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Livestock and Natural Resources

Summer Half Over

With the July 4th holiday in the rear view mirror, it's time to think about removing the bulls from the pastures, depending on the length of your breeding season.

Yearlings should be left with the cow herd for 60 days or less. Beyond that time their condition can fall off to such a degree that it could have long-range effects upon their growth. After removal from the cow herd after the breeding season, yearlings should be kept separate from the older bulls if possible at least through their second winter. Yearlings need to be fed or grazed on a good quality forage or pasture.

For spring/summer breeding programs, this could be hay regrowth or brome grass pasture. Their supplemental feeding regime can be equated to the program for bred-yearling heifers. These bulls are growing rapidly, in addition to replacing the condition they lost during the breeding pasture.

Extra care and feed of yearling bulls after the breeding season should increase their longevity. These bulls should also have a Breeding Soundness Evaluation well before the start of the next breeding season.

Get two-year-old bulls in condition or their working clothes well before the start of the breeding season. Start at least 100 days before the start of the breeding season to get these bulls in condition score 6. This may mean some grain or distillers may need to be fed to get them in condition. Starting early enough means that you will not need a lot of grain or distillers to get this accomplished.

Two-year-old bulls should have more of their mature size by breeding season as compared to yearling bulls. A 1,700 pound 2-year-old that is slightly under-conditioned will probably only need to gain 1 pound per day at this stage in his life. To do this, active bulls may need 40 pounds of feed or more on a dry matter basis, of which 5 to 7 pounds should be grain.

If body condition is well below the target, the amount of grain will need to be increased to near 0.5 to 1 pound or more per 100 pounds of body weight. Again, make any increases in grain intake gradually so that digestive disorders are unlikely.

The diet will need to be about 12% crude protein. Depending on the forage available this again may require protein supplement. Monitor the body condition of the bulls closely and make grain feeding adjustments to reach the body condition score of 6 before the next breeding season begins.

After this age of bull finishes the breeding season, good quality grass pasture should be adequate. Watch body condition and if they struggle to pick up condition by fall, they may need some supplement during the fall and winter.

These bulls should also have a Breeding Soundness Evaluation well before the start of the breeding season.

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Summer Tree Care

Summer has hit – with a vengeance! Once adequate soil moisture levels have been reduced and summer rains in many areas have thus far been inadequate to meet the needs of landscape plants. It *is* July!

Watering is key towards maintaining trees in our landscape. While most mature trees will have an adequate root system to explore moisture from a wide enough area to keep them nice and green, younger trees do not and will likely require some special care.

For example, newly transplanted trees need at least ten gallons of water a week to keep them going. Two and three-year-old trees that are still getting established may require even more! The challenge: getting water where it needs to be!

Trees perform best when they have deep, but infrequent water applications. Try to get water to soak deeply in to the soil. This keeps evaporation levels low, making water available to trees over a longer period. Try using a small hole in a five-gallon bucket or a perforated soaker hose (water distribution can be helped with these hoses by hooking both ends together with a Y-adaptor to equalize pressure) to allow for slower applications that can soak in to the soil's subsurface layer. If soil is hard, consider a light tillage of some sort to rough up the surface, with an eye towards increasing infiltration. If even these slow watering methods result in surface runoff, consider reducing the watering rate even further or building a berm around the base of the tree (make sure it's at least four foot in diameter) to allow water to percolate in to the soil profile before running off.

Whatever method you use, be sure to wet soils to at least a twelve-inch depth! Use a metal rod, wooden dowel, electric fence post or something similar to check depth. Dry soil is much harder to push through than wet.

Focus watering efforts on smaller and stressed trees, but don't forget mature trees as well! Evergreen species, in particular, seem to be showing increasing amounts of stress, likely due to reduced winter moisture and warmer, drying winds. Many are under attack from bagworms right now as well, compounding the issue. Be sure both evergreen and deciduous trees are evaluated for insect and disease pressure in addition to drought stress, to see if they are adding to the problem.

Multiple watering publications are available from your District Office to help you design a watering program. Stop in and pick one up, or contact me for an e-mail link.

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NO NEWS

Nancy Nelson, Agent
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Family Life

How to Safely Use Nail Care Products

Have you ever thought about the safety of your beauty products? The U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) has. Their consumer updates include practical health and wellness tips.

Manicures and pedicures can be pretty. The cosmetic products used, such as nail polishes and nail polish removers, also must be safe—and are regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

You can do your part to stay safe and look polished, too by following all labeled directions and paying attention to any warning statements listed on these products.

Cosmetic ingredients (except most color additives) and products, including nail products, do not need FDA approval before they go on the market. But these products are required to be safe when used as intended. Note that nail products intended to treat medical problems are classified as drugs and do require FDA approval.

Cosmetic nail care products also must include any instructions or warnings needed to use them safely. For example: Some nail products can catch fire easily so you should not expose them to flames (such as from a lit cigarette) or heat sources (such as a curling iron). Some can injure your eyes, so you should avoid this exposure. Some should only be used in areas with good air circulation (ventilation). Some ingredients can be harmful if swallowed, so these products should never be consumed by any person or pet.

Also know that retail cosmetics such as those sold in stores or online must list ingredients in the order of decreasing amounts. If you're concerned about certain ingredients, you can check the label and avoid using products with those ingredients.

For example, some nail hardeners and nail polishes may contain formaldehyde, which can cause skin irritation or an allergic reaction. And acrylics, used in some artificial nails and sometimes in nail polishes, can cause allergic reactions.

The bottom line? Read the labels of cosmetic products and follow all instructions. And if you go to a salon for a manicure or pedicure, make sure the space has good ventilation. Nail salon practices are regulated by the states, and not the FDA.

If you have questions about whether certain nail products are right for you, talk to your health care provider.