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MARION COUNTY LIVESTOCK NEWS

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Florida Equine Institute Video Presentations

Nearly 300 horse owners and managers from central Florida attended this year's Florida Equine Institute and Allied Trade Show held at the Southeastern Livestock Pavilion. This Extension program is designed to provide Florida horsemen and horsewomen with current equine management information and a "working" Trade Show.

For the first time we were able to video the speakers' presentations. Following is a list of topics with links:

Weed Control for Horse Farms - Jay Ferrell:

http://training.ifas.ufl.edu/Equine08_Ferrell_Herbicide_Labels/index.html

http://training.ifas.ufl.edu/Equine08_Ferrell_Herbicides/index.html

Care of Older Horses - Ed Johnson:

http://training.ifas.ufl.edu/Equine08_Johnson_AgingHorse/index.html

Equine Colic - Amanda House:

http://training.ifas.ufl.edu/Equine08_House_Colic/index.html

Ulcers - Mike Porter

http://training.ifas.ufl.edu/Equine08_Porter_Ulcers/index.html

Laminitis - Adam Whitehead

http://training.ifas.ufl.edu/Equine08_Whitehead_Laminitis/index.html

Confusion About Carbs in the Equine Diet - Lori Warren:

http://training.ifas.ufl.edu/Equine08_Warren_Carbs/index.html

Equine Piroplasmosis (EP) Update October 1, 2008

Two additional premises have been released from quarantine as all horses have tested negative and have not been exposed to EP, within the past 60 days. Currently, 11 premises remain under quarantine with only one of those premises still having positive horses. (See info. below)

The State Veterinarian's Office is continuing to investigate the EP situation in Florida by tracing horses that may have been exposed to the disease and coordinating tick surveillance. The evidence at this time continues to implicate management practices in the spread of the disease as no foreign ticks or ticks carrying the EP causing organism have been found.

With the exception of the Canadian ban on Florida horses, there are no restrictions on Florida horses at this time. The State Veterinarian's Office is continuing to work with the United States Department of Agriculture in an effort to have the Canadian restrictions reduced or lifted.

Quarantine Data

Quarantines Placed – 25

Premises Currently Under Quarantine – 11

Total # of Premises Having Horses Test Positive – 7

Premises Currently Having Positive Horses 1

Additional updates and information will be posted to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Animal Industry web site at:

<http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/ai/>

Source: Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; Charles H. Bronson, Commissioner

Update on Florida Equine Piroplasmosis Outbreak and Canadian Export Restrictions

After a horse tested positive for Equine Piroplasmosis (EP) in Florida in August 2008, the Florida State Veterinarian's Office began a full investigation and traceback. EP is a blood-borne parasitic disease that is primarily transmitted by ticks or contaminated needles. The disease was eradicated from Florida in the 1980's. Because the U.S. has been free of EP for two decades, it is required by law that suspected cases be reported.

This Equine Piroplasmosis outbreak investigation is near completion. There have been a total of seven counties and seven premises in Florida with horses that tested positive for EP. Throughout the investigation a total of 25 premises were placed under quarantine and approximately 200 horses were tested. Premises are being released from quarantine after obtaining negative test results and after an extended period of time since exposure. There is only one premises left that still has EP positive horses, five horses in total. All other horses that tested positive have been euthanized.

All of the horses that tested positive for EP have been directly linked to what is believed to be two horses that entered Florida from Mexico. The evidence indicates that the disease transmission was by management practices of shared needles and not by a tick vector. Thorough tick studies and surveillance have been conducted. No exotic ticks have been found and all testing on the collected ticks has been negative for EP.

Due to this EP outbreak, Canada placed movement restrictions on U.S. horses being exported to Canada and would not accept horses from Florida. Canada has since revised their requirements to allow horses from Florida with additional export requirements.

For horses that are being exported to Canada from Florida, an import permit is required as well as certification that the horse was inspected within 15 days prior to the date of importation into Canada. Additional certifications on the export health certificate are required including that the horse was not on a premises where EP occurred (or where EP occurred on an adjoining premises) during 60 days prior to exportation, and a negative cELISA test during the 15 days prior to the date of exportation.

Horses that are being exported to Canada from states other than Florida need additional certification that in the 21 days prior to exportation the horse was not in the state of Florida. These restrictions will be in effect until further notice.

Source: American Horse Council, Washington D.C.

Control of Prickly Pear Cactus

Prickly pear is a not a wide-spread problem in Florida pastures, but can devastate a pasture if allowed to establish. It can be particularly troublesome in pastures that are regularly mowed. This is because prickly pear spreads by fragmentation. As pads are removed from the parent plant, they have the ability to root and form new colonies. Therefore, mowing a pasture with prickly pear simply increases the infestation.

Control of prickly pear has traditionally been a slow and laborious process. The only effective herbicide was Remedy mixed as a 20% solution with basal oil or diesel fuel. Although effective, this is an expensive mixture and requires each individual colony to be sprayed. This has led ranchers and researchers alike to seek a new control method that will allow broadcast herbicide application in place of spot treatment. Research conducted in Florida and Texas has shown that Cleanwave herbicide at 50 fl. oz/A to be an effective broadcast treatment when applied in the fall. Cleanwave is not a restricted use pesticide and cost will be approximately \$25/A. However, it must be noted that control of prickly pear is an extremely slow process. Generally speaking, prickly pear will often survive for over 1 year after application. Therefore, it is important to allow the herbicide sufficient time to act before decisions about success or failure can be made. Also, do not expect 100% control with one application of Cleanwave. It is likely that Cleanwave will control a majority of the prickly pear that is present. However, a follow-up application of Remedy may be necessary two years later to spot-treat colonies that survived the initial application.

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Prickly pear Cactus

Photo: J. Ferrell and B. Sellers

Update on New Releases of Bahiagrass

UF-Riata is a novel diploid bahiagrass developed for fall and early spring forage production for the southeastern U.S. It has improved forage growth under short-daylengths and during the cool season. This new bahiagrass was developed by the University of Florida, the USDA-ARS Coastal Plain Experiment Station and the USDA-ARS Subtropical Agricultural Research Station (STARS)-Brooksville, Florida. This bahiagrass exhibits lower photoperiod sensitivity, improved leaf tissue cold tolerance, and increased forage production during the cool season compared to the standard bahiagrass cultivars Argentine and Pensacola. Multi-location variety trials show UF-Riata is similar in total season yield to Tifton 9, with an improvement in seedling vigor and leaf tissue cold tolerance that promotes late fall-season growth and early spring-season growth. UF-Riata seasonal forage yields have been greater than 25% compared with Argentine and Pensacola, and 5-10% compared with Tifton 9 in north Florida. UF-Riata is well adapted throughout the southern Coastal Plains and Peninsular Florida. UF-Riata will be sold by variety name and only as a class of certified seed. It will be marketed by Ragan-Massey Seed and should be commercially available in 2009.

TifQuik is a novel diploid bahiagrass population developed by the USDA-ARS Coastal Plain Experiment Station for rapid seed germination for the southeastern U.S. The population exhibits less hard seed dormancy, very rapid establishment, excellent seedling vigor and high forage yield compared to the standard bahiagrass cultivars Argentine and Pensacola and Tifton 9. TifQuik has been tested in a number of locations as part of a multi-state effort between USDA-ARS scientists in Georgia and at the University of Florida. This cultivar has shown superiority at early establishment and an aggressive seedling vigor that should allow the cultivar to gain rapid acceptance in bahiagrass growing regions of the southern Coastal Plain of the U.S. TifQuik will be sold by variety name and only as a class of certified seed. TifQuik will be available from the Georgia Seed Development Commission and should be commercially available in 2009. Management of these new cultivars is similar to that of Tifton 9. UF-Riata and TifQuik are not tolerant of severe overgrazing. While Argentine and Pensacola bahiagrass are tolerant to overgrazing, constant defoliation of Tifton 9, UF-Riata and TifQuik will result in some stand loss and subsequent weed encroachment. Care must be given in the grazing management of these new cultivars to adequately rest the pasture and allow for regrowth to a 6 inch height between grazing events. Rotational grazing is a good approach since it allows bahiagrass pastures to recover from livestock grazing and provides other benefits, as well. Hay production from both these two new cultivars typically results in higher seasonal tonnage than from Argentine and Pensacola. Hay harvests can be made several times throughout the growing season.

Forage should not be allowed to grow rank since digestibility decreases and infections from several fungal leaf diseases may harm the health of the stand. Should weather conditions prevent timely hay harvests, then options for grazing, mowing or ensiling the forage should be considered.

It is important to purchase certified seed of UF-Riata and TifQuik from a reliable seed source. This insures the purity of the cultivar, high percent germination and freedom from weed seed.

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New Oat Cultivar for 2008 Fall Planting

Horizon 201 is a new winter oat variety that was co-developed by University of Florida (UF) and Louisiana State University Agricultural Center (LSUAC) and is released under the SUNGRAINS cooperation. *Horizon 201* (experimentally tested as FL99201) has considerable potential for grain, forage, conservation tillage, and wildlife purposes in the southern U.S.. *Horizon 201* is typically one of the highest seed yielding entries in regional trials. *Horizon 201* is a good forage oat because of its vigorous growth and aggressive tillering. Throughout field testing, it was noted as having a high leaf to stem ratio and was considered a superior forage type. It has excellent grain and forage yield, tall plant height, average test weight, medium maturity, and excellent crown rust resistance. However, it is susceptible to stem rust. *Horizon 201* is adapted from North Carolina to Texas. This oat also fits in dairy silage operations where high quality, cool-season forages are utilized for greenchop or silage. Seed of *Horizon 201* is available from Plantation Seed Conditioners, Inc., Newton, GA (800-543-4164 or plantationseed@starband.net).

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John Mark Shuffitt
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Marion County Extension

“Beef Cattle Management Tips”

October

- Plant cool season legumes.
- Plant small grain pastures.
- Check mineral feeder.
- Check for external parasites, especially lice, and treat if needed.
- Check for spittlebugs and grassloopers and treat, if needed.
- Watch condition of cow herd; maintain adequate nutrition.
- Isolate any additions to the herd for 30 to 60 days and observe for signs of disease; retest for brucellosis and leptospirosis.
- Be sure you have adequate handling facilities, and they are in good working order.
- If you are raising bulls for the commercial market, October thru December is the main bull-buying season for cattlemen in south Florida and now is the time to have your promotion program fully activated.

November

- Have soils tested
- Observe cows daily to detect calving difficulty
- Use high magnesium mineral if grass tetany has been a problem in the past
- Check for external parasites and treat if needed
- Maintain adequate nutrient level for cow herd
- Calve in well-drained pastures
- Survey pastures for poisonous plants
- Begin summarizing your annual records, both production and financial – then you will have time to make adjustments for tax purposes
- Re-evaluate winter feeding program and feed supplies
- Perform breeding soundness exams on bull battery so you have time to find replacements if some fail
- Implement bull conditioning program