



September

2009

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Calendar of Events

October 9 Club Calf Sale at Fryeburg Fair
October 30 Fall Feeder Calf Sale Check-In Day
October 31 Fall Feeder Calf Sale
October 31 Presentation of Calves to Calves 4 Kids Recipients
December 5 Beef Conference

12 month subscription to Country Folks magazine) will be deducted from sale monies. Consignments shall have been weaned prior to September 1st, vaccinated and de-wormed.

Animals will be weighed on Thursday evening this year, although animals may arrive earlier in the week if needed. For more information, please contact Sale Manager Ed Carter, miniaces1@myfairpoint.net, 207-737-2872.

Club Calf Show & Sale



2008 Club Calf

MBPA and Fryeburg Fair will once again sponsor a Club Calf Show & Sale at the Fair on Friday, October 9th following the Market Steer Auction. Bulls and steers must have been born after January 1, 2009 while heifers have to have been born after September 1, 2008. There is a \$40.00 entry fee for consigners, who must also be MBPA members. If not already a member, the \$35 membership fee (which also provides a

E-mail Alert

Your help is needed! Many of you have included your e-mail addresses with MBPA dues renewals or with entries to various sales sponsored by MBPA. There have been times that e-mail communication has been attempted for confirmation of information or to share news about upcoming events that may be of interest. Unfortunately, spam filters prevent this communication from happening. If you want to receive materials from MBPA, it would make things much easier if you could take a few minutes and make sure that your computer recognizes info@mainebeefproducersassociation.org as a valid address.

MBPA Directories to be available at Ag Trade Show

MBPA member directories will be available at the Ag Trade Show in January. Anyone who joins or renews their MBPA membership by the end of October can be included in the print and/or web version. Membership envelopes therefore are included with this newsletter.

Some members have indicated on their

renewal envelopes that they wish to be included in one or both of these directories, but to make the directories as complete as possible, there is additional information that wasn't found on those envelopes. There are also many members who have not made their preference clear. If you wish to be included in the print directory, please fill out the following information and include it with your dues (unless you have already done so).

Directory Information

Name _____
Farm Name _____
Mailing Address _____
Street Address, if different _____
Telephone # _____ e-mail address _____
Website Address _____
Breed of Beef Cattle Raised _____
Purebred _____ Commercial _____ Herd size _____
Grassfed _____ Naturally Raised _____ Organic _____ Conventional _____
I sell Retail _____ Wholesale _____ Freezer Beef _____ Breeding stock _____
I wish to be included in the print MBPA membership directory _____ Yes _____ No
I wish to be listed on the MBPA website membership directory _____ Yes _____ No
Signature _____

Fall Feeder Calf Sale



Previewing 2008 Feeder Calf entries

The Pre-Conditioned Fall Feeder Calf Sale will be held at Dick Brown's in Richmond on Saturday, October 31st. Animals will be checked in on Friday, October 30th. Information about the vaccination requirements and entry forms are available on the MBPA website:

www.mainebeefproducersassociation.org or may be obtained from Sale Manager Pete Dusoe, pbdusoe@uninets.net, 207-948-3233. Executive Director Pam Harnden, info@mainebeefproducersassociation.org or 207-645-2568 can also forward the information.

Parasites in Beef Cattle

In August, Dr. Don Bliss, PhD, a renowned parasitologist and operator of Mid America Ag Research, made a presentation on parasites and the effect they can have on profitability. Years of research have shown that parasites are the major underlying cause of many problems affecting beef cattle. One of the most important is the effect they have on the immune system. They depress appetite and interfere with efficient production of feedstuffs. Worms can cause an increase in pH in the digestive system and reduce dry matter intake. It has also been shown that animals with high worm populations do not respond as readily to vaccinations, while worm-free calves can increase weaning weight by up to 100 pounds over those with worm infestations.

Parasites have two functions: to live and reproduce. Research has shown that parasite eggs can survive under snow (which is a finding

that contradicts what many producers believe). Other research has shown that the pour-on dewormers only kill part of the worm population present. Those that aren't killed develop a resistance to the active ingredient(s) in the treatment, which means that each subsequent treatment removes fewer and fewer worms while further increasing resistance to the products.

Other research has shown that treating beef cattle with Ivermectin after a hard frost combined with another product, such as Safeguard, in the spring will remove almost all of the parasites. Older cows should be wormed about 6 weeks after being put out to pasture while younger animals should be treated 3 ½ to 4 weeks into the grazing season.

Free Fecal Screenings Available

MBPA is pleased to announce that Intervet-Schering/Plough is offering a free fecal screening program, including free shipping of samples, to Maine cattle producers. A recent study from Iowa State University identified parasite control as the single most important economic factor in producing beef efficiently. Other studies have shown that success rates for parasite control vary greatly with the treatments used. AABP Parasite Resistance 2008 Report is an informative article that can give more information on this topic and is available on the MBPA website:

www.mainebeefproducersassociation.org.

To see if your treatment program is working, or to see if parasites are a problem in your herd, contact Rick Jackson of Intervet-Schering/Plough: Cell# - 802-309-4226, Fax# - 802-285-6065, E-mail – rick.jackson@sp.intervet.com, to have sampling bags and brochures sent to you. To take the samples themselves, only a small amount is needed – golf ball size will do. Samples should be kept cool, not frozen, and shipped at the beginning of the week so they don't sit over the weekend in warm conditions. Your local vet

may have disposable ice packs you can use to ship with the samples. Be sure to include the "Beef & Dairy Cattle Parasite Evaluation Form", which is also included in this newsletter, with your samples so that you can get a complete evaluation of your samples sent back to you. To ship by FedEx, use code 482629024. If using UPS, use 46E709. The samples should be shipped to Dr. Don Bliss, Mid America Ag Research, 3705 Sequoia Trail, Verona, Wisconsin 53593. Dr. Bliss's Phone# is 608-798-4901 should you wish to speak with him directly.

Cattle Health Topic for Beef Conference

This year's Beef Conference will be held on Saturday, December 5th at the Ramada Inn in Bangor. Cattle Health is the topic and Ben Bartlett will be the keynote speaker. Mr. Bartlett is an Extension Educator from Michigan State University.

Dr. Don Bliss will also be at the Beef Conference to share further information about parasites in Maine beef. The free fecal screenings offered for Maine beef producers (see preceding article) will have results by then, which will be available to get a better picture of what the parasite issues in Maine are.

Pasture Walk at Cold Spring Ranch



Gabe Clark discussing pasture rotation and grass species

A partly-sunny, September Saturday was the perfect setting for a recent pasture walk at one of the state's grass-fed beef operations. Gabe

Clark shared information about the many innovations and improvements he has begun since bringing cattle to Cold Spring Ranch in the spring of 2006. Previously a dairy operation, the fields were quite acidic, with most in the mid 5 to 6 pH range. Gabe has applied lime and used poultry manure, cow manure and grazing to bring the pH up and improve the soil quality. There are about 100 acres that during the summer months support 50 to 85 head of cattle. Most of Gabe's cattle are between the ages of 8 months and 2 years.

Gabe sells fresh grass-fed beef 52 weeks of the year to several high-end markets in New England. He purchases 8 to 12 month old calves and aims for 2 pounds average daily gain on pasture or high quality forage. Most of Gabe's animals reach desired slaughter weight at 18 – 24 months.

With assistance from NRCS, Gabe has recently added two new structures to his ranch. The first is a covered feed bunk area for winter feeding. A cedar grove provides protection and a sleeping area for the herd, but the bunk area simplifies feeding while also ensuring that more manure can be recycled, since most cattle relieve themselves while eating. A cement base allows Gabe to bring round bales to the bunk in any weather and is easily scraped to save as much manure as possible for return to the fields come spring-time.



80' X 90' compost pad using 8' concrete blocks in 16' walls

The second structure is an 80' X 90' compost pad. The compost pad was built fairly close to

the feed bunk to ease transfer of materials from one spot to the other. Poultry manure, as well as the manure and any waste feedstuffs collected during winter feeding, will be composted before spreading on the fields in an effort to reduce odors and enhance nutrient uptake.



Part of the beef herd on pasture at Cold Spring Ranch

Although his pastures are predominantly still made up of native grasses and legumes, Gabe has no-till and frost seeded some of his fields with mixtures containing clover, perennial rye grass, tall fescue and orchard grass. He has had the most success with broadcast seeding, although he has also used a no-till planter. He offers a free choice mineral mix and rotates his animals throughout his pastures every 24 to 48 hours based on the number of animals being grazed and grass height and quality.

“Beef up” Your Beef Efficiency

The extreme weather conditions of this spring and early summer plus other economic conditions, are combining to make it more difficult than ever to be profitable this year. Making sure that your cattle utilize feed the most efficiently is one way to increase profits.

An article in the September issue of American Agriculturist had some helpful hints. Parasites rob nutrients, so make sure your cattle are parasite free. In warm weather provide plenty of fresh water and effective shade will reduce maintenance requirements and prevent heat stress. Extreme cold and windy conditions also require additional

nutrients, so adequate wind breaks and shelter can prevent nutrient loss for maintaining body heat. Think about distances to feed and water for your animals. Performance suffers if cattle must walk more than 1500 feet for water. Minimize other stresses by working your cattle in a calm manner. Properly designed facilities can reduce energy-robbing stress. Finally,

selection can also play a role. Consider temperament when choosing animals since “flighty” cattle invariably perform at a lower level than calm cattle.

Some seemingly small management changes can have large dividends on feed efficiency. This year it is more important than ever to maximize feed.

