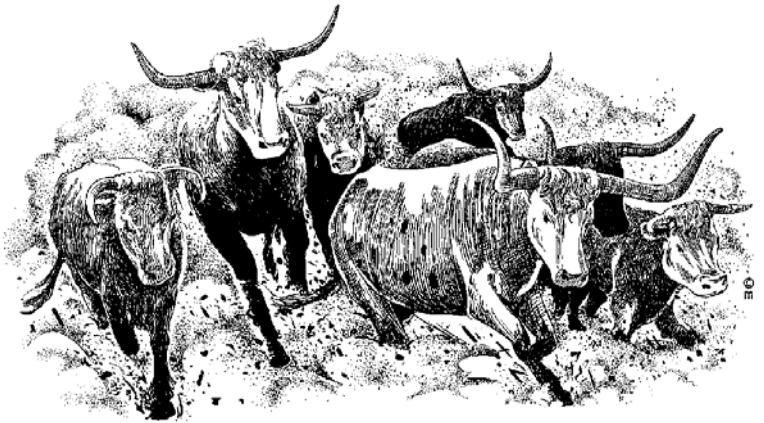


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## MARION COUNTY LIVESTOCK NEWS

APRIL 2007

### Landowner Workshops

“Transfer of Development Rights”

Marion County Ag Center  
Auditorium

April 17<sup>th</sup>, April 21<sup>st</sup>, April 24<sup>th</sup>

The Marion County Citizen's Coalition is a non-profit organization working to keep Marion County a healthy place to live. The coalition is doing this by promoting the preservation of farmland in Marion County. Two initiatives spearheaded by the organization will bring emphasis to this issue during April: 1) Proclamation by the Marion County Board of County Commissioners to designate April as Farmland Preservation Month  
2) Workshops about Transferring Development Rights and Farmland Preservation.

Protecting the quality of our drinking water and preserving farmland is important for every citizen in Marion County because water and food are the basics of life. Marion County is fortunate to have small farmers still growing seasonal fruits and vegetables as well as meat and dairy products year – round. These life- sustaining lands have been farmed in traditional ways that protect the ground water sources from contamination. These small traditional farms, if preserved, will distinguish Marion County as a healthy community in the future.

Executive Director of The Coalition, Judy Greenberg says the workshops are open to all landowners, developers, and citizens interested in learning about preserving farmland for Marion County. Other communities have successfully

(see Landowner Workshops pg 2)

### Celebrating the 54<sup>th</sup> Annual Beef Cattle Short Course

Hilton University of Florida Conference Center  
May 2-4, 2007; Gainesville, Florida

Topics for this year's program include:

- **Economic and Market Outlook for 2007**
- **International Competition and Opportunities for US Quality Beef**
- **Risk Management and the Cost of Production**
- **Persistently Infected BVD Cattle – A Cow/Calf Perspective**
- **Allied Industry Trade Show and Reception**
- **Review of the 2005 Beef Quality Audit**
- **Relationships Affecting the Choice-Select Spread**
- **Interactions of the Factors Affecting Cattle Grade/Performance**
- **Evaluation of Differences in Quality of Cattle**
- **Feeder / Finish Calf Evaluation**
- **Finished Steer and Cow Carcass Evaluation**
- **Beef Products Taste Panel**
- **Cattlemen's Steak-Out**
- **Utilization of *Bos Indicus* Cattle in Florida Beef Enterprises**
  - ⇒ Cow Herd
  - ⇒ Growth and Feed Efficiency
  - ⇒ Carcass Traits and Merit
- **Forage Management for Florida Pastures**
  - ⇒ Cost of Pasture Establishment
  - ⇒ Selection and Use of Cool Season Forages -
  - ⇒ Weed Control

(see Beef Cattle Short Course pg 2)

# Landowner Workshops

preserved farmland through transferring development rights; so can we.

The first workshop held on March 21<sup>st</sup> featured Dwight Gano of the Marion County Planning Department. A group of 24 received basic information about Marion County's Farmland Preservation and Transfer of Development Rights Program. The group also discussed proposed changes to the program that will be considered by the Marion County Board of County Commissioners during the summer.

The **April 17<sup>th</sup>** workshop will feature Paul Truesdell of Truesdell Investments. Paul will present information about structuring a transfer of development rights to meet financial and estate planning goals. This workshop will be held 7-9 pm.

## **Initiating a TDR in Marion County: Practical Application in Today's Market**

- Who has the TDRs?
- Who needs the TDRs?
- Structuring the TDR to accomplish personal financial and estate planning goals.

### Workshop Format

Presentation: 30 Min

Moderated Panel Discussion with Landowners &

Developers: 30 Min; Break: 15 Min.

Small Group Discussion to Familiarize with Sending & Receiving Area Boundaries: 30 Min

Wrap-up & Announcements by Leader: 10 Min

The **April 21<sup>st</sup>** schedule includes two sessions: 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm and then 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm. These workshops are devoted to water issues. Experts from the University of Florida, Southwest Florida Water Management District and private consultants will be on hand to discuss the unique water features of Marion County.

## **Water Shed Protection: Sending Area and Receiving Area**

- Issues and solutions to creating effective TDR policies that protect watersheds.
- Understanding the hydrology & geology of the Sending & Receiving Area

### Workshop Format

Three Speakers @ 20 Min each

Break for Refreshment: 10 Min

Small Group Discussions about Sending & Receiving Area Watershed Protection 20 Min

Moderated Large Group Discussion of Small Group Discussions: 20 Min

Wrap-Up & Announcements by Leader: 10 Min

The **April 24<sup>th</sup>** workshop will wrap-up the series with discussion about how the transfer of development rights program can facilitate preservation despite the ongoing controversy about Internal Revenue treatment of conservation easements. This workshop will be held 7-9 pm.

## **Moving Forward Despite The Ongoing Controversy: IRS Issues & Conservation Easements**

- Farmland Preservation & TDR Success Stories

- Master Plan for the Future: Urban & Farmland Working Together for the Future

### Workshop Format

Presentation: Farmland Preservation & TDR Success

Stories: 30 Min

Q&A For First Presentation: 20 Min

Break for Refreshment: 10 Min

Presentation by Speaker Two on Master Plan for Future (Speaker TBD): 30 Min

Q&A for Second Presentation: 20 Min

Wrap-up & Announcements by Leader: 10 Min

These workshops are made possible with funding from the Community Education Grant Program of the Southwest Florida Water Management District Withlacoochee Basin Board.

# Beef Cattle Short Course

## **Registration Information**

The reduced early registration fee is \$90.00 if payment is postmarked by April 20, 2007. **After April 20, 2007, the regular registration fee will be \$120.00.**

The registration fee includes refreshment breaks, exhibitor's reception, Thursday's luncheon, one Cattlemen's Steak-out ticket, and proceedings. Extra Cattlemen's Steak-out tickets are available at \$10.00 each. Please refer to the registration card to purchase extra tickets.

Conveniently register in 1 of 3 easy ways:

1. **ONLINE:** register online at:  
<http://www.doce-conferences.ufl.edu/basic/214.aspx>
2. **FAX:** If paying by credit card, FAX completed registration form to: (352) 392-9059
3. **MAIL:** Please make check, money order, or purchase order payable to: **UF Foundation**

## **Beef Cattle Short Course**

UF/IFAS Department of Animal Sciences

P.O. Box 110910

Gainesville, FL 32611-0910

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Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Hotel Accommodations/Meeting Site**

Call the Hilton University of Florida Conference Center directly at 352-371-3600 to make your reservations.

## Some Facts & Myths Regarding Higher Corn Prices

Everyone's speculating that higher corn prices will fuel a drive to make cattle bigger on grass, with an end-result of fewer days on feed. The reasoning is quite simple — cost of gain will be significantly cheaper in grazing programs than in the feedyard.

But the supply of feeder cattle hasn't changed. If one decreases days and accelerates the rate of turnover, then what already was an overcapacity situation in the feeding industry will increase. The result is there will be a need to import additional feeder cattle from Canada and Mexico, which will further stoke the whole trade debate.

It also likely means feedyards, which are battling to keep full, will actually add support to the calf and feeder market. The trend for a number of years has been to move cattle to the yard at lighter weights and then feed them longer. This trend enabled feedyards to behave as if they were in an expansion environment, despite numbers remaining constant (more days on feed and bigger outweights).

This year, the number of calves available to be placed is virtually unchanged, but the shift in placement weights (going higher) will have the effect of making inventories of placeable cattle appear smaller, even while numbers remain constant.

And while we're on the subject of corn prices, let's address some prevailing myths:

**Higher corn prices means lower cattle weights.** There's some truth to this — the incentive to produce fat will decrease, or there will be more of an economic incentive to identify that optimal body composition point where feed efficiency begins to rapidly decline. However, pounds remain the primary economic driver in the cow-calf, feeding and packing industries. Fixed overhead costs need to be spread over as many pounds as possible. This changes dramatically if the cost of putting on that pound is less than what the pound is worth.

That said, there's still ample incentive to make cattle bigger if they're worth \$90/cwt. and cost of gain (COG) is at \$70. The winter storm has removed a lot of tonnage from the system, but the math isn't there to encourage lighter weights.

Certainly as COG approaches price levels, there's more incentive to market cattle at their proper biological endpoint, but it's incorrect to assume the incentive for pounds has changed.

**Higher corn prices benefit beef over poultry and pork.** The logic of this argument is also sound. The reasoning is beef production only uses grain for half of its production cycle, while poultry and pork use corn for a much greater part of the life cycle. But beef production is at such a disadvantage in feed efficiency and feed conversion compared to poultry and pork that the relative changes in costs of production don't dramatically change the relative competitiveness between the proteins.

**Higher corn prices will drive a shift to grass-fed beef.** Grass-fed beef is potentially a great niche market. However, the world prefers high-quality corn-fed beef, and that's where the U.S. beef industry has a competitive advantage.

Grass-fed beef from an industry standpoint isn't an option; it's neither price competitive nor the product of choice. A shift to a grass-fed program could be great for individual operations, but a disaster if the entire industry were to shift in that direction.

**SOURCE:** Troy Marshall <http://beef-mag.com/>

Release - March 2, 2007

## Beef Cattle Management Tips

### APRIL

- Plant warm season and perennial pastures.
- Plant corn for silage.
- Check and fill mineral feeder.
- Check dust bags or apply treated ear tags.
- Check for external parasites and treat if necessary.
- Observe cows for repeat breeders.
- Deworm cows as needed if not done in March.
- Vaccinate against blackleg and brucellosis after 3 months of age and prior to 12 months of age.
- Market cull cows and bulls.
- Update market information and refine market strategy for calves.

### MAY

- Remove bulls,
- Harvest hay from cool season crops.
- Plant warm season perennial pastures.
- Check and fill mineral feeders.
- Check for spittlebugs and treat if necessary.
- Apply spot-on agents for grub and louse control.
- Check dust bags.
- Vaccinate and implant with growth stimulant any later calves.
- Re-implant calves with growth stimulant at 90-120 days, when you have the herd penned.
- Update market info. and refine marketing plans
- Remove bulls by May 21<sup>st</sup> to end calving season March 1<sup>st</sup>.

John Mark Shuffitt  
Livestock Agent III  
Marion County Extension Service

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# Unwanted Horses

While the concept of processing unwanted horses for food is an emotional issue, the dark side of such a policy is on display in Kentucky and other states, the *Associated Press* reports.

Kentucky is being overrun with thousands of horses no one wants, as are other parts of the U.S. With the opposition to horse slaughter having led to the closure of horse-processing facilities, auctions are glutted with horses, and many rescue organizations have run out of room.

An Illinois State Legislature bill that would prohibit movement of horses into Illinois for purposes of slaughter for human consumption could be a final nail. Illinois is the only state where continued horse slaughter isn't threatened following a Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals decision in mid January that ruled as valid a 1949 Texas law banning horse slaughter for human consumption.

That ruling concerned two of the nation's three horse slaughter plants — Dallas Crown Inc. at Kaufman, TX, and Beltex Corp. in Fort Worth. Spokesmen for the Texas plants say options are being weighed, including an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The third plant, which is unaffected by that ruling, is Cavel International, Inc., in DeKalb, IL. The three plants, which USDA says harvested 100,000 horses last year, produce horsemeat for the European Union and other countries.

Former U.S. Rep. Charlie Stenholm of Texas, now an agriculture consultant in Washington, D.C., recently acknowledged the emotionalism of the horse-slaughter issue to attendees of the Texas Ag Forum. But he says 80% of the horse industry supports the practice, and denying horse owners the option of taking unwanted horses to a processing plant restricts property rights.

"The best way to end a horse's life is humanely, with a veterinarian present," Stenholm said. "That's mandated in processing plants," he says.

"Any horse owner who does not choose to receive a value for (unwanted) horses doesn't have to," he said. "But it's a property rights issue similar to water rights."

"The Humane Society and People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals have a different opinion. But if they care about the welfare of horses, what do they recommend we do with more than 100,000 horses if we don't maintain a market of last resort?" Stenholm asks. Many wild horses end up on feedlots, ranches and care facilities, at taxpayer expense. "Can we afford that?"

He says people don't like to think about what it's like for an animal to die a natural death in the wild, which is "often gruesome." Stenholm says it's important to the horse industry, which counts more than 9 million horses at a value of more than \$9 billion, that the Texas law (banning processing) be repealed.

"Horse owners have the best interest of their animals in mind," he said. "We should return the option of selling to a processing plant. This is an emotional issue."

Ann Swinker, Pennsylvania State University professor of equine science, says that, according to the Unwanted Horse Coalition, there are an estimated 120,000 head of unwanted horses in the U.S. today.

Meanwhile, it's estimated there are 8,000-10,000 spaces available for unwanted horses at horse rescues and retirement farms across the U.S.

**SOURCE:** Joe Roybal, <http://beef-mag.com/>