

The Range Review

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Upcoming Events:

- **Small Farms Workshop, Rotational Grazing**
Cognito Farms
Bradford County
May 25, 2011
- **Tri-County Beef Cattle Genetics Update**
Baker County
Extension Office
May 31, 2011
- **Weed ID Workshop**
Alachua County
Extension Office
June 24, 2011
- **Integrated Pest Management Workshop**
Columbia County
August 25, 2011
- For more information, call 904-966-6224

Volume 4, 2nd Quarter

April/May/June 2011

Howdy from the Bradford County Extension Office!

Spring began on March 20th but I'm beginning to wonder if we haven't already moved into summer. Looking at the weather forecast, we are hotter than most other states. The lack of rain in Bradford County makes me wonder were our spring rains have gone.

Regardless of the rain, I hope you all have begun the annual maintenance checks on your tractors, bailers, rakes and mowers. As our pastures receive the rain we hope for, we'll be cutting and bailing soon after. Scout your pasture for weeds and spray herbicides appropriately.

In this issue of the Range Review, you'll find some interesting and hopefully helpful information on tropical soda apple (TSA), horn fly control and beef cattle implants. We are planning a Tri-County Beef Cattle Genetics Update on May 31st in Baker County. This will be part three of our beef management series in the Tri-County Area. We have already covered vaccines and nutrition. Materials presented at these workshops are intended to empower you with the information you need to make sound management decisions related to your operation.

We have a lot going on here in the Extension Office, so I've also included a 2nd Quarter Calendar of Events for your reference. If you are interested in attending one of these programs, please give us a call and register. Don't miss out because you forgot to RSVP!

If you have any questions related to livestock and forages, please feel free to give me a call at any time. If I don't know the answer, I'll help you find it.

Timothy W. Wilson

Timothy W. Wilson
County Extension Director
Livestock and Forages



South American beetle released by UF researchers benefits Florida ranchers

GAINESVILLE, Fla. — Over the past two decades, Florida cattle ranchers have spent as much as \$16 million a year doing battle with an invasive weed called tropical soda apple, known as TSA, that takes over pastures, elbowing out the forage grasses ranchers need for their cattle.

But a beetle released by the [University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences](#) is taking a bite out of the problem by feeding on the weed and reducing its competitiveness. UF researchers describe the beetle's success as a biological control agent in the current issue of the journal *Florida Entomologist*.

Gratiana boliviana, as the beetle is known to scientists, is a native of South America and the first biological control agent in North America to be used against TSA. The beetles are highly specific feeders whose voracious appetite is focused only on TSA but not on related plants such as eggplant, peppers or potatoes.

[Julio Medal](#), the [UF entomologist](#) who led the research team that released the beetle, said TSA has not only been a problem on cattle ranches but also in citrus groves and vegetable fields.

"It causes a lot of economic problems, and to prevent its spread, you can't move cattle from Florida to other states without holding them at least six days in a TSA-free area," he said. This is enough time to destroy the viability of any TSA seeds that may be in their digestive tracts.

Nearly 200,000 beetles have been released in the state since 2003, and the insect is now established throughout Central and South Florida. In the journal, Medal reported that the beetles caused the invasive weed to suffer significant defoliation as well as decreased fruit, and thus seed production, in Polk and Okeechobee counties.

TSA can grow taller than 3 feet and equally wide. Its leaves are covered in long spikes, and its immature fruits with pale and dark green stripes resemble small watermelons. It is an aggressive propagator, and cattle will not feed on its leaves.

TSA is native to South America and was discovered in the U.S. more than 20 years ago in Glades County. It now covers more than 1 million acres in Florida and has spread to other states including Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Texas.

Buzz Eaves, a cattle rancher in St. Lucie County, first encountered TSA in 2000 when it began overtaking his forage grasses. After four years of aggressive campaigning against the weed using herbicides, fire and mowing, Eaves allowed IFAS researchers to release the *Gratiana boliviana* beetles on his ranch. Eaves said for the first two years the beetles worked slowly on the TSA and steadily increased in number.

"And then the following year, we had pretty much reached a biological balance with the plants," Eaves said. "The TSA plants would start growing in the springtime and be followed a month or two later by the beetles. And the beetles would work on them all summer long, and by the end of the summer, those plants would be skeletonized and away we go to another year."

Eaves said the beetles have reduced his annual spending on TSA control from as much as \$25,000 to nothing.

Medal is working to gain approval from the [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#) for the North Florida release of two more TSA biological control insects. These insects are better adapted to colder climates than *Gratiana boliviana*, which has failed to establish north of Central Florida.

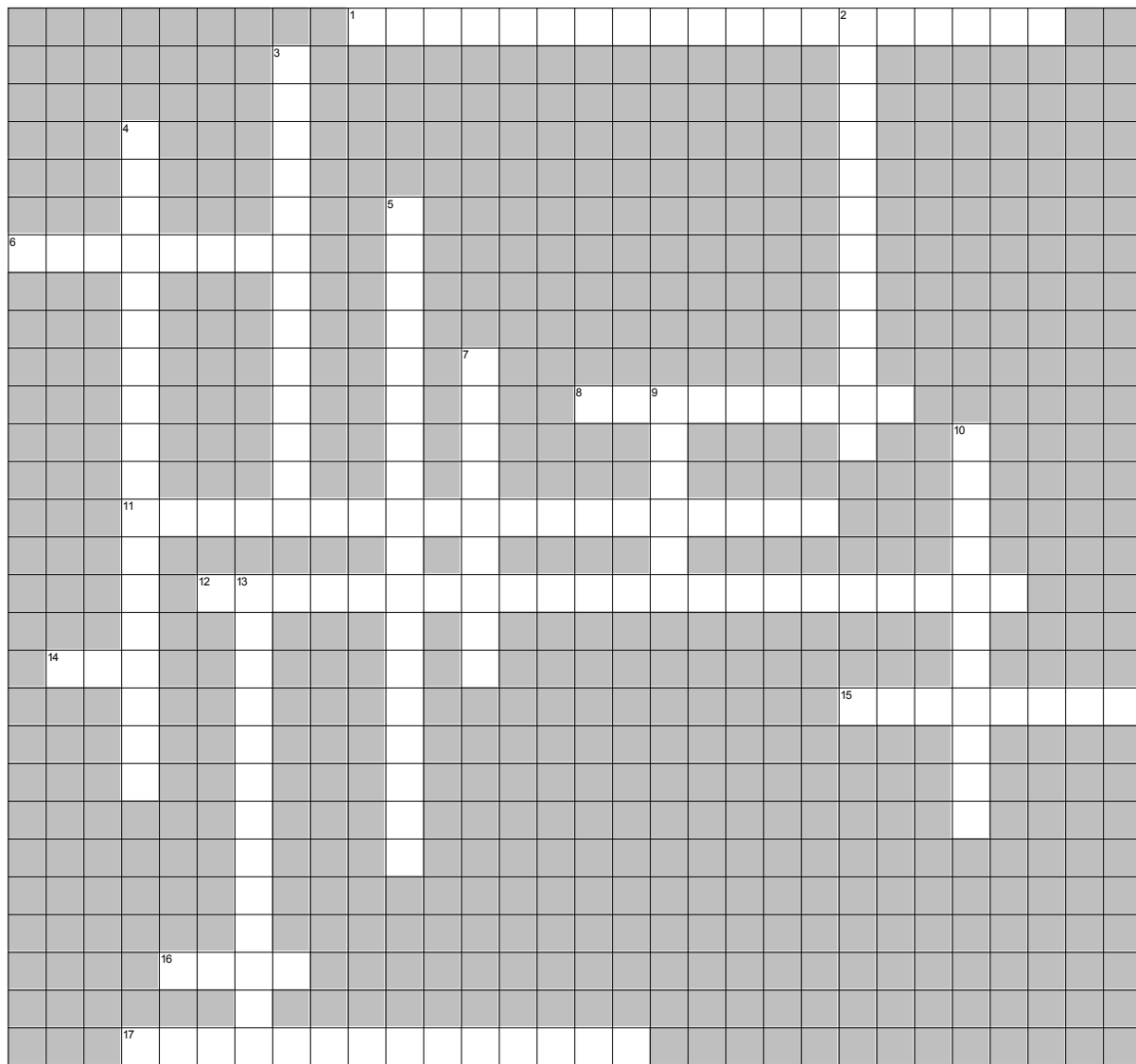
Credits

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Source: Julio Medal, medal@ufl.edu, 352-273-3928

Beef Cattle Reproduction Crossword



EclipseCrossword.com

Across

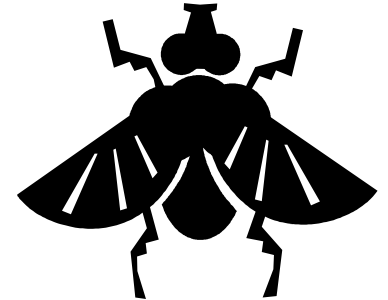
Down

1. MGA
6. Calving difficulty
8. Time between calving and breeding
11. BVD
12. AI
14. Can Cause Reproductive Problems
15. Infection in the Udder
16. Controlled Internal Drug Release
17. ET

2. Produces progesterone
3. PGF
4. 90-d Breeding Season
5. BCS
7. 283-day period
9. 18 - 21 day cycle
10. Attitude
13. Cow that comes into heat and is bred a 3rd time

Horn Fly Control for Beef Cattle

Have you ever seen cattle that are so close to each other in a pasture they look as they are one unit? What are they doing? If you look closely, many times they are swinging their tails to swat flies not only on themselves, but on their neighbors as well. Horn flies can become a problem as the spring and summer months arrive, but they can be controlled when a carefully thought out strategy is implemented.



Losses to the beef industry associated with horn flies have been estimated to be as high as \$700 million annually due to blood loss, irritation, annoyance and reduced weaning weights of calves nursing dams (Allison, NCSU 1996). Producers may use one or more of the many methods of application currently available to control horn flies such as sprays, dusts, ear tags, back-rubbers, boluses and in feed additives. Some even take advantage of de-wormers applied as an injectable or pour-on that are labeled to control horn flies in their management strategy.

Many beef producers will use ear tags that are impregnated with an insecticide to control horn flies. This method of control, although relatively simple, is often misused and can result in future problems. These ear tags contain an ingredient that over time is reduced in its effectiveness, so they should be removed once they are no longer effective. Typically insecticidal tags can last a couple of months, but should always be removed at the end of the season. If these tags are not removed they will continue to release their ingredient at a lower, less effective dose and fly populations could develop resistance to that particular ingredient. It is recommended to read the label closely and remove these tags at the appropriate time to prevent resistance.

Development of new technology to control horn flies has been limited for the past 20 years. Until recently there have only been two primary chemical classes of insecticides, pyrethroids and organophosphates, commonly used to control horn flies. A new class of insecticide called endosulfan has been on the market for a couple of years with success controlling horn fly populations. Producers are encouraged to design their fly control strategies to change chemical classes every two years, to prevent flies developing resistance.

Removing fly tags at the appropriate time and alternating the chemical class of insecticides can help prevent horn fly resistance in beef cattle. When using insecticides, review the label and follow it closely. Failure to do so may not only be illegal, but may also result in future problems associated with resistance. If you have any questions related to horn fly control, please contact me at any time.

Production Enhancement – Calf Implants

One of the most economically rewarding procedures in animal agriculture is implanting calves. Implanting calves will increase profit in two ways. First, it will increase the amount of protein the calf is able to turn into muscle and secondly it will improve feed efficiency. Implanting a 30-day-old steer calf will increase average daily gain by about 10% and his feed efficiency by about 8%. That means if he normally gains 2 pounds per day over a 100-day implant period, you can increase his rate of gain by $0.10 \times 2 \times 100$ or 20 pounds. If a steer calf sells for \$1.00 or more per pound, by implanting, you have gained \$20.00. Your out-of-pocket cost was \$1.00 to \$2.00 plus labor to gain \$20.00. This gain occurred with a minimal increase in feed cost.



There are two implant types used on young calves, zeranol is the active ingredient in Ralgro and estradiol benzoate is the active ingredient in Synovex – C and Calfoid. Over a large number of studies, both types of implants result in similar gains and efficiencies. Ralgro has its effect early with a peak at about 70 days and Synovex – C has an effect later with a peak at about 120 days.

If you work your calves again at 70 – 120 days of age, you could re-implant and get the full benefit of the implant over the next 100 days or so. That means you continue to get an increased rate of gain of 10% with an 8% increase in feed efficiency.

Pitfalls of implanting include poor implant technique, implanting non-castrated males and replacement heifers at the wrong age. Consequently it is important to follow label directions in relation to implanting heifers. In general, there is no reason to implant a heifer you know you will keep. If you are uncertain of the replacement heifers and you are saving a small percent of heifers, implant all heifers between 45 days of age and 400 pounds one time with an approved product. Do not implant a male calf that is destined to become a bull.

The goal of the implant procedure is to place the implant under the skin of the back of the ear about half way between the head and the tip of the ear and half way between the top and bottom. It is not difficult to do, but cleanliness and a sharp needle are very important, as with any injection. Contamination results in an infection and loss of implant effectiveness. Also, it is important not to force the implant into the ear because misalignment or crushing may result. This changes the absorption rate and thus the effectiveness.

As mentioned previously, implanting is the most financially rewarding processing procedure. Unlike most procedures aimed at preventing problems or losses, this is one procedure that can put you in control of production. Just make sure it is done correctly, at the right time, and involves the right animals.

Source: Article used with permission and written by:
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May 4 - 6, 2011

UF Hilton, Gainesville, FL

Registration (\$165.00)

"Addressing Cow Herd Management and Business Issues"

Welcome to the 60th Annual Florida Beef Cattle Short Course for the cattle industry! The Beef Cattle Short Course is considered one of the premier beef cattle educational events in the Southeast and Gulf Coast regions with significance nationally and globally. The course addresses issues for beef cattle enterprises at an elevated level of management skill with practical applications for every beef cattle producer, in Florida and beyond. The course focuses on unique challenges facing our beef industry; beef production issues, urban growth, global competition, changing consumer demands and economic and environmental sustainability. Every year we lead the industry covering subject areas and topics prior to those issues becoming management concerns. Participants get to hear contrasting, alternative and complimentary ideas about the beef cattle enterprise. The 2011 Florida Beef Cattle Short Course promises to continue the tradition of being the best educational event for beef cattle producers in the Southeast.

Short of paying a professional consultant, there is not a better source of information for beef cattle producers than to attend the Florida Beef Cattle Short Course.

Small Farms Working Group; Rotational Grazing Systems

May 25, 2011; 3 - 6PM

Bradford County Extension Office

The UF/IFAS Small Farms Working Group will host a Rotational Grazing Systems workshop on May 25, 2011. Classroom instruction will be provided on Rotational Grazing Systems at the Bradford County Extension Office followed by a field visit at Cognito Farms. This combination of instruction plus field visit will provide participants an opportunity to learn about the many advantages related to rotational grazing. To register for the FREE workshop, contact the Bradford County Extension Office at 904-966-6224 by May 23, 2011.

Tri-County Beef Cattle Genetics Update

May 31, 2011; 5:45 - 8:30 pm

Baker County Extension Office; Registration - \$5.00

Beef producers in the Tri-County Area have an opportunity to attend a quarterly Beef Update provided by the Bradford/Baker/Union County Extension Offices. This update will provide the latest information on beef cattle management and genetics. Dr. Todd Thrift UF/IFAS Beef Cattle Specialist will provide our Key Note address focusing on Expected Progeny Difference (EPDs). Registration for this update is \$5.00 and must be secured before May 24th by calling 904-966-6224.

Weed Identification Workshop

**June 24, 2011
Alachua County**

The Northeast Florida Beef and Forage Group is hosting a Weed Identification Workshop in Alachua County on June 24, 2011. Materials covered in this workshop will enable clients with basic weed identification knowledge to identify various weeds in their pastures. Interested participants should contact the Bradford County Extension Office at 904-966-6224 by June 17, 2011.

Livestock and Pasture (IPM) Field Day

**August 25, 2011
Columbia County; Registration - \$5.00**

This IPM Workshop will discuss topics related to livestock and pasture management. Specialists from Gainesville will be available to provide the latest information related to integrated pest management. To register for the FREE workshop, contact the Bradford County Extension Office at 904-966-6224 by August 18, 2011.

Recent University of Florida/IFAS Publications of Interest

Helminthosporium Leaf Spot (SSPLP9/LH048)

This fungal disease is most serious on bermudagrass and acts over a wide range of temperatures. This 2-page fact sheet was written by M. L. Elliott and P. F. Harmon, and published by the UF Department of Plant Pathology, February 2011.

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/lh048>

Disaster Planning Tips for Older Adults (FCS9198/FY620)

Disaster can strike without warning. An important part of planning for a disaster is to have a plan for what you will do if you have to leave your home. Pick a place to meet family members or a close friend in the event that you have to evacuate. Communications often are down early in a disaster, so knowing where to meet loved ones or friends ahead of time is helpful. Use the special tips in this 4-page fact sheet to plan and prepare for any emergency. Written by Carolyn S.

Wilken, Linda B. Bobroff, and Emily Minton and published by the UF Department of Family Youth and Community Sciences, February 2011.

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fy620>

Compare Unit Pricing (FCS1051/HE948)

Learn to use the grocery store unit price information to find out whether the larger container is really the better bargain. This revised 1-page handout was written by Glenda L. Warren and Claudia Peñuela, and published by the UF Department of Family Youth and Community Sciences, February 2011.

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/he948>

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We're on the web!
<http://bradford.ifas.ufl.edu>



SOLUTIONS for *your* LIFE

Beef Management Calendar

May

- Control pasture weeds by spraying herbicides or mowing.
- Fertilize pastures based on soil test recommendations.
- Inspect and prepare hay making equipment.
- Cut Hay when its ready.
- Continue to provide supplements until pastures are capable of maintaining cattle.
- Control Flies.
- Vaccinate calves

June

- Cut Hay!
- Apply nutrients to pasture when needed.
- Control Flies
- Wean calves that were born in Oct./Nov.

(Source: Silcox and McCann)

