HAY!

Look no further than your local co-op for top-quality hay twines and more.

- Gold Crest
- Green Valley
- Bridon
- Bridon Poly Wrap
- Bridon Net Wrap
- And more
Top 10 spring & summer 
management tips for your beef operation

1. Keep hay tarps tight and repair any wind damage promptly.
2. Provide free-choice Co-op mineral and access to fresh water.
3. Monitor grazing and rotate when possible.
4. Conduct a good fly-control program to help prevent pinkeye.
5. Consider weaning early if hot, dry weather persists.
6. Avoid working in the hottest part of the day to reduce stress.
7. Provide access to shade when possible.
8. Schedule breeding to avoid calving in the hottest part of the summer.
9. Monitor cattle for signs of respiratory problems and isolate accordingly.

**Spring 2011 NEWSLETTER**

Put the hurt on summer weeds

By Alan Sparkman, TFC Agronomy Department marketing manager

Tennessee beef producers know the value of good forages. An effective weed-control program is essential to producing quality hay and pasture. Summer weeds like horse nettle (bull nettle), tall ironweed, cocklebur, and ragweed can rob nutrients and moisture that would otherwise be available for increased grass production. There are several products available at your local Co-op to help rid pastures and hayfields of costly weeds and brush. Milestone™, Forefront R&P™, and PastureGard™ herbicides — all made by Dow AgroSciences — can provide forage producers with effective weed control in a variety of situations.

Here’s a brief description of each product:

- **Milestone** is labeled for control of more than 50 broadleaf weeds, including horse nettle and tall ironweed. Since there’s no 2,4-D in Milestone, it may be used in areas where 2,4-D use is discouraged. The use rate for Milestone is 3 to 7 ounces per acre, with 5 ounces per acre being most common. There are no grazing restrictions for any class of livestock for Milestone.
- **Forefront R&P** is a combination of Milestone and 2,4-D amine. Forefront R&P is labeled for control of more than 60 broadleaf weeds, including all of the weeds controlled by Milestone plus buckhorn plantain, wild carrot, and several others. The use rate for Forefront R&P is 1.5 to 2.6 pints per acre. Two pints per acre is the correct rate for most situations. There are no grazing restrictions for any class of livestock for Forefront R&P.
- **PastureGard** is a product that is primarily used for brush control in pastures, hayfields, and fencerows. PastureGard is labeled for control of brushy plants like blackberry, osage orange (hedge apple, etc.), and locust. The use rate for PastureGard is 3 to 5 pints per acre. When using PastureGard on fencerows, use a 2-percent solution.

Always refer to the product label for specific details on rates, restrictions, etc. For more information, visit your local Co-op or visit [www.dowagro.com/range](http://www.dowagro.com/range).

Don’t let flies drain profits

By Dr. Kevin Cox, DVM, TFC veterinarian

As temperatures rise and grass begins to grow, many of the things that have been dead or dormant during winter begin to take on new life. For the most part, that is a good thing. However, insect populations are one of those things we would rather do without.

Flies can be one of the biggest problems cattle producers face during the spring and summer. The various types of flies that affect cattle can cause a myriad of problems, ranging from outright health issues to decreased productivity that may not be as easily measureable.

From a health standpoint, the insect we are most concerned with is the face fly, which is the major vector for *Moraxella bovis* — more commonly known as pinkeye. Pinkeye is a serious bacterial infection in the structures of the eyeball. Most commonly, it starts out as a small infection on the center of the cornea and can sometimes progress to full blown abscessation of the eye. While there are several methods of effective treatment for pinkeye, strategic prevention is often a more practical approach. This prevention is primarily related to fly control but is also combined with other management procedures such as pasture clipping, vaccinations, sanitation practices, etc.

(See Fly control, next page)
Fly control
(Continued from first page)

One of the best methods of prevention is the use of cattle ear tags labeled to control face flies. Pinkeye vaccines are also very effective, and there are several products available that provide a variety of choices and routes of administration. A final control suggestion is the use of a cattle mineral that contains fly-control technology.

The success of any of these control strategies, however, often depends on using multiple methods for effective prevention. Co-op’s livestock experts can recommend products and practices to implement this type of combined approach, including a mineral feeder with an attached face fly rub. This approach allows for two fly control methods to be combined in one easy-to-use piece of hardware.

So as we head into fly season, good luck with your fly-control program and pinkeye prevention. Visit with the professionals at your local Co-op for more information.

Laredo Bermudagrass is excellent summer forage

Laredo is a specially formulated blend coated proprietary Bermudagrass seed for improved stand establishment. Its growth characteristics create a versatile forage for high-quality hay, grazing, and silage.

Laredo can be planted in the spring or summer after any danger of frost is past and when the soil temperature is consistently above 65 degrees. It can also be planted in late summer or early fall as long as a minimum of 60 days of good growth occurs before a frost. General planting rates are 10-12 pounds per acre at a maximum depth of a quarter inch. White clover can also be seeded with Laredo to improve forage quality, extend the grazing season, and supply part of the nitrogen required for optimum production. With proper management and ideal growing conditions, Laredo will be ready to cut or graze 45 to 50 days after seeding. Laredo should be cut for hay or silage when it reaches 16 inches in height and then every 4 to 6 weeks thereafter.

Featured product:
Face Fly Oiler (#15443)

This 16-inch Face Fly Oiler, ideal for use with the Co-op/Herdman Heavy-Duty Mineral Feeder (#15440), has a 1.5-gallon capacity and is tilt-activated to reduce waste. The PVC tank will not corrode, and the mop is replaceable. For more information and pricing, visit with the professionals at your local Co-op.

Co-op Knows Beef Bonanza returns Aug. 23

Educational seminars, demonstrations, and a trade show — all related to beef production — will be featured at the second Co-op Knows Beef Bonanza, planned for Tuesday, Aug. 23, at Miller Coliseum in Murfreesboro.

“We are excited to be bringing this event back to our Tennessee beef producers,” says TFC Marketing, Advertising, and Promotions Coordinator Keith Harrison. “Our 2009 event was a great success, and we expect this one to be even better.”

The inaugural CKB Bonanza drew more than 600 producer, says Harrison. Those interested in attending this year’s event should contact their local Co-op for registration materials over the upcoming months.

SPRING FORAGE CALENDAR

April
- Complete alfalfa seeding
- Determine need for supplemental summer forages like millet or Sudan grass.
- Prepare for start of hay harvest.
- Prepare fencing and water for grazing season.
- Begin grazing early pastures.
- Plant corn for silage and warm-season grasses if weather permits.
- Assess opportunity for weed control using recommended herbicides. Follow label recommendations.

May
- Start hay harvest to ensure adequate quality.
- Seed warm-season perennial grasses.
- Clip seed heads to prevent formation on fescue and to control weeds. Consider herbicide options.
- Apply 60 pounds of actual nitrogen per acre to pure cool-season grass fields if a second hay harvest is expected.
- For bermudagrass hay, apply 60-100 pounds of actual nitrogen per acre after each harvest.

June
- Continue hay harvest.
- Clip pastures for weeds and seed heads as needed.
- Rotate pastures as needed.
- Soil-test for late summer seeding.
- Protect round hay bales from weather to minimize storage losses of yield and quality.

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Hi-mag minerals provide more than magnesium

By Dr. Paul Davis, TFC nutritionist

Calving season is here, and so is the danger of grass tetany. To reduce loss, many producers use the time-tested practice of providing cattle with supplemental magnesium, often in the form of “high-mag” minerals. This helps guard against hypomagnesemia (low blood magnesium) — commonly known as grass tetany.

While this serious disorder is referred to the “silent killer of spring,” cows are at risk anytime grass or small grain pasture is lush and growing. Despite its discovery more than 80 years ago and endless research and study since, some of the best herds across our nation are stricken with grass tetany every year.

Grass tetany is most often associated with levels of low magnesium and high potassium in growing pastures. Often, cattle operations that strive to do a good job with forage production are plagued with more incidences of grass tetany. It usually affects mature cows in heavy lactation due to an increased demand for magnesium and calcium coupled with the reduced ability to mobilize minerals from bone in mature animals.

Fortunately, grass tetany is treatable when diagnosed early, but it is generally less expensive to prevent the disease. Since grass tetany affects mineral metabolism, mineral supplementation is logically an effective method of prevention. While supplemental magnesium may be delivered in methods other than a “free-choice” pasture mineral, complete supplementation with trace minerals and fat-soluble vitamins included in Co-op Hi-Mag Cattle Minerals has numerous benefits. Supplemental magnesium is usually the reason for choosing these minerals, but since many cows are in late gestation or heavy lactation during grass tetany season, there are many potential benefits to complete vitamin-mineral supplementation.

Most Southeast forages are nutritionally inadequate in copper, zinc, and selenium, which are especially important to brood cows in late gestation and lactation and during breeding season. Copper plays a role in numerous processes for the adult animal and the developing fetus. Most important to the cow-calf producer are those processes associated with growth and reproduction. Cattle grazed in areas with excessive sulfur in soil, forages, and/or water may be in greater need of supplemental copper because dietary sulfur is an antagonist to copper absorption. Likewise, zinc is involved in several functions, mostly related to health and immunity. Selenium and vitamin E work in synergy and are involved with reproduction, immune function, and placenta expulsion after calving.

Recent research suggests that, regardless of their own nutritional status, heifers born to mothers that received adequate trace mineral supplementation are more productive throughout their lives than those born to inadequately supplemented dams. This is commonly referred to as fetal programming and shows that benefits of mineral supplementation are realized far beyond the animal that directly ingests the product. In terms of health, growth and increased productivity, vitamin and mineral supplementation provides a very attractive return on investment.

As you strive to prevent grass tetany this spring, work with your local Co-op livestock specialist to tailor a mineral program to help guard against loss and improve your bottom line.

Ag Enhancement applications now at Co-op

Even with a change in administration and well-publicized state budgeting challenges, the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program (TAEP) is on track to continue providing cost-share grants to help farmers improve their operations in 2011.

Since the program began in 2005, nearly $49 million in cost-share funds have been awarded to the state’s farmers to purchase new equipment, upgrade infrastructure, enhance herd genetics, and implement diversification projects. Although funding dollars won’t be finalized until the state legislature approves the budget in June, Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA) officials say the amount should be around $21 million this year compared to $16 million in 2010.

Because of the program’s rising popularity, timeliness and accuracy of applications are the most important factors in determining whether producers will be awarded cost-share funding for 2011, according to TDA. Grants are given on first-come, first-serve basis, and producers are encouraged to get their forms to TDA on the first day of the one-week application period — June 1-7 — for the best chance of approval.

As in years past, beef and dairy producers may receive 35 percent cost-share for cattle genetics, livestock equipment, and hay, feed, and grain storage requests. Producers who have completed programs like the Master Beef Producer and Tennessee Quality Milk Improvement can receive 50 percent cost-share. The maximum funding ranges from $1,200 to $15,000, depending on the project.

Even though applications cannot be postmarked before June 1, now is the time for producers to start determining their requests, filling out applications, completing requirements such as premises registration and Beef Quality Assurance certification, and gathering bids for projects. Co-op can help with all those tasks.

To date, TAEP has helped to fund more than 19,000 projects, including 5,072 last year. The majority of those are in livestock equipment, cattle genetics, and hay storage. For every state dollar invested, an additional $4.64 is generated in local economic activity.

Applications are now available at Co-ops across the state or can be downloaded from www.ourcoop.com by clicking on the TAEP logo in the “Of Interest To You” section of the home page. One application can be used for the genetics, livestock equipment, and storage programs; a separate form is available for producer diversification projects.

For more information, talk with the livestock experts at your local Co-op or visit online at www.tn.gov/agriculture/enhancement.

Co-op Knows Beef Spring 2011