Swine News

For individuals who would like to become a Certified Operator in Charge, the following classes have been scheduled:

Type A Certification Classes:
April 5 and April 6, 2005 from 9:00AM – 4PM both days at the Cumberland County Cooperative Extension Center, Fayetteville. Contact Tyrone Fisher at 252.534.2711 for more information.

July 20 and July 21, 2005 from 9AM – 4PM both days at the Craven County Cooperative Extension Center in New Bern, NC. Contact Amy Andrews at 252.633.1477 for more information.

October 18 and 19, 2005 from 9AM – 4PM both days at the Duplin County Extension Center in Kenansville, NC. Contact Star Jackson at 910.296.2143 for more information.

Cattle News

April 7, 2005 – The Duplin County Cattlemen’s Association will meet at 7:30PM at the Duplin County Cooperative Extension Center Auditorium. An educational program on cattle genetics will be presented.

How To Select Quality Hay

There are two methods of hay evaluation: visual and chemical. Chemical analysis is the only true indicator of nutritional value, but visual analysis can be used to provide an indication of overall hay quality.

Visual Evaluation

The following are points to consider when visually evaluating hay quality:

1. **Stage of Maturity at Time of Harvest**
   The presence of large, coarse stems and seedheads indicates that the plant was more mature than desired at the time of harvest. An abundance of leaves and lack of seedheads is desirable.

2. **Texture**
   Stem size and flexibility provide an indication of how palatable the hay will be to livestock and horses.

3. **Presence of Foreign Material**
   Look closely for insects, weeds (especially poisonous weeds), and trash (wire, nails, etc.).

4. **Color**
   In general, a bright green color indicates high vitamin and protein content. A dark brown color is a sign that the hay was heat-damaged, which may cause mold. A light beige color indicates sun-bleaching.

5. **Aroma**
   Smell the hay - a musty or moldy odor indicates that the hay was not cured or stored properly and mold is present. Mold will appear as a grayish-white
dust when the bale is slapped, or as a white flaky substance in tightly packed sections of the bale. **Mold usually eliminates hay as a horse feed.**

**Chemical Evaluation**

The NC Farm Feed Testing Service, a cooperative effort of NCDA and the NC Cooperative Extension, offers analysis of forages and grain mixes. For $10 per sample, the laboratory analyzes levels of dry matter, protein, digestible energy, minerals, etc. **Nitrate levels may also be tested at no cost.**

Feed values on the analysis report are expressed on both a dry matter (DM) and an as-sampled basis. DM values indicate the nutrient content of feed with the water removed. This permits the comparison of different feeds. DM basis is considered to be the best indicator of nutritional value.

**Sheep and Goat News**

Biosecurity refers to management measures taken to prevent disease agents from being introduced and spreading to and/or from animal populations or their proximity.

Biosecurity has three main components. These are:

1. **Isolation** – The most common way that new diseases are introduced into a flock is through new animal additions. New animals and animals returning from exhibitions should be quarantined from resident animals for four weeks to allow for incubation periods of certain diseases.

2. **Traffic Control** – Do not carry disease from your place to someone else’s place. Avoid unnecessary animal contact when visiting other livestock facilities. Take precautions so you do not carry diseases back to your own place. Change overalls or clothes in between farms. Also, either clean and disinfect your boots before entering and when leaving another livestock premises or wear disposable boots plastic boots at the farm when your visit id finished.

3. **Sanitation/Husbandry** – **Keep things clean and picked up!** Good sanitation is a necessity in biosecurity.
   - Regular cleaning and disinfecting
   - Removal and disposal of mortality
   - Pest, rodent, and insect control
   - Proper manure management

Sincerely,

Star Jackson