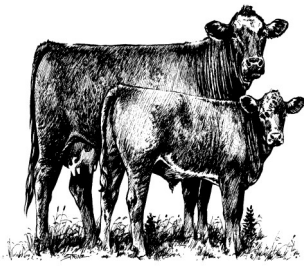


## “Where the Green Grass Grows...”

July 2009, Volume 3, Issue 1



### Price Report

-Dec. Corn-	3.67
-Nov. Soybeans-	9.83
-Dec. Wheat-	5.59
-Dec. Live Cattle-	89.7
-Oct Feeder Cattle-	101.7
-Dec. Class III Milk	13.95
-Crude Oil-	72.50
-Dow Jones-	8447.0
All prices as of June 30, 2009	

### BQA or VQA?

**Beef Quality Assurance (BQA)** is an educational program developed to ensure beef and dairy cattle are managed in a manner that will result in a safe and wholesome beef product for the consumer. The Virginia BQA Certification Program is based on scientific research and national guidelines. The program enables beef and dairy producers to enhance their product, maximize marketability, and strengthen consumer confidence. Virginia Cooperative Extension provides hands-on training and technical assistance and certifies livestock producers.

**Virginia Quality Assurance (VQA)** is a feeder cattle marketing program used to identify and market feeder cattle that meet superior health and genetic requirements.

The programs goals are:

1. Improve the health and genetics of Virginia feeder cattle.
2. Identify feeder cattle with superior health and/or genetic history to improve their marketability and reward producers for their efforts.
3. Improve the communication between buyers and sellers of feeder cattle.
4. Enhance the reputation of Virginia feeder cattle.

If you plan on marketing your calves under VQA, myself or some registered third party must be there when vaccinations are given!

Simply put, BQA is certification for the producers and VQA is certification for the animals.

### The Real World

Perhaps one of the biggest loses that most farmers never recognize is the amount of hay lost before it is stored if it is stored or covered at all. I know everyone cannot go out and build a new hay shed or go out and buy a bale wrapper, but there are some inexpensive ways of covering your hay that will pay off. By either stacking all of your rolls in a line around the field or stacking them pyramid style and covering them with black plastic, you can save a lot of hay. Hay left in the field that gets wet can lose 20% or more. If you calculate a 1000lb roll losing 20% that is 200 pounds of hay lost. Multiply that times 100 rolls of hay and you are talking about 10 tons of lost feed!!! Can you afford to lose that much feed by simply not covering your hay?

### How many trips can you afford over your fields?

Although diesel prices are not where they were at this time last year, now might be a good time to look at the size and condition of your hay equipment. Can you afford to step up to a larger mower, tedder, rake, or baler? All of these would present you with the opportunity for fewer trips over the field and each presents its own pluses & minuses. If we're talking used, a mower, tedder, or rake would be the cheapest option by far. Adding just a few feet to any of these pieces of equipment could drastically reduce your trips across the field. The most expensive option would be a new or used baler. By increasing the size of your hay roll, there would be less stopping to tie and unload and there would also be the benefit of less trips to feed come this winter, saving time and more fuel. If your tractor has the capacity to handle larger hay equipment, now might be a great time to step up with some new or used equipment that just might pay off in the long run.



[www.ext.vt.edu](http://www.ext.vt.edu)

Summer's heat appears to be here and unfortunately the rain seems to have disappeared which is good for getting up hay, but bad for making crops grow! I guess we have to take what we are given. Remember, if farming was easy, everybody would do it!



Franklin County Extension Agent

## Surplus of Grass May Mean It's Time to Go Rotational

With all of the rain that we had this spring a lot of pastures have been overflowing with grass. This is the perfect time to set up a rotational grazing system to utilize all of this forage. You can do something as simple as splitting a field with a hot wire or something more complex like splitting a field into 4 or 6 paddocks, whichever works best for you. By dividing your fields you force your cows to eat some forage that they may overlook when they have free range. This not only helps your cows, it definitely helps your pastures as well. By dividing your pastures temporarily or permanently you will have the ability to stock pile forage for the late fall and winter months as well. We all know that with the costs of feed and fuel anything we can do to start feeding hay later will save money in the long run. By intensively grazing your pastures you can go in behind your cows and spray or bushhog what they did not eat. This combination of grazing & weed control will create better pastures with less inputs.

## Upcoming Events

Summer 2009

### -July 14, 2009 VA Forage and Grasslands Council Summer Field Day and Tour

State Field Day and Tour held at Virginia Tech's Kentland Farm, Blacksburg and at Optimal Beef – Allen Graybeal, Dublin. Speakers for the field day will discuss the following topics:

- Body Condition Scoring and Frame Size, Beef Health Programs– Investing in your herd's health, Rotational Grazing– Making the most of grass with your beef herd, Overview of the Grass Fed Beef Project at Virginia Tech (Partnering Universities include Clemson and West Virginia), Strategic Marketing and Culling—How do I plan for this?, Heifer Development—Raising next year's "success story." What Makes Optimal Beef Successful?

Cost for the field day is \$10 and that includes a BBQ Lunch. Please RSVP by July 13<sup>th</sup> to the Pulaski County Extension Office 540-980-7761.

### -July 23, 2009 Southern Piedmont AREC Field Day, Blackstone, Virginia

The annual field day at the Virginia Tech, Southern Piedmont Agricultural Research and Extension Center will be held on Thursday, July 23, 2009. The station tours will provide an overview of research programs in tobacco and forages. Registration will begin at 4:30 p.m. with dinner following at 5:00 and tours beginning at 5:30 and ending at 8:30. Please contact SPAREC at (434)292-5331

### -July 25, 2009 Franklin County 4-H Dairy Heifer Show, Franklin County Recreation Park, Sontag, Virginia

### -August 5, 2009 Shenandoah Valley AREC Field Day, Steeles Tavern, VA

This is going to be an excellent educational program starting at 1p.m., especially for beef cattle, sheep, and forestry producers in the Shenandoah Valley interested in forage production, grazing, and forest management. We are asking persons interested in attending the Field Day to contact the Shenandoah Valley Agricultural Research and Extension Center at (540) 377-2255 on or before Friday, July 31, 2009 to sign-up.

### -August 6, 2009 Virginia Ag Expo at J.N. Mills & Sons Farm in King William County from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Come to Virginia's largest annual field day to view the VCE On-farm corn & soybean test plots, farm exhibits & vendors, fencing demonstrations, the latest in vegetables, and farm machinery. Please register by sending a \$10 check made payable to Virginia Ag-Expo, 17000 Sandy Point Rd, Charles City, VA 23030. Please pre-register by Tuesday July 28, 2009

### -August 11, 2009 New River Valley Agricultural Field Day at Kentland: Putting New Technologies to Work on the Farm

Information on Farm Fences-What the Law Has to Say, Fencing Demonstrations, GPS, 4H & FFA Livestock Fitting & Showmanship, Kentland Farm Traveling History & Research Tour, Farm Equipment Demonstrations, Vendor Trade Show, Mini Livestock Show, GPS Course & Demonstration, Unmanned Airplanes, Country BBQ & Homemade Ice Cream

Please Pre-Register by August 1 by contacting the Giles County Extension office with a check for \$10 per person(16 & under are free) at 507 Wenonah Ave. Pearisburg, VA 24134. Make check payable to VCE-Giles. Please provide email when registering if available. Contact Giles-VCE at (540)921-3455

### -August 25, 2009 24th Annual Agriculture Field Day at Virginia State University– AgriTourism 8:00a.m.-3:00p.m. Event

is free, but registration is required by August 21. Contact Andy Hankins at Box 9081, Petersburg, Virginia 23806 Phone (804) 524-5960 Fax (804) 524-5714 [cstreetman@vsu.edu](mailto:cstreetman@vsu.edu)

### -October 23-24, 2009 Virginia Forage & Grassland Council Mid-Atlantic Grass-Finished Livestock Conference: "Merging the Art and Science of Grass Finishing" Holiday Inn Conference Center, Staunton, Virginia

**Early Registration – Must be post marked by September 15, 2009**

Registration	Early	Late	Number	Amount	<i>Please make check payable to VFGC</i>
Per Attendee	\$200	\$300 x	_____ =	_____	Mail check and registration form to: <b>VFGC</b>
Per Student	\$100	\$200 x	_____ =	_____	Margaret J. Kenny
Total Amount of Check				_____	3599 Indian Oak Road Crewe, VA 23930

If you are a person with a disability & desire any assistive devices, services or other accommodations to participate in these activities, please contact Tim Johnson at the VCE-Franklin County Office, 540-483-5161 during business hours of 8a.m. to 5 p.m. to discuss accommodations 5 days prior to the events.