

Across the County

Take Steps to Reduce Heat Stress in Cattle

By
Marty
Fear



County Extension Agent

With plenty of summer left to go, soaring temperatures and humidity can take a toll on cattle, resulting in everything from reduced rates of gain to death loss.

"Cattle will adapt to heat if it happens gradually, but that's often not the case," said Larry Hollis, veterinarian, Kansas State University, citing the quick wide temperature and humidity swings that can happen in the central High Plains.

"United States Department of Agriculture has information including forecast maps that show geographically, where it expects the heat to cause problems," said Hollis, who is a beef cattle veterinarian.

"United States Department of Agriculture has information including forecast maps that show geographically, where it expects the heat to cause problems."

See the maps at <http://1.usa.gov/14KSLg2>. The website takes into account weather parameters that influence livestock comfort or stress, including temperature, wind speed, humidity and solar

radiation. The site also includes a breathing equation that producers, feedlot managers and others can use to evaluate their animals.

"Cattle don't have the ability to sweat like we do," Hollis said. "Instead they'll start panting."

The site has information to help producers gauge cattle heat stress by how many breaths an animal will take per minute. If an animal is taking less than 90 breaths per minute, the rate is considered "normal." A rate of 90-110 breaths per minute indicates "alert," 110-130 indicates "danger," and above 130 breaths per minute indicates "emergency."

"If you see them in the morning and they're already over 100 breaths/minute, you know it will likely get worse as the day goes on," Hollis said. "We can't control the temperature or humidity, but we can control some things."

He outlined several steps.

- Provide cool drinking water. There is a difference between water heated by the sun all day and cool water.

- Make sure there is ample space around the drinking source, so cattle don't bunch up as they are accessing the water.

- Provide shade – whether it is moving animals to a different pasture with more trees or stretching a screen over pens.

- Remove anything that impedes airflow. Do not pen cattle near windbreaks. Mow weeds if they are tall enough to function as a windbreak. If there are mounds, cattle will use them to try to catch a breeze.

- Control flies. Cattle will come together to help each other deflect flies but air circulation is impeded when they bunch up, so controlling flies helps with controlling heat stress.

- If handling cattle, do it early in the day. Have all work done by 10 a.m.

- Where possible, use sprinklers, but do not use mist. Mist raises humidity, which adds to stress. Instead, use a system that dispenses large droplets.

"At the end of the day, cattle that are not alive don't do us much good. When we have performance losses, that's one thing, but when your animals don't survive, that's not a good situation at all," Hollis said.

Contact the Cheyenne County Extension office at 332-3171 or cfear@ksu.edu with questions or comments. Till next week - Marty



GAS METER hit in the alley. Travis Jensen from Midwest Energy, left, gets the gas shut off. Fire chief George Harper and fireman Clay Zimelman were on hand in case of an emergency.

Herald staff photo by Tim Burr



ANNOUNCING

The Winners of the 2013 Harvest Countdown

- Carol Redding - First Place \$50**
- Ted Busse - Second Place \$35**
- Tom Williams - Third Place \$15**

The official first load of wheat was brought in on June 27 at 10:51 a.m. by the Bracelin Brothers.

CAPTAIN HOOK'S FINE DINING

WHEELER ---332-3275
Daily Specials
Hand pressed hamburgers never frozen
Like Us On FACEBOOK To See Our Daily Specials.
DINE IN --CARRY OUT • 785-332-3275

W. Hwy. 36 in St. Francis or (785) 332-2601
Carry-Out or Dine-in

HOURS:
Thursday • 11 a.m.-9 p.m.
Fri. & Sat. • 11 a.m.-10 p.m.
Sun. • 11:30 a.m.-9 p.m.



Accepting Credit Cards

1st Loads of 2013 Wheat at area elevators



BARTLETT COMPANY — Zach Patterson, manager and Kyle Buffington go over the scale ticket on the first load of wheat .

Majestic Service

Truck Stop

- Gas ► Diesel ► Snacks
- Restaurant ► Grocery

West US 36 • St. Francis • 785-332-2905

Here as part of the community The Bank — The Choice



Member FDIC

PO Box 40
Bird City, KS 67731
785-734-2100
785-734-2121 (fax)



FRONTIER AG — Taryn Carmichael and Dalton Magnani test the first load of wheat brought in by Jon Waters.



The Saint Francis Herald

We are here for all your financial needs!



WESTERN STATE BANK

FDIC

785-332-3100 www.wsbs.com
P.O. Box 1102 ~ 400 E. Washington ~ St. Francis



St. Francis Equity Exchange

St. Francis
(785) 332-2113
Haigler
(308) 297-3223

Owned by the farmers and ranchers of this community since 1913