

Livestock News

Johnston County Center

September 2012

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For any meeting in this newsletter, persons with disabilities and persons with limited English proficiency may request accommodations to participate by contacting the Extension Office where the meeting will be held by phone, email, or in person at least 7 days prior to the event.

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Important Information

Hands on Goats XII

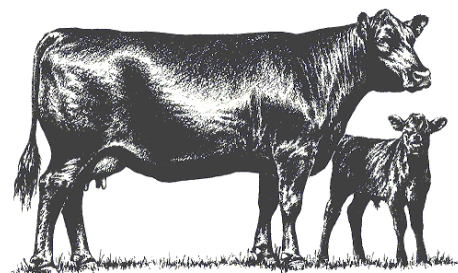
The Johnston County Goat Producer's Association in cooperation with NC Cooperative Extension will host their thirteenth annual goat field day on Saturday, November 3 from 9 to 3 at the Johnston County Livestock Arena. The Arena is located at 520 County Home Rd, Smithfield. As in previous years, there will be a variety of seminars and demonstrations throughout the day on topics such as fecal egg counts, parasite control, forages, fencing, hoof trimming and milking. There will be catalogs of goat-related items, vendors with goat related merchandise, a goat Skill-a-thon, and many articles available on a variety of goat topics. The day will conclude with raffle items from the raffle table and awarding the grand prize raffle drawing for \$200 cash. A free hot dog and hamburger lunch will be served. There is no cost to attend, all ages are welcome.

Goat Semen Collection

The Johnston County Goat Producer's Association will host a buck semen collection day on Sunday, November 18 at the Johnston County Livestock Arena. All bucks must be in place by 8 AM. The collection will be performed by Biogenics, Ltd. Rates are: \$200 for 30-straw minimum, \$4.25 for each additional straw. Please call or email Dan Wells to pre-register your buck. More information on page 6.

Cattle Industry Assessment Referendum

The North Carolina Cattlemen's Association (NCCA) has announced that the N. C. Cattle Industry Assessment Referendum vote will take place on October 4, 2012. NCCA says that the referendum language will be to assess all cattle one dollar per head for the purposes of promoting the cattle industry in NC. The funds will be used for producer education -- regarding beef production topics, beef production research, youth education and leadership development events, NCCA administration, beef industry leadership development, promotion and marketing of NC cattle, and promoting the interests of the cattle industry. All North Carolina cattle owners over the age of 18 are eligible to vote during the regular business hours of their County Extension Office. Producers can request an absentee ballot by calling your Extension Office. More information will be available closer to the voting date.



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**COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION**

Empowering People • Providing Solutions

Animal Waste Management

By: Becky Spearman, Livestock Extension Agent with N.C. Cooperative Extension in Bladen County

CONTINUING EDUCATION CLASSES

Date	Location	Time	Contact
November 8th	Scotland County	9 am (6hrs)	910-277-2422
November 29th	Bladen County	9 am (6hrs)	910-862-4591
December 4th	Cumberland County	9 am (6hrs)	910-321-6872
December 14th	Sampson County	9 am (6hrs)	910-592-7161

Initial Animal Waste Certification Training

There will be an initial training class for type A license on **September 26 and 27**. Call Amanda Hatcher at (910) 296-2143 to register. The last 2012 exam is November 8th.

Calibration and Sludge Surveys

All farms are required to calibrate their irrigation equipment and perform a sludge survey. General Permit Farms are required to calibrate at least once every two years and perform a sludge survey every year (unless an extension from DWQ was granted). NPDES farms must complete both every year. Call your Extension Agent for more information.

Temporary Adjustments in Lagoon Stop Pump Level

The NRCS Technical Guidance Document allows an optional, temporary adjustment in the lagoon operating procedure. This adjustment in operating procedure allows the operator to pump into the top 8 inches of the treatment volume from June 15th through October 31st to provide irrigation water during drought periods to establish or maintain vegetation in waste application areas and to allow additional temporary storage for excessive rainfall during the hurricane season and the following winter months. There are several restrictions to the rule. For more information, call your Extension Agent or NRCS Office.

Storm Warning Permit Information

In 2009, some of the permit conditions for your farm changed. Below is the land application rule in regards to a Hurricane Warning, Tropical Storm Warning or a Flood Watch. If you have any questions, call your Livestock Agent or NRCS/SWC office. Section II 22. Land application of waste is prohibited during precipitation events. The Permittee shall consider pending weather conditions in making the decision to land apply waste and shall document the weather conditions at the time of land application on forms supplied or approved by the Division.

Land application of waste shall cease within four (4) hours of the time that the National Weather Service issues a Hurricane Warning, Tropical Storm Warning, or a Flood Watch associated with a tropical system including a hurricane, tropical storm or tropical depression for the county in which the permitted facility is located. Watches and warnings are posted on the National Weather Service's website located at www.weather.gov or by calling your area National Weather Service office.



Hay Directories are below for people selling hay or looking for hay to buy. It is free to list your hay for sale.

1. North Carolina Department of Agriculture's Hay Alert is at <http://www.agr.state.nc.us/hayalert/>. Producers can call the Hay Alert at 1-866-506-6222. You can sign up to list your hay on-line.
2. The Southeastern NC Hay Directory is available at <http://onslow.ces.ncsu.edu/files/library/67/HayDirectory.pdf>. Call your Extension Agent to learn how to include your farm on the list.

Forage Management Tips

From *Production and Utilization of Pastures and Forages in North Carolina*

SEPTEMBER

- Fertilize and lime cool-season grasses.
- Keep pressure on summer grasses and completely use them before grazing cool-season forages.
- Watch for fall insects (armyworms, grasshoppers, crickets).
- Overseed or no-till winter annuals into summer perennial grass.

OCTOBER

- Finish using summer grasses before grazing the cool-season ones.
- Watch for prussic acid poisoning when grazing sudan and sorghum-sudans after the first frost.
- Overseed warm-season grasses with winter annuals.

Weed Control in September? Probably Not Worth the Effort

By: Randy Wood, County Extension Director and Livestock Agent with N.C. Cooperative Extension in Scotland County

In my years as a livestock and forage agent with the Cooperative Extension Service I have learned that there are several things you can set your watch by:

- 1) We will have a wet/dry/cold/hot summer every year. There is no such thing as normal anymore.
- 2) If you agree to judge a livestock show, you will be called the best and worst judge ever with equal enthusiasm.
- 3) At the end of the summer/start of fall, you will be swamped with phone calls on how to control certain weeds, such as sandspurs, nutgrass, crabgrass, etc...

The first two certainties on this list there's not much I can do about. The 3rd item on this list is one that at some point I hope to make a difference in. The fact is, there are a lot of hay and livestock farmers that will only get concerned about certain weeds well after the window to control them has closed. For these farmers that I talk to this time of year I can only say save your time and money for next spring when you can make a difference. The reality is at this point in the growing season, there's not much you can do to clean up a pasture or make a late cutting of hay pretty. About the most you can hope for is to not make a problem any worse for next year.

Most weeds and weedy grasses are best controlled in the late spring and early summer. At this point, their root system is immature, they have yet to negatively impact your selected grass, and they have not had time to go to seed (which will set the stage for the following year). This is true of almost 100% of your grassy weeds such as crab, bahia or nutgrass. Just about every selective grass herbicide on the market such as Pastora, Cimneron or Outrider all clearly state that for best results to apply shortly after the targeted grass has emerged in the spring and before it forms a seedhead. Once the plant has time to mature the effectiveness of most herbicides declines tremendously. Once you get into August/September, all of your grasses and sedges will have already reseeded themselves for the coming year and any effort to kill the current grass is just about pointless, as the stage has already been set for the next season anyway.

Take nutgrass (or Nutsedge as it is properly known as) for example. Nutgrass can be controlled quite effectively with the correct herbicides in late May or early June. If you're just now getting worried about it because the nutgrass infestation is really thick and robust this time of year, it's too late. You can't kill the current plants that you are seeing and next year's crop of nutgrass is pretty much already there regardless of what you do on top of the ground anyway.

Nutgrass



Sandspurs are probably the most frustrating plant to deal with this time of year. At this point in the season, you are not going to solve anything with a herbicide treatment. Once the spurs are formed on the plant, you have to either physically remove the plant **and** spurs from the field or at a minimum avoid dispersing the spurs that are hanging on the plant. Mowing them down, driving through them or allowing animals to graze them is the worst thing you can do to a stand of sandspurs this time of year. The only way you can really help yourself at this point is to remove the spurs from the plant either by carefully digging them up or even burning them with a propane torch on the plant stalk. This can actually be a somewhat effective (although a terribly labor intensive) way to deal with Sandspurs.



Sandspur
(Sandbur)

The take home message from this article is to remember what weeds you're dealing with this year and get a plan together for next year when you can be effective.

Getting a Calf

By: Michelle M. Shooter, Extension Livestock Agent with N.C. Cooperative Extension in Robeson County



A few other agents and I were fortunate enough to spend a week in July at the National Association of Agricultural Agents Professional Improvement Conference in Charleston, S.C. Not only was this conference a good opportunity for us to meet other agents from Alaska to Hawaii, but it was a great opportunity to hear about excellent Extension programs and ag research going on across the country.

At one of the livestock seminars, I listened to a presentation by Rebekah Norman, an Extension agent from Tennessee. Her presentation was titled “Getting a Calf: The Nutrition/Reproduction Interaction.” I would like to share with you some parts of her presentation; many things you might already know, but there might be a new way, for you, to think about the aspect of getting a calf.

Most of us are aware that nutritional expense is the largest component of owning livestock, even if we feed mostly grass and hay. The drought of 2007 reminded us they should not be taken for granted. Proper nutrition is critical for a healthy herd; however, there are many misunderstandings about the role nutrition plays, especially concerning protein and energy. Genetic potential is commonly discussed in the cattle business, but we must remember for a calf to receive the genetic potential to flourish, it must have a good start. This start begins in utero with the cow’s diet.

A cow has four goals: survive, grow, store some energy (fat), and calve. Cows in better condition before calving have healthier calves that perform better in feedlots and on the rail, reach puberty earlier, and have higher first-service conception rates.

Let’s go back to a quick nutrition lesson. Nutrition is based on four classes: energy, protein, water, and minerals. This article will focus on energy, the most important of these classes.

Energy is required for every function and mostly received from carbohydrate and fat sources. Energy requirements must be met before supplementing protein; if not, the cow can’t do anything with the supplement. A good way to know what energy level you are feeding is to have your hay and forages tested.

Signs of insufficient energy intake in late pregnancy are: weak calf syndrome, which includes small, weak calves lacking the vigor to stand and nurse; higher death rates in newborns; scours; respiratory problems; and reduced performance. Examples of decreased performance include poor pre-weaning and post-weaning gains, poor feedlot health and negative affects on carcass grade. There is an old wives tale that you can impact the size of the calf through feeding the cow less. This is not true and can lead to a weak calf, not necessarily a smaller calf. If you want to decrease the likelihood of having to pull a calf, use a bull with low birth weight EPDs; do not change the way you feed the cow. There are also consequences of giving a cow too much energy; one being she can become obese and have lower fertility. So as always, it is important to know the Body Condition Score (BCS) of your herd, including the pregnant heifers and cows. Calves from thin cows and heifers (with less than a 5 Body Condition Score) are more susceptible to cold stress than those with a BCS over 5. Calves from heifers with a BCS of 3 took 60 minutes to stand and nurse compared to 35 minutes for calves from heifers with a BCS of 6. When reading labels or hay analyses, digestible energy in beef cows is often referred to as TDN for Total Digestible Nutrients.

With beef prices at historic highs, it is important that each calf has a good start and is allowed to reach its genetic potential before it is returned to the herd or finished for meat production. By ensuring the mother has the maternal nutrition she needs and selecting genetics that compliment your farm, you will have a greater chance of your calves reaching their potential. For a copy of the presentation, more information, or if you are interested in testing hay or other feed sources, contact your livestock agent.

Cow Size and Milk Production

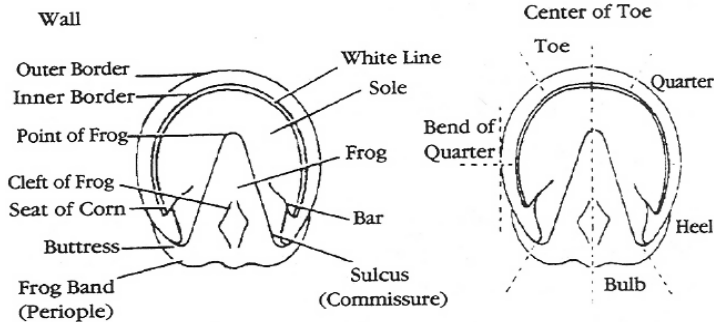
Cow Size	Milking Level	lb of milk/cow/day	lb TDN Needed	lb CP Needed
1000	Average	10	12.4	1.9
1000	Above Avg	20	14.8	2.6
1000	Superior	30	17.2	3.5
1200	Average	10	13.8	2.1
1200	Above Avg	20	16.2	2.8
1200	Superior	30	18.7	3.5
1400	Average	10	15.2	2.3
1400	Above Avg	20	17.6	3.0
1400	Superior	30	20.1	3.7

Source: Nutrient Requirements of Beef Cattle, 1984 & 1996.

Thrush and Horse Hoof Care

By: Becky Spearman, Extension Livestock Agent with N.C. Cooperative Extension in Bladen County
Information from the Horse Industry Handbook and eXtension Horse Pages.

The old quote "No foot, no horse" pretty much sums up the importance of the horse's foot. They are the foundation of any animal and care must be taken to reduce problems. Each foot supports weight, resists wear, absorbs shock, provides traction, conducts moisture and helps pump blood.



Parts of the hoof (Horse Industry Handbook)

There are several foot problems that occur in horses such as thrush, white line disease, sole bruises, corns, abscess, sand cracks, navicular disease and laminitis. This article will discuss thrush.

Thrush is the most common infection in horse's hooves. It is caused by anaerobic bacteria that affects the frog. It is characterized by a black, foul smelling infection that eats away at either side of the frog. If untreated, it can damage tissue and cause lameness. It is similar to foot rot in ruminants but is not contagious. Thrush usually occurs from unsanitary or wet conditions.



Location of thrush in the foot (Horse Industry Handbook)

The best control for thrush is clean and dry hooves. Good hoof cleaning (daily) and eliminating a wet environment for the horse are keys to preventing thrush. Clean and remove manure from stalls and run-in sheds frequently. If horses are in a pasture, make sure they are able to get out of the wet areas of the field. There are several recommendations to treat thrush including disinfectants such as iodine-based products and bleach. Other products such as

Kopertox and Thrushbuster can be effective. Contact your veterinarian to determine which is the best to use for your horse(s).

Below are steps to cleaning your horse's hooves from eXtension's Horse Page. Clean the feet by removing dirt and rocks from the sole and frog area. It is very important to clean the cleft of the frog and commissure because this is where bacteria that cause thrush to congregate. This also helps prevent bruised soles. **Safety Precaution** - when cleaning the foot, always move the hoof pick in the direction from heel to toe. Never move the hoof pick from toe to heel because you may jab the horse's leg or fetlock or stick the hoof pick in yourself.

Front Feet

1. Begin with the left front foot. Put your left hand at the horse's shoulder and push lightly. This shifts the horse's weight on the other front foot.

2. Slowly move your hand down the leg to the cannon bone and squeeze between the tendon and cannon bone.

As you reach the lower leg, say "up" to the horse, to prompt it to lift the foot. The horse should lift its foot.

3. Grasp the toe for more control, then put your hand under the front of the hoof to hold it. Clean the bottom of the foot with the hoof pick by smoothly pulling the pick from the heel toward the toe.

4. After cleaning, put the foot down slowly so your horse knows the foot is being released and does not accidentally step on you.



Hind Feet

1. Move to the flank area. Put hand on your horse's hip.

2. Move your hand slowly down the leg to the cannon bone and squeeze the tendon, just like with the front.

3. When the horse gives its leg, step back to the flank area and bring the leg with you to maintain a safe control of the hind leg.

4. Step forward and put your inside knee -- the one closest to the horse -- under its raised leg.

5. Grasp the toe and place the foot on your knee. Clean it like the front feet, making sure to remove dirt and debris from the cleft of the frog and of the commissure.

Preparing Goats for the Breeding Season

By: Dan Wells, Livestock Extension Agent with N.C. Cooperative Extension in Johnston County.

The time of year to think about preparing goats for breeding has arrived. A profitable kid crop begins with getting does pregnant, so it pays to think about and give some management toward achieving a high conception rate in the flock.

The primary consideration for preparing goats for breeding is to assess the body condition of the flock. The best way to do this is to assign a body condition score to each animal. It's very helpful to write these down, as this will help you to more accurately determine the flock average, as well as to determine the success of your attempts to alter body condition. A nine-point scale is typically used; extremely thin animals are scored 1, extremely fat animals are scored 9, and others in between. Most of us can easily think of thin, fat and "just right." Well, that's essentially a three-point scale, so a nine-point scale is just a bit more refined, with 1-3 being thin, 4-6 being moderate, and 7-9 being fat. It's really helpful to handle the animals when evaluating body condition, as a hair coat can be misleading. Handling the spine and ribs to determine fat cover is especially important. Body condition scoring is an acquired skill, so practice is encouraged. It's a good idea to monitor body condition every month to get a good feel for the skill.

Ideally, a doe should be in a body condition score of 5 or 6 for the breeding season. It's quite rare to have a doe fatter than this, but not uncommon for a doe to need to gain some condition before the breeding season. It's also desirable for an animal to be on an increasing plane of nutrition at breeding, so "flushing" does prior to the breeding season is a fairly common practice. Flushing can be accomplished by giving the animals access to a high quality pasture beginning thirty days prior to, and continuing through, the breeding season. An alternative if pasture is limited or lower in quality is to provide an energy supplement. One of the simplest ways to do this is to feed does a half-pound per head per day of cracked corn.

This is also a critical time of year to evaluate the parasite levels in your flock and take steps to correct that, if needed. Animals with a high parasite load will not respond as favorably to flushing. Just simply deworming is probably not the right step, but rather using a system such as FAMACHA or Fecal Egg Counting to determine the

amount of worms the animals are carrying and the effectiveness of your dewormer, if needed.

Don't forget about your buck. He also needs to be in a good moderate body condition to breed. Fat bucks often exhibit low libido, or interest in the females. On the other hand, bucks that are too thin when turned in with the does often lose body condition as the breeding season goes along, so you don't want a buck to be too thin, either.

Both bucks and does should have their hooves checked well before the breeding season. Some animals may have problems that require more than one trimming, so it's very important to start checking hooves well before the breeding season. It's especially important that your buck is able to travel effectively and be free from any discomfort on his feet, so don't overlook this important aspect of your herd management.

There will be a buck semen collection in Smithfield on Sunday, November 18, 2012 for producers interested in having a buck collected. The collection will be performed by BioGenics (www.biogenicsltd.com) and will begin promptly at 8 AM. The semen will be processed into straws and ready for pick-up by 10 on Monday morning. Anyone interested in having a buck collected will need to bring a functional semen tank and have their buck ready to be collected. Information about preparing your buck for collection and other information such as fees is available on the BioGenics website. If you are interested, you must call Dan Wells, Johnston County Livestock Agent, well in advance with your information. Phone number is (919) 989-5380 or email dgwells@ncsu.edu.



Showmanship: Practice Makes Perfect

By: Mandy Harris, Extension Livestock Agent with N.C. Cooperative Extension in Cumberland County

September and October bring cooler weather and county fairs. County fairs mean getting the opportunity to show off the livestock you've worked with all summer and your showmanship skills. Some people's ultimate goal is to win grand champion animal at a fair. For me, it was always winning showmanship. I knew that in market class, the judge was looking at my animal that may have flaws that I can't change, but in showmanship, he was judging me and how well I work with my animal; things that I have more control over. So here are some tips to help you in showmanship of all species.

Winning starts at home. Anyone that has ever shown an animal knows that you can't walk in the ring with an animal that has never been worked with and win a show. Exercise helps build endurance for a show and practice makes perfect, so practice at home with your animal as much as possible. You should practice walking around, setting up, and watching the judge as if you were in a real show. Learn the animal's flaws and how to best present them so that those flaws are somewhat hidden. It also helps to have other animals around, as well as some kind of background noise. This prepares your animals for a fair atmosphere so that they won't be in total shock when they see and hear unfamiliar things. Once you feel that you and your animal are ready for the first fair, it's time to get packed up. Prepare your trailer, showbox, feed, show clothes and anything else you might need at a show the night before. This way you're not in a rush and you can make sure you have everything you will need. Then the morning of, load your animals up and get on the road.

Prep your animals and yourself for the show ring. Get your animals ready, then get yourself ready. Once you get your animals weighed and checked in, feed them and get them clean. After your animals are ready, get dressed. Knowing the appropriate dress for the show ring is key. You should dress neatly with clean jeans or slacks and a nice button-down or polo shirt. No camouflage shirts or t-shirts should be worn, and your shirts should be tucked in. Hats should be left in the truck and don't forget your belt and boots!

It's showtime! Take a deep breath and enter the ring with poise and confidence. Chelsea Clifton, a sheep judge from Kingfisher, Oklahoma, says "It's all about poise. The comfort level of the exhibitor reflects their character and attitude." So while in the ring, stay calm and just pretend

you're practicing at the barn. Keeping yourself calm keeps your animal calm, therefore they will work better for you. Remember to keep your animal set up and keep your eye on the judge. It is also important to make sure you follow the animal in front. Even if the people between you and the first person are in different spots, you should always be in line with the first person. Also when on the profile, make sure you're in line with the first person; you don't want to be out further than everyone and hide someone else's animal.

Know your project. The majority of judges want to know that you know your project, as well as the industry, so you will probably be asked some questions. Know everything about your animal, from what it eats, to what kind of stomach it has, to what kind of diseases it can get. You can call your Extension agent for help with preparing for questions the judge may ask you.

Be a good sportsman. Not only do showmanship skills matter, but so does sportsmanship. Although the ultimate goal is to win, showing livestock teaches you that's not always the outcome. It may be a tough pill to swallow when your prized goat stands 5th in class, but you should always be cordial, helpful and congratulatory. If you win, remember to show humility and humbleness. Warren Beeler, a swine judge from Caneyville, Kentucky, says "Juniors have to help each other and congratulate the winner. If you'd rather blame the judge or something else for your loss, then you have wasted the opportunity to learn and progress." Once you have congratulated the winner, be sure to shake the judge's hand. Most of the time, they are more than happy to tell you what to improve on for your next show. Take that information and go home and work harder for the next show.

If you have any further questions, contact your Extension agent for help. Good luck this fair season!



2012 Hurricane Preparation for Poultry Farms

By: James Parsons, Area Poultry Extension Agent with N.C. Cooperative Extension

We are about half way through with the 2012 Hurricane season that officially began on June 1, 2012. As you know, we had 2 Tropical Storms prior to June 1, Alberto and Beryl. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is predicting 15 named storms this year, including Alberto and Beryl. Dr. William Gray and his staff are predicting 13 named storms, 50 named storm days, 5 hurricanes, 18 hurricane days, 2 major hurricanes and 4 major hurricane days.

Our area of the state has been fortunate the last several years, but poultry farmers must not become complacent and not be prepared for a major storm. Please make your farm as prepared as possible.

All poultry producers need to be prepared in case a hurricane strikes our area. You, as poultry producers, can minimize damage due to hurricanes on your farms by taking a few simple precautions.

One of the easiest things to do is make sure equipment and other items around the poultry houses are battened down. Flying debris can be as big a problem as anything. Your poultry houses and birds could be secure, but if you don't have everything tied down, something could rip through the curtains. This could result in birds piling up, excessive damage to curtains and equipment, and harm to you if you are in the path of the debris, either outside or inside the poultry house.

Many producers are unsure how to set the curtains in times of high winds. The following recommendations may help you in adjusting your curtains. If your poultry house is empty, lower the curtains all the way down to reduce pressure and hopefully save your building. With birds in the house, the curtain on the windward side of the house should

be raised all the way up and the leeward side should be lowered 6-12 inches. In most cases in our area, the wind will come from the south and east.

One of the most important pieces of equipment that a poultry producer may have during a hurricane is a generator. Many newer farms are required to have a large self-contained generator that comes on automatically if the power fails. If you do not own a generator you may be able to rent one, just do not wait until it is too late to locate one. A minimum 25-kilowatt generator is recommended. This will enable you to start your water pump and then turn on feed lines, fans, etc. as needed. DO NOT try to start everything at one time. If you have smaller generators, including PTO driven generators, start them now to make sure they work properly.

Another suggestion is to go ahead and identify a site on your farm that can be used for burial of poultry mortality in an emergency situation. I know you do not want to hear this, but it is much better to be prepared than to have to go through what we did following Hurricane Floyd.

The Cooperative Extension Center in each county has additional information to aid you if a disaster occurs. Please feel free to call the Center in your county if you desire additional information.



Small-Scale Egg Production in a Range Setting Field Day

The field day will be held on Wednesday, September 19th from 8:15 am - 2:15 pm at the Center for Environmental Farming Systems in Goldsboro. The registration fee is \$30. The deadline to register is SEPTEMBER 10th.

The Field Day will be geared toward those interested in small-scale egg production in a range setting. Topics to be covered include: Integrating Egg Production Into Your Operations, Constructing Mobile Paddocks and Range

Huts for Laying Hens, Egg and Environmental Microbiology in Organic Egg Production with Rotational Organic Dairy Grazing, Flock Health in Organic Operations, Tour the Small Farm Organic Unit (Poultry), Forages for the Poultry Paddocks.

To register, go to http://go.ncsu.edu/egg_production_2012 or call your Extension Office for a registration form.