Wheat and Stocker Cattle Production Challenges

- Stocker cattle grazing wheat pasture is an important part of the economy in the Texas Rolling Plains region.
- Wheat and stocker cattle business decisions are impacted by a variety of issues, including cattle and wheat prices, animal health, weather, wheat forage availability, disease, insect infestations and cost of production.

Extension’s Response

- The Cattle Trails Stocker Conference was organized by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service to address wheat and stocker cattle production and economic issues in the Rolling Plains (Texas and Oklahoma).
- The conference, held annually on a rotating schedule between Texas and Oklahoma, is a one-day educational program aimed at both providing wheat and stocker cattle producers with up-to-date market and economic information and teaching management practices that influence operational profitability.

The conference involves key leaders from the beef industry and Extension specialists discussing various topics, including cattle and wheat market analysis economics, risk management, animal health, wheat varieties and production, grazing practice considerations and animal welfare issues.

In 2011, approximately 110 stocker cattle producers attended the conference in Wichita Falls, Texas.

Participants own or manage more than 61,000 head of stocker cattle and 192,500 acres of wheat.

Economic Impact

- Based on program evaluation responses, 63 percent of the participants said they expect to change their production and/or marketing practices based on the information they received at the conference.
- The potential increase in net returns resulting from the adoption of selected wheat and stocker cattle management and marketing practices is estimated at $10,852 per operation, resulting in a total benefit of $596,844 annually.

Contact:
Dean McCorkle
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
ph. 979.846.1861
e-mail: d-mccorkle@tamu.edu
agrilifeextension.tamu.edu/impacts

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