



STILLWATER AG NEWS

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May 2015

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Note from Lee

Howdy Folks!

Hope spring finds you happy and not too far behind your tail. As I write this it is sprinkling so we will certainly take all of that we can get! Please take a minute when you first get this and look at the upcoming events. There are several opportunities in the next few days and near future to pick up something that may help you or your business.



400 3rd Avenue North
PO Box 807
Columbus, MT 59019
406.322.8035
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www.msuentension.org



Upcoming Events

Property Rights Forum

Land & Minerals... Do you know YOURS?

Purpose: Present information from industry professionals regarding YOUR property rights, land and mineral development, federal property leasing, pros and cons of oil development and more. This forum will be educational, while providing the audience with factual and balanced information.

Speakers: Adam Sigler, MSU Extension Water Quality Specialist; Hertha Lund and Breeann Johnson, Lund Law PLLC; Craig Drake, BLM; and Dick Iverson, Rancher from Eastern MT

RSVP: By **May 6th** to Lindsey at 406.780.1249 or email svwc2010@hotmail.com. Full agenda can be viewed at www.stillwatervalleywatershed.com.

Cost: \$15 for members/\$20 for non-members

Sponsored by:

Stillwater Valley Watershed Council

Beartooth Stock Association

Stillwater Protective Association

MSU Extension

May 14, 2015

9 am to 4 pm

LUNCH INCLUDED

Anipro Event Center

5 miles south of Absarokee, MT

www.StillwaterValleyWatershed.com

Spring Forum Agenda

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 9:00-9:15 | Introduction of forum and presenters |
| 9:15-10:15 | Baseline Information on Oil/Gas Exploration from Around the State |
| 10:15-10:30 | Break |
| 10:30-11:30 | Surface Rights vs. Mineral Rights-What Landowners Need to Know, Breeann Johnson, Attorney |
| 11:30-12:30 | Federal Leasing and the Development Process, Craig Drake, BLM |
| 12:30-1:15 | Lunch |
| 1:15-2:15 | Pros & Cons of Oil Development and introduction of the White Paper: "Fracking: What are the Questions?" Hertha Lund, Attorney |
| 2:15-3:15 | Secondary Effects, Dick Iverson, Cattle Rancher, Culbertson, MT |
| 3:15-4:00 | Questions/Closing Remarks |

A reminder for you and your constituents and colleagues of the June 11th Field Day at the Bridger Plant Materials Center in Bridger, Montana. An agenda of events will be

forthcoming in the near future.

The Plant Materials Center Board of Managers has graciously offered to host a BBQ. Would you please RSVP to Roger Hybner (Roger.Hybner.mt.usda.gov) at your earliest convenience with the number of persons that plan to attend from your family and/or office so that the Board may plan for an appropriate number of lunches, and the staff here can plan for accommodations. If any of your family or staff require special accommodations, please let us know.

"The only time to eat diet food is while you're waiting for the steak to cook" - *Julia Child*

May 21 **Practical Ranch Biosecurity 10 am to 3 pm.**

10-12 Nick Campbell *Practical approaches to efficient herd health programs*

Gene Max , Deworming followed by a variety of other topics and your questions.

12 noon Lunch sponsored by Beartooth Stockgrowers Pitchfork steaks and pork chops.

1-3 Jeanne Rankin DVM. Practical Ranch Biosecurity.

Pesticide Applicator Training.

Judging by the number of calls I received, I confused the issue with the last post card sent out in February. First our reenrollment period ends December 31 2017. You have until then to obtain 6 applicator credits. We will have a series of meetings beginning the fall / winter of 2016 and continuing through the end of 2017. In the meantime, we will also hold a few educational meetings that will also have the opportunity to obtain credits such as at the MATE. Such was the case with the class in Billings we held the end of February. That class specifically targeted new applicators or those that had let their license expire and needed all 6 credits. If you are a current or past license holder in Stillwater County or you receive this newsletter you will receive notification of upcoming trainings with pesticide applicator points available.

Low-Stress Livestock Handling With
DR. TEMPLE GRANDIN & CURT PATE
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3RD, 2015
BAKER, MT
FALLON COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

*The same workshop will be offered in Miles City, June 2nd.
Call the Custer County Extension Office for information (406) 874-3370*

*Register with the
Fallon/Carter Extension
Office by May 26th*

**Fallon/Carter
Extension**
(406) 778-7110
P.O. Box 850
Baker MT, 59313
falloncarter1@montana.edu

Agenda:

- | | |
|------------|--|
| 10:00 a.m. | Registration Opens |
| 10:30 a.m. | Presentation and Q & A Session (Grandin & Pate)
<i>*Bring your questions!</i> |
| 11:30 a.m. | Lunch provided |
| 12:30 p.m. | Livestock Demonstration (Grandin & Pate) |
| 2:30 p.m. | Horsemanship for Stockmanship (Pate) |
| 3:00 p.m. | Closing remarks |

Workshop Fee: \$20.00

(Make checks payable to Fallon/Carter Extension)

Dr. Temple Grandin is a designer of livestock handling facilities and a Professor of Animal Science at Colorado State University. Facilities she has designed are located in the United States, Canada, Europe, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand, and other countries. In North America, almost half of the cattle are handled in a center track restrainer system that she designed for meat plants. Curved chute and race systems she has designed for cattle are used worldwide and her writings on the flight zone and other principles of grazing animal behavior have helped many people to reduce stress on their animals during handling.



Curt Pate brings great value to the livestock industry. He spends his time conducting stockmanship demonstrations and trainings and also manages a small grazing operation in Montana. With his ability to think outside the box, his ability to challenge others to do the same, and a willingness to share his skills. Curt has set himself apart in conducting stockmanship clinics. His lifelong experience in ranching adds credibility and enables him to communicate his methods of effectively to cattle ranchers throughout the county. In addition, Curt continues to seek out new learning opportunities to increase and hone his knowledge and skills and enjoys sharing this knowledge with others.



PESTICIDE NEWS

Tools for managing wheat stem sawfly have been historically lacking. Thimet 20-G has received a 24 (C) special local need registration in MT and has been successful in managing sawfly in field trials. Many wheat producers throughout the state will be considering the use of Thimet 20-G for managing wheat stem sawfly. It is really important that users be familiar with the required equipment and safety considerations outlined in the ag alert before they use this product. This is a highly toxic (category 1 substance) pesticide that should be used only after understanding all safety / non-target concerns. If this pesticide is misused we will likely lose this product for managing wheat stem sawfly in Montana.

See the MSU Ag Alert below.

Thimet 20-G® for Wheat Stem Sawfly Management Dr. Kevin Wanner, MSU Extension Specialist, Crop Entomology Cecil Tharp, MSU Extension Pesticide Education Specialist

The wheat stem sawfly (WSS) is one of the most damaging insect pests of wheat in the northern Great Plains region. The larvae feed internally within the stem, weakening the wheat stand that subsequently falls over prior to harvest (lodging damage). Foliar applied insecticides targeting the adult sawflies have not proven

effective at preventing egg laying and subsequent damage by the larvae, due to the long 3-4 week emergence period of the adult insects. A systemic insecticide applied to seed at planting does not (Photo credit: *Blodgett, S.L.*) persist long enough within the developing wheat stems

to kill the internally feeding larvae. However, a new application method for the insecticide Thimet 20-G® has received a 24 (C) special local need registration label for control of WSS in spring and winter wheat crops, and research has demonstrated that it is effective.

Thimet 20-G® is formulated as a granular insecticide, with 20% phorate (the active ingredient) by weight. Phorate is an organophosphate class of insecticide, an older chemistry that is highly toxic to people and animals as a nerve toxin. Thimet 20-G® is applied as a granular

(5 lbs/acre) after wheat emergence and needs to be incorporated at least one inch deep between the crop rows, once per season. Thimet 20-G® is a systemic insecticide, taken up by the roots and translocated up the wheat stem where it kills the WSS larvae. Applications must be completed before the WSS begins to fly and lay eggs, which in Montana can begin at the end of May or sometime during June depending on seasonal weather conditions. Efficacy is achieved by applying Thimet 20-G® after the crop emerges, closer in time to when WSS larvae are feeding within the stem. Trials in Montana have demonstrated a 64- 100% reduction in damage measured as stem cutting by the larvae. Yield increases of 5.4 – 6.1 bushels per acre were achieved in spring wheat and winter wheat crops, respectively.



Equipment Considerations and Required Engineering Controls:

- An air seeder with disk type openers is recommended to minimize damage to emerged wheat plants.
- Thimet 20-G® granules MUST be incorporated into the soil.
- This Lock'N Load product must be used with an enclosed loading system as defined by Worker Protection Standard (WPS) for Agricultural Pesticides [40 CFR 170.240(d)(4)].
- An adapter lid must be fitted to the air seeder for delivery of the insecticide granules into the fertilizer bin.
- Applicators must use an enclosed cab that meets the definition in the WPS for Agricultural Pesticides for **dermal protection**. In addition the applicator must wear long sleeve shirt, long pants, shoes plus socks while within the cab. The enclosed cab must also provide respiratory protection equivalent to a dust/mist filtering respirator or the applicator must wear a NIOSH approved respirator with any N, R, P, or HE filter (prefix TC-21C) while within the cab.

Taking Care of Business

Is it any wonder that those individuals who are highly motivated and self-disciplined with good time management and organizational skills are usually the most productive and successful in their chosen field? These people have the heart and passion for what they do. They are usually self-starters who know how to prioritize and multi-task in order to get the job done. These are the people we search out to do business with. They can be counted on in every situation. They are dependable and good to their word.

In every walk of life there are those who have a natural sense for taking care of business and those who don't. Although many of these traits may not come naturally to some folks, the good news is that they can be developed and fine tuned over time. Those of us in the beef business know only too well how easy



it is to fall behind the eight ball at some point or another in the course of a year. After a long, drawn out winter, spring hits us full force starting with calving. From there on out there's branding, breeding, turning out, fertilizing, irrigating, haying, moving cattle, marketing, weaning, shipping and so on. In between we have to find time to fix fence, repair breakdowns, make management decisions and at the same time take care of the everyday necessities of life. If we let things slide they continue to add up until we are overwhelmed. We can't do it all so unfortunately all of it doesn't get done. And what does get done may not get done well because we are just too strapped for time to do a good job. This is where advanced planning comes in to play. By setting realistic goals

based on our priorities we are able to enter the busy times with more efficiency and less worries while still giving it our best.

Organization and time management go hand-in-hand. The best place to start is by making a list of both your non-monetary short and long-term goals. Prioritize the items on your list in order to get the most demanding and tedious jobs done first. Post your lists in a conspicuous spot so you are reminded every day of your commitment to your goals and priorities. Check them off as you complete them. You will feel a real sense of accomplishment when you are able to see the jobs checked off. Update your list periodically. If you see something that needs to be done but you can't get to it right away, add it to the list. This written commitment will help keep you on track and encourage you to follow through with your plan. You will have to be ambitious and self-disciplined to make this work. Think ahead. Don't wait until shipping day to fix the loading chute. Put it on the priority list and fix it early. Take the time to make it a permanent fix to the problem. Remember to include things important to the overall health of the ranch and yourself and family. How many of us haven't taken that well deserved and much needed family vacation?



Have you ever noticed how procrastination can cost you in the long run both in time and money? Organizing the ranch shop for the first time in twenty years is a case in point. Imagine the time you'll save when your tools are arranged so that you can find the right one just when you need it. Chances are with an organized shop you'll be more apt to follow through with a lot of the jobs you would have normally put off just because you weren't able to find what you needed to get the job done. During the long winter months go out and tackle that bin of bolts you've been meaning to sort forever. You'll have saved both time and money spent in making a trip to town to buy what you already have on hand.

It's important to be realistic when setting long term goals. Identify the areas that will add the most to your ranching operation's efficiency when they are restored. Stop for a moment and really think through the things that



might effect your operations safety or efficiency. A case in point happened on my own small place last year. As usual before turning out on grass I had walked the fence and fixed up, stretched up the fences so they were in pretty good shape. Unlike a lot of you most of my fence is easily visible and regularly scanned. Although the short stretch of fence in question is within 15 yards of a spot I drive by nearly every day, It is hidden by trees and I hadn't checked it since mid summer. Needless to say I got a call about stock on the highway– in this case horses. Luckily this was easily taken care of and fixed however all sorts of scary thoughts ran through my head as I fixed that little dab of fence and what that 15 yards could have cost me.

As unpleasant as it can be, digging post holes, setting corner posts, making gates and repairing fence has to be done. Approach the job with a different attitude. Imagine the time that could be saved if you could contain your cattle. Then get to work. Set practical goals. Since it took several years for the fences to get in to their current state of disrepair, it's going to take a good period of time to get them back in shape. Work on fixing a quarter to half-a-mile of fence a week during the off-time of the year when more pressing jobs are not overpowering. In just a few months you'll have repaired 5 to 10 miles of fence. There are always obstacles to overcome while working toward your goals. Life has a way of throwing curve balls every now and then. It helps to remain focused on your objective. Get and stay organized. When you have down time, work on your list of goals. Where and what is your 15 yards? Be motivated to get things done and done right the first time. The best time to start taking care of business and reaping the benefits of a productive and successful life is now. Who knows? You might actually start enjoying the process.



News from MSU Animal and Range Science Department

Over the last 15 months, we have added an Assistant Professor, Forage Specialist; an Assistant Professor, Wildlife Habitat Ecology; an Assistant Professor, Beef Specialist for Fort Keogh; and an Assistant Professor, Sheep Specialist. In addition, we have interviewed for an Animal Physiologist.

We also hired a Non-Tenure-Track Instructor to teach the applied courses and coach the livestock judging team. We were able to hire a laboratory manager to run all aspects of the laboratory from safety to ensuring assays are completed.

Our graduate students contribute greatly to our research program. Without their hard work and efforts, our research program would suffer. Some of our research faculty and research programs are highlighted in this newsletter. Our research programs address a variety of issues facing agriculture in our world today.

Students continue to enthusiastically support our program in many different ways. Students are involved in clubs

along with several local, national and international contests ranging from livestock and wool judging to the Undergraduate Range Management Exam (URME) and plant identification. We will soon be selecting the next team to compete in the Academic Quadrathlon. Equine students have several opportunities for extracurricular activities such as clubs, events and workshops.

Points to Ponder

- A sound health program and good nutrition are requirements of any breeding program. They become even more important in an A.I. program. Income and labor use can both be improved by shortening the calving season.
- Reproductive efficiency has a greater impact on the economic returns of a ranch than any of the more highly *heritable traits*.
- *Fertility records* are the easiest of all performance records to keep. They reflect the level of management and environment more accurately than any other record kept.
- Bulls are purchased to improve the genetic merit of the offspring.
- Performance is influenced more by environmental factors than genetic factors.
- By knowing your major grasses and how they grow, you will be able to set the most advantageous time to graze each area. You will also be able to predict the level of use the plant will tolerate and still produce well.
- When you know *inherent* grazing preferences and adjust season of use and numbers of stock, you can manage grazing to increase some plant species and decrease others.
- Matching the nutrient demands of livestock and the nutrients supplied by range forage comprises a real balancing act for a considerable portion of the year.
- *Species composition* on the range has a great bearing on the forage value obtained from it.
- After the optimum combination of nutrients occurs in the forage, the manager has the options of moving stock to areas of less mature plants, supplementing that forage, or modifying the demands (e.g., weaning the calves or taking off yearlings).
- Drought in the period after calving and remaining through several months can delay a cow's breeding for 3 months or longer. The manager should plan to provide cows a good feed source to keep them on schedule.
- If you have made *range improvements* on your allotments in the past, keep good records of the impact they have had, both on the resource itself and on animal production.

Good Management Practices

During the breeding season, keep cows distributed over the feed resource so the nutrient level is kept high. Some of the most important "riding" of the

year will be done at this time.

3. Any cows that have lost their calves or did not calve should be marketed.
4. Be sure that the mineral-salt mixture is available for all of the cattle and that the mixture has adequate levels of special minerals for preventing problems such as grass tetany.
5. In single bull groups, watch the cows closely during the first 30 days of the breeding season so you will know if the cows are cycling and if the bull is settling the cows.

- Review your mineral supplement program. Be sure mineral consumption level is meeting your needs. The most critical mineral needs are calving to re-breeding and 30 days pre weaning and shipping. However research has shown that cattle will actually consume less mineral if they are kept on it year around than if they are moved on and off of a mineral.

Dr. Jeff Hall, Utah State University maintains the least return on investment he has seen from adequately meeting mineral needs even with more expensive chelated minerals is 5:1. The best return he has seen was 10:1.

- Keep up-to-date on market reports and trends.
- Plan some marketing alternatives.
- Review your budget for future needs.
- Review good management practices for growing and harvesting alfalfa hay.

Spring

1. Record when each species starts to grow. This will help you project when ranges will be safe to begin spring grazing that year. Build an initiation-of growth record over several years. You will find it helpful in long-range planning.
2. Monitor relative development rates for forage plants. This should help you assess whether adjustments in grazing plans will be necessary.
3. Use rough country with yearlings rather than cows and calves if that option is available. Yearlings will cover country better and make more efficient use of forage. Weigh yearlings before turning out so you can determine their performance from range forage. Assess effects, if any, of excessive winter big game use on spring forage supply. Quantifying the impacts will be necessary if justifiable cases are to be made for reducing the impacts.

Summer

Record degree of grazing use by date. Are your grazing objectives being met? Degree of grazing use on a particular date will vary. In a good forage year, amount of use will be much less, for example, unless stocking rate is increased to make up the difference. Total use and where it occurs should reflect a true situation.

Junipers

Our strange winter has caused some winter kill and severe browning to many of our trees and in particular junipers. We suspect that the juniper is affected by winter injury. Even shrubs growing close to a house can be affected by this abiotic disorder. Warm, sunny days and

light/warmth reflecting from the house is causing the needles of the shrub to evaporate water. Unfortunately, should the ground be frozen, the roots are not able to take up the lost amount of water, therefore causing the winter injury.

Management

Our state horticulture specialist recommends watering your junipers well during the growing season and providing them with adequate nutrients. You may prune the juniper lightly, only cutting off dead branches in the lower part of the shrub to improve air circulation. Never make cuts into needle-less wood, as no new growth will emerge from this portion of the juniper branch and the juniper will be left with bare spots. If parts of the juniper show new growth development - warmer temperatures and adequate moisture will help your shrub to recover.

You should also check if voles are present on the perimeter as we had a major explosion of voles in some parts of the state and county. They can severely damage the root system, resulting in browning and die-back of shrubs and trees.



Random Thoughts gleaned from the MSU Nutrition Forum and Ag update held last week.

It seems that one of the perpetual decisions is when to reseed alfalfa fields. As you go through this growing season here are a few guidelines to evaluate stands.

1. When assessing alfalfa stands for productivity.
 - ◆ For straight alfalfa. Economically it is feasible to refurbish alfalfa stands when stems drop below 10 per square foot. (see video of method here) [Alfalfa Stand Assessment: Is this stand good enough to keep? University of Wisconsin Extension video](#)
 - ◆ For mixed grass alfalfa tonnage and quality are determining factors are you maintain the tons and the quality necessary for the class of cattle you want to feed it too. NRC requirements for dry pregnant 1350 # cows in the last trimester of pregnancy would require hay with around 59% TDN and 10% protein on a dry matter basis. That will give you an idea of hay you need to get to calving. Protein and energy needs to increase dramatically after calving so you will need to have some hay at about 12% protein and 64% TDN to meet those needs.
 - ◆ Rule of thumb—an alfalfa stand will last approximately 20 harvests. So if you cut it for hay and then graze the aftermath then it should last 10 years.
 - ◆ Cut or Graze your alfalfa no later than 6-8 weeks before the first killing frost in the fall if at all possible



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