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September and October

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COOPERATIVE EXETENSION

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

New NRCS Program– Conservation Stewardship

A new program is available to California agricultural and forestry producers offering financial incentives to adopt additional conservation activities on their land. The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) is a voluntary program that encourages producers to maintain existing conservation activities and add new ones. The program was authorized by Congress in the 2008 Farm Bill and will be available through 2017.

Producers interested in applying are encouraged to review program details online at www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/new_csp/csp.html before making an appointment with their local NRCS field office. Applications must be submitted by September 30 to be considered for funding in the first ranking period. Eligible lands include cropland, grassland, improved pastureland, rangeland, non-industrial private forestland, and agricultural land under jurisdiction of an Indian tribe. Eligible applicants include individual landowners, Indian tribes, and legal entities.

Producers doing a variety of other practices can also profit from the program. Such practices include controlling wind erosion, conserving en-

Horse Hints– Lameness

Most lameness, approximately 75%, is found in the forelimbs, which carry 60-65% of the weight, of the animal and of these about 95% are in the knee or below. The diagnosis of lameness should eliminate the common sites of lameness and the common lameness associated with the work performed, first. In all cases, the foot should be suspected and eliminated as a cause of lameness.

To help you vet diagnosis the cause of lameness it is important to observe the horse and remember specific information regarding the duration and intensity of the lameness, the symptoms, the activity immediately preceding the lameness, and previous treatments or therapies employed. Here is a list of questions to consider:

1. *How long has the horse been lame?* If lameness has been present for a month or more, it can be considered a chronic condition because permanent structural damage could have occurred that may render recovery unlikely.

2. *Has the horse been rested or exercised during this lameness period?* Also, inform the veterinarian of the conditions in which the horse is kept. Stalled horses may have sudden outburst or over-exuberance. Additionally, pastured horses, though not ridden may be "exercised" by pasture mates.

3. *Has the lameness worsened, stayed the same, or improved?* Cases where the lameness has improved will have a better prognosis than cases which have remained static or have worsened.

4. *What caused the lameness?* It is important to note whether the lameness is associated with an isolated incident or whether it has developed over time.

Schedule of Events

- September 7th– Labor Day UCCE Office Closed
- September 9th– Cattlmen's Day at the Modoc Veterinary Hospital/ Brass Rail
- September 11-12th– CWGA Annual Meeting Bakersfield, CA
- September 23-25th– Public Lands Council Annual Meeting, Sacramento, CA
- September 25th– Cal-PAC , Harris Beef Ranch
- September 30th and October 1st– Modoc Washoe Experimental Stewardship Meeting and Tour
- October 3rd– Cal Poly Beef Field Day
- October 8th– Cattlewomen's Fall Meeting, Old Sears Building 5:30 Social, 6 P Dinner
- October 24th– Modoc County Cattlemen Annual Dinner, Alturas

Horse Hints– CONT

5. *Is the horse still lame after being warmed up?* If so, muscular structures or arthritic joints may be involved.

6. *Does the animal stumble?* Stumbling may be indicative of pain due to heel pressure such as navicular or a heel puncture wound thus the horse is attempting to land on the toe. It may also suggest a spinal condition or virus (i.e. West Nile Virus).

7. *What treatment has been done and was it helpful?* If recommended treatment has been employed with little to no results, prognosis may be guarded. Additionally, dosage and types of drugs used should be recorded as some may mask symptoms of the lameness. It is especially important to inform the veterinarian if corticoid injections have been received.

8. *When was the horse shod?* Nails that are placed near sensitive tissue may cause lameness in the animal though the effect may take several days to show. Close nail lameness will not subside until the nail is pulled and the pressure is relieved. Additionally, "hot" nail infections may also take several days to show and the shoe must be removed to discover the potential cause of lameness.

Noting the answers to these questions may assist the vet in timely diagnosis of lameness in horses. This in turn, will possibly allow for a more positive prognosis and less costly evaluation.

California Cattlemen's Annual State Meeting

November 11th-13th

John Ascuaga's Nugget
Sparks, Nevada

Information on:
Public Lands
Legislation
Cattlemen's Colleges
And
Much More

Contact Chaley Paulson at CCA office
916-444-0845

Beef Bits– Livestock and Range and Range Management After Drought

Maybe this article is being a little optimistic but it is possible the drought cycle may be broken this year. After drought FINALLY breaks, the range and pastures tend to be flush, above average heights and increased seed stalk production, compared to previous years. This is due to drought induced mortality thinning plant communities creating a growth spurt within the surviving plant community. The plants that have survived have more water and nutrients available and also tend to be more vigorous than previously. However, there may be reduced total forage production because of fewer plants per acre than in previous years.

The green seen in both plant production and possible income can be deceiving and tempt landowners to restock land to levels before drought. Overgrazing after drought, same as during, will damage surviving plants and ultimately require longer recovery and rest periods than conservatively restocking land. The year following drought should be used for restoring residual vegetation, increasing plant litter, and improving plant vigor.

Several different methods can be used to benefit plant recovery and pastures with the most potential to provide the largest increases in forage production should receive the highest priority. These practices include (adapted from Reece et al., 1991):

Rest pastures for an entire growing season or more following severe droughts. Complete rest is the most effective and fastest way to achieve range recovery.

Use pastures only when key forage species are dormant for one or more growing seasons. The dormant season is typically the least harmful time to graze perennial grasses.

Use pastures when the least desirable species are green and palatable (i.e. early to mid spring for cheatgrass). By manipulating timing of grazing in this way, you can shift grazing pressure away from key forage plants. Animals are likely to prefer green, but less desirable plants, over key forage plants that are dormant.

Defer grazing until after key forage species have produced mature seed. After herbaceous plants produce mature seed, they are usually not as highly sought after by livestock. Perennial grasses can generally tolerate grazing better during this period because they have completed their life cycle for the current growing season.

Graze early growth after perennial grasses have reached the 4 to 5 leaf stage. Perennial grasses are usually more tolerant of grazing during this period because their growing points have not been elevated. Animals should be removed from the area before key forage plants reach the early head (reproductive) or late boot stage.

Advanced planning is critical to surviving drought for both plants and land owners. This allows for making decisions early and avoiding crisis situations. Delays in decision making can cause an elevated economic loss and long term damage to rangelands. Well-planned grazing protocols that promote conservative while sustaining high plant vigor is insurance of quick recovery and reduced impacts of drought.

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Alturas, CA 96101

Missy Merrill-Davies: County Director and
Livestock and Natural Resources Advisor

NEW NRCS PROGRAM, CONT.

ergy, using high efficiency pumps, growing high residue-producing crops, using minimum tillage, growing cover crops, installing buffers to prevent runoff from going directly into lakes and streams, managing non-cropped areas for wildlife, providing food plots and flooding fields for wildlife, avoiding nesting periods when mowing hay, using integrated pest management, applying fertilizer according to soil and tissue tests, following a nutrient management plan, and following a grazing management system that maintains soil and water quality and provides adequate forage to meet livestock demands.

Payments will be made for installing and adopting additional conservation activities; improving and maintaining conservation activities in place at the time the contract offer is accepted; adopting resource-conserving crop rotations to achieve beneficial crop rotations; engaging in activities related to on-farm conservation research and demonstration activities; and pilot testing of new technologies or innovative conservation practices. Contracts will cover the entire agricultural operation and be for five years. Payments to an individual or legal entity may not exceed $40,000 per year and $200,000 in a five-year period. CSP payment rates will be based on a combination of points determined by the producer's current and planned conservation enhancements. Final payment rates for the 2009 CSP sign-up have not yet been established. The estimated range of payments is expected to be: $5 to $35 an acre for cropland; $3 to $21 an acre for pasture; $2 to $14 an acre for range; and $1 to $14 an acre for forests. Payments are based on cost of stewardship/conservation activities, forgone income, and environmental benefits achieved. To receive the high-end of payments participants will need to commit to do several additional activities.

For information about CSP, producers can visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/new_csp/csp.html or contact their local NRCS field office.