \$1,817
- ⇒ 29 Hereford sold for an average of \$1,800
- ⇒ 12 Polled Hereford sold for an average of \$1,575
- ⇒ 1 Simmental sold for \$1,800

