Agriculture Newsletter

NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

N.C. A&T STATE UNIVERSITY

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Yancey County Center

December 2022

In this Issue:

Merry Christmas!

Happy Holidays!

We would like to take a moment to wish you Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays! As another year is coming to a close we hope you are able to spend time with family and enjoy this season!

Sincerely,

David Davis
Agriculture Extension Agent/CED
NC Cooperative Extension
Yancey County Center

Pesticide Training Dates Scheduled

The spring **Private Applicator Pesticide "V" Certification class** has been scheduled for **Thursday, February 9, starting at 6 pm**. Any Yancey County private pesticide applicator with a license expiration or recertification date of December 31, 2023 should plan to attend. NC Cooperative of Yancey County will be sending out letters to producers that we know are in need of "V" credits.

We will have several opportunities coming up this winter for private applicators to receive "X" credits. In addition, we are considering how to add a course for Commercial Pesticide Applicators in need of "L" credits next year. As we are able to finalize the details of upcoming pesticide trainings, they will be announced in this newsletter and on our website.

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Follow us on Facebook:
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Checkout our website:
yancey.ces.ncsu.edu

Yancey County Cattlemen Association Christmas Dinner

Thursday, December 15, 2022

Starting at 6:30 PM

Yancey Senior Center

(503 Medical Campus Dr.)

NC Small Ruminant Improvement Winter Webinar Series

We would just like to remind any sheep and goat producer about the ongoing webinar series focusing on management practices to improve profitability of your flock! There are 4 sessions left! These webinars will be held at 7 pm on the third Thursday of every month starting in November. Participants can attend from their home. The following sessions will be offered:

December 15	**Getting Off to the Right Start: Small Ruminant Health and Lambing/Kidding**
January 19	**Taking the Next Step: Small Ruminant Post-Weaning Management**
February 16	**Marking Considerations and Genetic Improvement for Small Ruminants**
March 16	**Reproductive Management for Improved Small Ruminant Flock/Herd Productivity**

Find out more about this webinar series, and access the registration links by going to http://go.ncsu.edu/readext?893796. You can also email David Davis (david_davis@ncsu.edu) or contact the Yancey County Center by calling 828.682.6186.

When Deer Become a Problem

David Davis, Agriculture Extension Agent

Deer cause millions of dollars worth of damage in the state of North Carolina to agriculture crops each year. This year, I have fallen victim to deer damage on my farm. Back in October I planted strawberries that the deer have devastated. I am hoping to get a harvest, but it is looking unlikely this year. This was not the first crop losses that were experience on the family farm due to deer damage. There seems to be little that can be done to manage deer damage, but fencing is probably the best option. Here is a look at 3 different options that you might consider on your farm.

Permanent Woven Wire Fence

Fencing is a valuable tool that will keep deer away from crops. A good fence can provide consistent effective deer damage control. As far as fence design, the 8ft woven wire fence is probably the best for keeping deer out. However, this option is usually cost prohibitive for the crops that are produced in Yancey County.

Permanent Electric Hi-Tensile Fence

One of the most common implemented permanent electric fence designs for deer control is the 6ft to 8 ft hi-tensile electric fence. If considering this option, keep in mind that an electric fence is only as good as its design. It takes a high powered charger, and a good grounding system to make an electric fence work properly. Most fence companies recommend a charger that can supply at least 1 joule of energy at night (since that is when deer are usually most active). That rules out most of the cheaper solar powered fence chargers found at the local fence supply stores. Those usually supply less than 0.2 joules of energy. The other consideration for permanent electric fencing is that it is very important to keep the fence maintained. This means regularly keeping the fence cleaned, inspecting the fence wires for issues, and replacing broken insulators.

Temporary Electric Fence

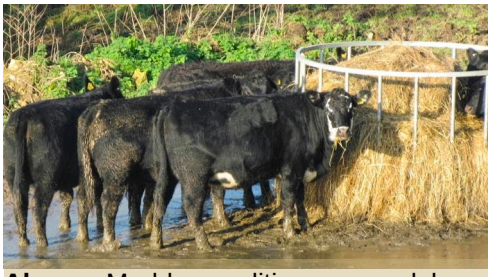
For many of our crops, installing permanent deer fencing can be quite expensive. Permanent fencing may also take up too much field space. Temporary fencing may be an option to consider. Temporary fencing may utilize "step in" posts, a good temporary electric fence tape (at least 6 or 9 way), but also takes a little effort to "train" the deer. Like permanent deer fence, having a good grounding method and a high powered charger (at least 1 joule of energy at night) is very important. Once the fence is installed and powered, deer are trained to the fence by placing peanut butter on the electrified fence tape. Deer taste the peanut butter, receive a jolt, and learn to stay away.

Fencing is not the only option, but probably is the best option to manage crop loss due to deer damage. If you would like more information about fencing options to detour deer, please contact the Yancey County Extension Center by calling 828.682.6186, or email David Davis (david_davis@ncsu.edu).

Dealing with Mud in the Winter Feeding Season

David Davis, Agriculture Extension Agent for Yancey County

It is again the time of year for feeding hay in rainy weather. That means we have a lot of mud! Muddy conditions cost pounds of production, increase energy needs, and require feed that is of a higher quality and increased quantity. In a year that has already shown to be quite costly, mud is not good for livestock producers. In some years, muddy conditions can cause losses during calving, lambing, or kidding season. Many times, considering the way that livestock are normally fed with hay feeders, not managing the mud can result in damaged pasture. So, it is important to manage the feeding area during muddy conditions. Here are a few things to consider:



Above: Muddy conditions around hay feeders are a common sight this time of year.

1. Take care of your pastures. Designate a portion of pasture as a "sacrifice lot" for feeding. Only allow livestock to feed in this area. Move feeders around frequently to avoid a build up of mud and manure. In some cases, it might be best consider unrolling hay. However, understand that this will include some hay loss. Make sure to re-seed the feeding area in the spring with desired pasture grasses.

2. Consider putting in a designated feeding pad. Feeding pads can be easily constructed using geo-textile fabric, course rock, and gravel. There are several NRCS research proven designs that can minimize mud, and allow for better manure management. Check with NRCS or the Yancey County Soil Conservation Service for technical assistance, or possible available cost-share programs.

3. Avoid locating feeding areas in locations that do not drain very well, or that receive a lot of run-off. Avoid low lying areas that might receive water from nearby barns or other buildings, or even adjacent hill sides. It is best to choose the driest location possible to locate any outdoor hay feeding areas.

If you are having issues with mud at your livestock feeding location, and would like to discuss possible options for your farm feel free to reach out to us. Contact NC Cooperative Extension of Yancey County by calling 828.682.6186 or email David Davis, Agriculture Extension Agent (david_davis@ncsu.edu).