

Virginia Cooperative Extension



Farm Business Management Update December 2009 – January 2010

To: Extension Unit Directors, Extension District Directors, Extension Program Directors, and Farm Management Agents, and ANR Specialists

Dear Co-Workers:

Farm Business Management Update is a joint effort of the Agricultural and Applied Economics faculty and the area farm management agents. Subject matter areas include timely information on farm management, marketing, tax management, finance, credit, labor, agricultural law, agri-business, estate planning, 4-H and economic education, natural resources, and CRD. Please feel free to reproduce any article. However, please cite the title, author(s), date, and this Newsletter.

Farm Business Management Update is electronically accessible via the Virginia Cooperative Extension World Wide Web site (<http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/news/farm-business-management-update.html>). To see the articles listed in the reverse chronological order, select "News," then select "Farm Business Management Update" listed under the heading "Periodicals."

Gordon E. Groover

Extension Economist, Farm Management and Farm Management Coordinator

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The Management Calendar

**By Gordon Groover (xgrover@vt.edu), Extension Economist, Farm Management,
Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, Virginia Tech**

Farm business managers should consider putting the following activities on their management calendar for December and January.

- Before the end of the year (calendar tax year filers), follow up on end-of-year tax management strategies recommended by your tax advisor. Additional information can be found in IRS publication 225 Farmer's Tax Guide at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p225.pdf>. Hard copies of Farmer's Tax Guide can be obtained from many of your public libraries.
- Begin closing out the farm books by collecting information for the farm net worth statement. Around the first of the year when you need to walk off all that holiday food, take a notepad or try out the new camera and/or cell phone as you walk around the farm. Record the number and approximate value of all the farm assets (cattle, tractors, machinery, buildings, inventories of grains and feedstuffs, chemicals, etc.) that can be organized on the asset side of the balance sheet. Be sure to save the notes, recording, or, better yet, place the notes or recording in a safe location (safety deposit box or fireproof box) for possible insurance claims. Review your end-of-year bank statements or contact your lender for current listings for all personal and business liabilities. You now have all the information you need to complete a market value net worth statement.
- If you are using cash accounting methods for tax purposes (computerized business records or hand-kept), you need to make sure your actual records match the deposits and check dates for all claimed income and expenses. A quick check of the records will help address any problems that might arise at tax time.
- Plan to get all tax records summarized and to your tax advisor by February 1, 2008, and check with your Virginia Cooperative Extension's farm business management agent on farm-related changes in state and federal taxes. A listing of Virginia tax credits can be found at the following site: <http://www.tax.virginia.gov/site.cfm?alias=TaxCredit>. Make sure that your tax advisor is aware of these credits. An abbreviated list of credits for agriculture and forestry are listed below.
 - Agricultural Best Management Practices Credit
 - Conservation Tillage Equipment Credit
 - Fertilizer and Pesticide Application Equipment Credit
 - Land Preservation Tax Credit
 - Riparian Waterway Buffer Credit
- Use 2009 financial and production records to develop projected budgets, cash flow, and income statements for 2010. If you are using Quicken or QuickBooks, use the automated feature to create a budget based on last year as a starting place to create a detailed budget to reflect your expected costs and returns for 2010. If you are using the Virginia Cooperative Extension "Farm Record Book: Expenses and Receipts," the back pages provide forms to summarize all your financial data.
- Depending on the type of farm, begin working on a marketing plan for 2010 by collecting information on prices and world market situations.

- The 2007 Farm Bill made a number of changes in farm programs, check with your local Farm Service Agency for information on all programs and signup deadlines. Contact information for your local FSA office can be found at <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=us&agency=fsa>.
- Keep up-to-date on the release of economic, crop conditions and estimates, world agricultural situation and outlook, and many other USDA reports by looking at the USDA report calendar at <http://www.usda.gov/news/releases/rptcal/calindex.htm>.
- Check on crop insurance policies by visiting the Risk Management Agency website at <http://www.rma.usda.gov/> to find an agent and view the multitude of policies (crops, livestock, forages, vegetables nursery, clams, and more) that are available in your area.
- Close out and summarize livestock and/or crop records for 2009, noting problems that must be addressed when making cropping, feeding, and breeding decisions during 2010. Compare 2009 records to previous years looking for strengths and weaknesses.
- Review 2009's crop, hay, and livestock records for labor problems, bottlenecks, and down times. Include all employees in spotting and planning to correct labor bottlenecks. Draw up a labor flow chart listing estimated times and identify employees who will be responsible for major tasks. This is very important if you have expanded acreage, number livestock, and/or replaced an employee or the number of employees.
- Schedule regular meetings with all workers and family members to discuss work activities as you gear up for the spring push. Make sure all workers feel free to suggest ways to improve efficiency. Think about creating an employee handbook for important information on pesticide safety, farm bio-security, and safe operations of machinery and equipment.

Selective information that might be useful to farmers and their advisors:

- The Virginia's Use Value Assessment Program web site has been updated for Tax Year 2010 (TY), details at <http://usevalue.agecon.vt.edu/>.
- Interested in a variety of information about Virginia agriculture from apples to zucchini? Get a copy of the Virginia Agricultural Statistics Bulletin and Resource Directory Number 80. The publication covers year 2008 and is published annually in September. You can download a copy by going to www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Virginia/Publications/Annual_Statistical_Bulletin/bulletin2008.pdf. A hard copy can be obtained by contacting Virginia Agricultural Statistics Service (VASS) nass-va@nass.usda.gov or by calling (804) 771-2493.
- Time to order your Virginia Cooperative Extension "Farm Record Book: Expenses and Receipts" (Publication 446-017). This 120-page record book provides an organized way of keeping track of annual financial, labor and personnel, and production-related records. It provides forms for many categories of expenses, receipts, labor, and financial summaries to meet the needs of most agriculturally-related businesses using cash accounting methods. Column headings are included for major items with some columns remaining blank for your own headings. Forms are arranged to facilitate transferring totals to income tax forms (Schedule F, tax depreciation, and Form 4797) and to help complete end-of-the-year analysis. Virginia Cooperative Extension "Farm Record Book: Expenses and Receipts" is available from Virginia Cooperative Extension for \$12.00. Call your local extension office and request the order form VCE Publication 446-016,

print the form at www.ext.vt.edu/pubs/agecon/446-016/446-016.pdf, or contact me at (540) 231-5850.

- Online help understanding and using financial statements. The Center for Farm Financial Management has created a new online workshop series to help agricultural producers and/or anyone who works with them to understand and use common financial statements and measures. The website, Interpreting Financial Statements and Measures (IFSaM), is intended to teach producers the basics of interpreting the four major financial statements and the 21 financial measures recommended by the Farm Financial Standards Council. IFSaM is a series of online videos that producers can work through at their own pace. Each session provides benchmarks, based on actual farms, that producers can use to evaluate their own financial position and their financial performance. Case farm examples are used to bring the data to life. There are also optional “test your knowledge” quizzes at the end of each session. In total, there is over 2 ½ hours of information. Best of all, it’s free. This series was created with funding from the North Central Risk Management Education Center. IFSaM is located at <http://ifsam.cffm.umn.edu/>.
- *Are You a Good Farm Marketer* is an online publication from Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development [www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sis5220](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sis5220). This is a quick way to evaluate your marketing skills.

Did I Make Money Farming in 2009?

By Peter Callan (peter.callan@vt.edu), Extension Agent, Farm Business Management, Northern District

A frequent phone call that many extension agents receive in January begins like this: “I was summarizing my records to take to my tax person, and I’m not sure if I made money raising crops.” The extension agent’s response is: “It all depends on ...”

To answer that question lets start with, “What are your costs for producing a crop?” The Virginia Tech online budgets web site <http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/category/enterprise-budgets.html> is an excellent place for producers to analyze the costs of raising a crop. The budgets are Excel spreadsheets that are user-friendly and can be downloaded to the producer’s computer. The following data is **inputted** into the spreadsheets: projected yield, sale price on a per bushel basis, input costs for N, P and K, seed, herbicide, land rent, diesel fuel, labor and crop insurance. All input costs, including those that have not been paid, should be included in the crop budgets to determine the cost of growing a crop.

The crop budgets include a fixed cost for machinery and equipment that is based on new equipment prices. Although machinery costs are different for all producers, I encourage producers to include their own machinery cost. If they do not have their own costs, then consider using half or two thirds of the equipment cost listed in the online crop budgets if you routinely purchase used equipment. All farm equipment eventually wears out and will need to be replaced. Machinery costs can be estimated by dividing the equipment cost by the estimated life of the equipment (e.g. total hours or total acres). Many producers address the concept of estimating machinery costs by stating that their equipment is paid for: “Why should I include machinery costs?” Producers must generate net returns from their crop enterprises and these net

returns will be used to purchase new equipment to replace what is currently wearing out. By including equipment costs, crop producers will be able to summarize the major costs associated with growing a crop.

Cost accounting is an approach to evaluating the overall costs that are associated with conducting business. Accurately allocating expenses (e.g. repairs, supplies, fuel, and interest) between crop enterprises is difficult to perform because most farms grow more than one crop. I teach producers a quick and easy way to implement a cost accounting system on their farms (contact me for details). Enterprise cost accounting can be done using QuickBooks® or a hand-kept account book.

A wise producer who clearly understands the cost structure for his farm has a favorite saying regarding farm profitability: “I am not in farming for cheap exercise! I have to make money or else I will not be in business. If I cannot make money growing a crop, the machinery will stay in the yard! I am not going to work hard all my life, and all I have to show for all my hard work is a yard full of worn out and tired old equipment!” The key is using cost accounting in conjunction with the Virginia Tech online crop budgets to accurately calculate the profitability of the crops being grown.

If you have questions regarding how to use online crop budgets and implement a cost accounting system for your farm, please contact your local extension office (www.ext.vt.edu/offices/index.html) or me at the Culpeper County Extension.

Estimating Fence Construction Costs for Grazing Livestock

By Eric Eberly (eeberly@vt.edu), Extension Agent, Farm Business Management, Central District, and Tom Stanley (stanleyt@vt.edu), Extension Agent, Farm Business Management, Northwest District

Fencing costs are one of the most expensive aspects of livestock grazing. The budgets presented in this article are for five primary types of fencing: 1) woven wire, 2) high tensile fixed knot, 3) high tensile non-electric, 4) high tensile electric, and 5) barbed wire. Each budget is set up to provide the costs per thousand linear feet of fencing at 2009 materials pricing. The materials sections will be the most helpful in planning the quantity needed, as well as the cost of each fence material.

Table 1 contains a summary of the annual ownership costs of equivalent perimeter fencing. Depreciation is calculated by dividing material cost by its useful life. The interest on investment is calculated by multiplying one-half the material cost times 6 percent interest rate. The average annual cost of maintenance is based on 5 percent of the initial cost. Labor was figured at \$18.03 per hour, the average fence-building labor charge reported in the 2008 Shenandoah Valley Custom Rate Survey. The custom post driving charge is \$55.83 per hour from the same survey. All budgets include one 14-foot gate. Each budget contains the base assumptions, estimated labor requirements, and suggested wire spacing. Detailed cost calculations for each fence type are found in Tables 2 through 6.

Table 1. Average annual ownership cost by fence type.

	High-tensile Woven Wire (1047-6-11 +1) Table 2	High-tensile Fixed Knot (949-12-330 +1) Table 3	High-tensile Non- Electric (8 Strand) Table 4	High-tensile Electric ¹ (5 Strand) Table 5	High-tensile Barbed Wire (5 Strand) Table 6
Material Cost per 1000 Feet	\$2,895.71	\$2,173.09	\$1,521.87	\$1,224.47	\$1,482.77
Est. useful life (years)	25	25	25	25	25
Depreciation	\$115.83	\$86.92	\$60.87	\$48.98	\$59.31
Interest on Investment	\$86.87	\$65.19	\$45.66	\$36.73	\$44.48
Maintenance ²	\$144.79	\$108.65	\$76.09	\$101.22	\$74.14
Total Cost per Year	\$347.49	\$260.76	\$182.62	\$186.93	\$177.93
Total Cost per Foot / Year	\$0.35	\$0.26	\$0.18	\$0.19	\$0.18

¹. Maintenance of electric fence includes replacement of fence charger every 4 years

². Average annual maintenance based on 5% of initial cost

Table 7 lists the average price and the range of price quotes for a given item. The prices for the materials are based on a recent (March 2009) survey of fence material suppliers across Virginia. Please contact your local supplier for current cost.

Please note that the budgets do not provide estimates of the “up-front” costs associated with getting ready to build a fence; for example, labor and machinery expenses required to clear or prepare a fence row. Since these “up-front” costs would be the same for the farmer regardless of what type of fence they were installing, no attempt has been made to estimate this additional cost. These and other enterprise budgets can be found at:

www.extension.agecon.vt.edu/enterprisebudgetsdetail.html.

Table 2. Conventional Woven Wire Fence

Item	Unit	Price	CONV. WOVEN WIRE FARM CUT POSTS 1047-6-11 + 1 TOP BARBED WIRE		CONV. WOVEN WIRE TREATED POSTS 1047-6-11 + 1 TOP BARBED WIRE		H. T. WOVEN WIRE TREATED POSTS 1047-6-12 1/2 + 1 TOP BARBED WIRE	
			Quantity	Total	Quantity	Total	Quantity	Total
8 FT BRACE POSTS 6"-7"	EACH	\$12.74	0.00	\$0.00	16.00	\$203.90	16.00	\$203.90
7 FT LINE POSTS 4"-5"	EACH	\$7.77	0.00	\$0.00	72.00	\$559.16	72.00	\$559.16
8 FT BRACES 4"-5"	EACH	\$7.23	0.00	\$0.00	12.00	\$86.80	12.00	\$86.80
8 FT FARM CUT LOCUST POSTS	EACH	\$6.30	100.00	\$630.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00
WIRE CONV. 1047-6-11 20 ROD	ROLL	\$251.37	3.03	\$761.71	3.03	\$761.71	0.00	\$0.00
WIRE HT 1047-6-12.5 20 ROD	ROLL	\$225.75	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	3.03	\$684.08
BARBED WIRE - CONV. 12.5	ROLL	\$87.64	0.80	\$70.11	0.80	\$70.11	0.00	\$0.00
BARBED WIRE - H. T. 15.5	ROLL	\$57.38	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.80	\$45.90
FARM GATE - 14 Ft	EACH	\$118.39	1.00	\$118.39	1.00	\$118.39	1.00	\$118.39
GATE HANGING BOLTS	EACH	\$11.52	2.00	\$23.05	2.00	\$23.05	2.00	\$23.05
BRACE PINS - 10"	EACH	\$0.92	8.00	\$7.36	8.00	\$7.36	8.00	\$7.36
BRACE PINS - 5"	EACH	\$0.61	6.00	\$3.68	6.00	\$3.68	6.00	\$3.68
BRACE WIRE - H. TENSILE	FOOT	\$0.044	480.00	\$20.99	480.00	\$20.99	480.00	\$20.99
TWIST STICKS 2 FT	EACH	\$4.58	12.00	\$54.98	12.00	\$54.98	12.00	\$54.98
STAPLES - BARBED FOR HT	LBS.	\$1.75	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	15.25	\$26.64
STAPLES - STANDARD	LBS.	\$1.41	12.22	\$17.19	10.75	\$15.13	0.00	\$0.00
POST DRIVING (MACH & LABOR)	HOURS	\$55.83	11.67	\$651.35	9.33	\$521.08	9.33	\$521.08
LABOR	HOURS	\$18.03	29.93	\$539.70	29.93	\$539.70	29.93	\$539.70
OTHER		\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00
TOTALS								
	MATERIAL COST PER 1000 FEET			\$1,707.47		\$1,925.27		\$1,834.93
	MATERIAL COST PER FOOT			\$1.71		\$1.93		\$1.83
	LABOR COSTS PER 1000 FEET			\$1,191.05		\$1,060.78		\$1,060.78
	LABOR COSTS PER FOOT			\$1.19		\$1.06		\$1.06
	TOTAL COST PER 1000 FEET			\$2,898.52		\$2,986.05		\$2,895.71
	TOTAL COST PER FOOT			\$2.90		\$2.99		\$2.90
Assumptions			Labor Requirements					
1000 Feet of Fence			Building Brace Assemblies - Double Span = 1.25 Hours					
Double Brace Assembly on each end			Driving Line Posts = 6 minutes per post					
Equivalent of 2 corners or 4 dips/rises			Driving Brace Posts = 8 minutes per post					
8 Ft between brace posts			Driving Farm Cut Posts = 7 minutes per post					
12 Ft between line posts			Stapling Fence and Barbed Wire = 7 (6+1) minutes per post					
All brace posts driven 48" in ground			Unroll and Stretch Fence and Barbed Wire = 0.7 minutes per foot					

Table 3. High Tensile Fixed-Knot Fence

			HT FIXED KNOT FARM CUT POSTS 949-12-330 + 1 TOP BARBED WIRE		HT FIXED KNOT TREATED POSTS 949-12-330 + 1 TOP BARBED WIRE		HT FIXED KNOT TREATED POSTS 949-12-330 FENCE ONLY	
Item	Unit	Price	Quantity	Total	Quantity	Total	Quantity	Total
8 FT BRACE POSTS 6"-7"	EACH	\$12.74	0.00	\$0.00	16.00	\$203.90	16.00	\$203.90
7 FT LINE POSTS 4"-5"	EACH	\$7.77	0.00	\$0.00	43.00	\$333.94	43.00	\$333.94
12 FT BRACES 4"-5"	EACH	\$15.90	4.00	\$63.60	4.00	\$63.60	4.00	\$63.60
8 FT FARM CUT LOCUST POSTS	EACH	\$6.30	59.00	\$371.70	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00
WIRE CONV. 1047-6-11 330 FT	ROLL	\$251.37	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00
WIRE HT 1047-6-12.5 330 FT	ROLL	\$225.75	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00
WIRE HT 949-12-330 Fixed Knot	ROLL	\$211.58	3.00	\$634.73	3.00	\$634.73	3.03	\$641.14
BARBED WIRE - H. T. 15 1/2	ROLL	\$57.38	0.80	\$45.90	0.80	\$45.90	0.00	\$0.00
FARM GATE - 14 Ft	EACH	\$118.39	1.00	\$118.39	1.00	\$118.39	0.00	\$0.00
GATE HANGING BOLTS	EACH	\$11.52	2.00	\$23.05	2.00	\$23.05	0.00	\$0.00
BRACE PINS - 10"	EACH	\$0.92	8.00	\$7.36	8.00	\$7.36	8.00	\$7.36
BRACE PINS - 5"	EACH	\$0.61	6.00	\$3.68	6.00	\$3.68	6.00	\$3.68
BRACE WIRE - H. TENSILE	FOOT	\$0.044	240.00	\$10.49	240.00	\$10.49	240.00	\$10.49
INLINE STRAINERS	EACH	\$4.58	2.00	\$9.16	2.00	\$9.16	2.00	\$9.16
STAPLES - BARBED FOR HT	LBS.	\$1.75	0.00	\$0.00	9.30	\$16.24	8.37	\$14.61
STAPLES - STANDARD	LBS.	\$1.41	8.52	\$11.99	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00
POST DRIVING (MACH & LABOR)	HOURS	\$55.83	6.88	\$384.30	6.43	\$359.17	6.43	\$359.17
LABOR	HOURS	\$18.03	22.05	\$397.56	19.05	\$343.47	14.57	\$262.64
OTHER		\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00
TOTALS	MATERIAL COST PER 1000 FEET			\$1,300.05	\$1,470.44		\$1,287.89	
	MATERIAL COST PER FOOT			\$1.30	\$1.47		\$1.29	
	LABOR COSTS PER 1000 FEET			\$781.86	\$702.64		\$621.81	
	LABOR COSTS PER FOOT			\$0.78	\$0.70		\$0.62	
	TOTAL COST PER 1000 FEET			\$2,081.91	\$2,173.09		\$1,909.70	
TOTAL COST PER FOOT			\$2.08	\$2.17		\$1.91		
Assumptions			Labor Requirements					
1000 Feet of Fence			Building Brace Assemblies - Single Span = .75 Hours					
Single Brace Assembly on each end and at Fence Splice			Driving Line Posts = 6 minutes per post					
Equivalent of 2 corners using 8 End Posts			Driving Brace Posts = 8 minutes per post					
12 FT between brace posts			Driving Farm Cut Posts = 7 minutes per post					
20 FT between line posts			Stapling Fence and Barbed Wire = 7 (6+1) minutes per post					
All brace posts driven 48" in ground			Unroll and Stretch Fence and Barbed Wire = 0.7 minutes per foot					

Table 4. High Tensile Non-Electric Fence

4 STRAND					6 STRAND		8 STRAND		10 STRAND	
Item	Unit	Price	Quantity	Total	Quantity	Total	Quantity	Total	Quantity	Total
8 FT BRACE POSTS 6"-7"	EACH	\$12.74	10.00	\$127.44	16.00	\$203.90	16.00	\$203.90	16.00	\$203.90
7 FT LINE POSTS 4"-5"	EACH	\$7.77	18.00	\$139.79	16.00	\$124.26	16.00	\$124.26	16.00	\$124.26
8 FT BRACES 4"-5"	EACH	\$7.23	6.00	\$43.40	8.00	\$57.87	8.00	\$57.87	8.00	\$57.87
BRACE PINS - 10"	EACH	\$0.92	6.00	\$5.52	8.00	\$7.36	8.00	\$7.36	8.00	\$7.36
BRACE PINS - 5"	EACH	\$0.61	6.00	\$3.68	6.00	\$3.68	6.00	\$3.68	6.00	\$3.68
BRACE WIRE - H. TENSILE	FOOT	\$0.044	400.00	\$17.49	480.00	\$20.99	480.00	\$20.99	480.00	\$20.99
H.TENS.WIRE 12.5 GA.	FOOT	\$0.025	4000	\$99.15	6000	\$148.72	8000	\$198.29	10000	\$247.86
FARM GATE - 14 Ft	EACH	\$118.39	1.00	\$118.39	1.00	\$118.39	1.00	\$118.39	1.00	\$118.39
GATE HANGING BOLTS	EACH	\$11.52	2.00	\$23.05	2.00	\$23.05	2.00	\$23.05	2.00	\$23.05
SPRINGS	EACH	\$6.07	1.00	\$6.07	1.00	\$6.07	1.00	\$6.07	1.00	\$6.07
INLINE STRAINERS	EACH	\$2.69	4.00	\$10.76	6.00	\$16.15	8.00	\$21.53	10.00	\$26.91
BATTENS 40"	EACH	\$3.32	60.00	\$199.29	57.00	\$189.33	57.00	\$189.33	57.00	\$189.33
BATTEN CLIPS	EACH	\$0.06	240.00	\$15.12	342.00	\$21.55	456.00	\$28.73	570.00	\$35.91
CRIMP SLEEVES	EACH	\$0.16	24.00	\$3.93	36.00	\$5.90	48.00	\$7.86	60.00	\$9.83
STAPLES - BARBED FOR HT	LBS.	\$1.75	1.76	\$3.08	3.03	\$5.28	4.03	\$7.04	5.04	\$8.81
POST DRIVING (MACH & LABOR)	HOURS	\$55.83	3.13	\$174.93	3.73	\$208.43	3.73	\$208.43	3.73	\$208.43
LABOR	HOURS	\$18.03	11.27	\$203.14	14.30	\$257.83	16.37	\$295.09	18.73	\$337.76
OTHER		\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00
TOTALS	MATERIAL COSTS PER 1000 FT			\$816.16	\$952.48		\$1,018.34		\$1,084.21	
	MATERIAL COSTS PER FOOT			\$0.82	\$0.95		\$1.02		\$1.08	
	LABOR COSTS PER 1000 FEET			\$378.07	\$466.26		\$503.52		\$546.19	
	LABOR COSTS PER FOOT			\$0.38	\$0.47		\$0.50		\$0.55	
	TOTAL COSTS PER 1000 FEET			\$1,194.23	\$1,418.74		\$1,521.87		\$1,630.40	
TOTAL COSTS PER FOOT			\$1.19	\$1.42		\$1.52		\$1.63		
Assumptions			Labor Requirements				Wire Spacing (Inches)			
1000 Feet of Fence			Building Brace Assemblies - Single Span = .75 Hours				4 Wire = 6-7-10-12			
Single Brace Assembly on each end - 4 strand			Building Brace Assemblies - Double Span = 1.25 Hours				6 Wire = 5-5-6-7-8-9			
Double Brace Assembly on each end - 6, 8, 10 strands			Driving Line Posts = 6 minutes per post				8 Wire = 4-5-5-5-6-6-7-8			
Equivalent of 2 corners or 4 dips/rises			Driving Brace Posts = 8 minutes per post				10 Wire = 4-4-4-4-5-5-5-5-5-5			
8 Ft between brace posts			Stapling Wire - 1 minute per wire							
50 Ft between line posts - HT										
3 battons between line posts - HT										
All brace posts driven 48" in ground										

Table 5. High Tensile Electric Fence

			1 STRAND		2 STRAND		3 STRAND		5 STRAND		
Item	Unit	Price	Quantity	Total	Quantity	Total	Quantity	Total	Quantity	Total	
8 FT BRACE POSTS 6"-7"	EACH	\$12.74	4.00	\$50.98	4.00	\$50.98	10.00	\$127.44	10.00	\$127.44	
7 FT LINE POSTS 3"-4"	EACH	\$7.77	7.00	\$54.36	7.00	\$54.36	4.00	\$31.06	4.00	\$31.06	
8 FT BRACES 4"-5"	EACH	\$7.23	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	6.00	\$43.40	6.00	\$43.40	
BRACE PINS - 10"	EACH	\$0.92	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	6.00	\$5.52	6.00	\$5.52	
BRACE PINS - 5"	EACH	\$0.61	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	6.00	\$3.68	6.00	\$3.68	
BRACE WIRE - H. TENSILE	FOOT	\$0.044	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	240.00	\$10.49	240.00	\$10.49	
H.TENS.WIRE 12.5 GA.	FOOT	\$0.025	1000	\$24.79	2000	\$49.57	3000	\$74.36	5000	\$123.93	
FARM GATE - 14 Ft	EACH	\$118.39	1.00	\$118.39	1.00	\$118.39	1.00	\$118.39	1.00	\$118.39	
GATE HANGING BOLTS	EACH	\$11.52	2.00	\$23.05	2.00	\$23.05	2.00	\$23.05	2.00	\$23.05	
SPRINGS	EACH	\$6.07	1.00	\$6.07	1.00	\$6.07	1.00	\$6.07	1.00	\$6.07	
INLINE STRAINERS	EACH	\$2.69	1.00	\$2.69	2.00	\$5.38	3.00	\$8.07	5.00	\$13.46	
BATTENS 40"	EACH	\$3.32	0.00	\$0.00	8.00	\$26.57	15.00	\$49.82	15.00	\$49.82	
BATTEN CLIPS	EACH	\$0.06	0.00	\$0.00	16.00	\$1.01	45.00	\$2.84	75.00	\$4.73	
CRIMP SLEEVES	EACH	\$0.16	6.00	\$0.98	12.00	\$1.97	18.00	\$2.95	30.00	\$4.91	
STAPLES - BARBED FOR HT	LBS.	\$1.49	0.19	\$0.28	0.38	\$0.56	0.56	\$0.84	0.94	\$1.40	
INSULATORS	EACH	\$0.21	7.00	\$1.47	14.00	\$2.94	30.00	\$6.30	50.00	\$10.50	
WRAP AROUND INS SLEEVE	EACH	\$1.36	4.00	\$5.42	8.00	\$10.85	12.00	\$16.27	20.00	\$27.12	
POST DRIVING (MACH & LABOR)	HOURS	\$55.83	1.23	\$68.86	1.23	\$68.86	1.73	\$96.77	1.73	\$96.77	
LABOR	HOURS	\$18.03	3.13	\$56.49	4.23	\$76.33	10.20	\$183.91	10.97	\$197.73	
TOTALS	MATERIAL COSTS PER 1000 FT			\$288.48				\$351.69			
	MATERIAL COSTS PER FOOT			\$0.29				\$0.35			
	LABOR COSTS PER 1000 FEET			\$125.35				\$145.18			
	LABOR COSTS PER FOOT			\$0.13				\$0.15			
	TOTAL COSTS PER 1000 FEET			\$413.83				\$496.87			
			TOTAL COSTS PER FOOT	\$0.41				\$0.50			
Assumptions			Labor Requirements					Wire Spacing (Inches)			
1000 Feet of Fence			Building Brace Assemblies - Single Span = .75 Hours					1 Wire = 30			
Single Brace Post on each end & 2 Corners - 1 & 2 strand			Driving Line Posts = 6 minutes per post					2 Wire = 20-16			
Single Brace Assembly on each end - 3 & 5 strand			Driving Brace Posts = 8 minutes per post					3 Wire = 13-11-12			
Equivalent of 2 corners or 4 dips/rises			Attaching Wire - 2 minute per insulator					5 Wire = 6-7-8-9-10			
8 Ft between brace posts											
150 Ft between line posts											
75 Ft between battons - 2 strand											
50 Ft between battons - 3 & 5 strand											
All brace posts driven 48" in ground											
			Costs for Electrification								
			Charger - Medium Duty \$200.00								
			Ground Rods and								
			Clamps \$125.00								

Table 6. Barbed Wire Fence

			HIGH TENSILE BARBED WIRE 3 STRAND		HIGH TENSILE HIGH TENSILE 4 STRAND		HIGH TENSILE HIGH TENSILE 5 STRAND		CONV. BARBED FARM CUT POSTS 4 STRAND	
Item	Unit	Price	Quantity	Total	Quantity	Total	Quantity	Total	Quantity	Total
8 FT BRACE POSTS 6"-7"	EACH	\$12.74	10.00	\$127.44	10.00	\$127.44	10.00	\$127.44	0.00	\$0.00
7 FT LINE POSTS 4"-5"	EACH	\$7.77	35.00	\$271.82	35.00	\$271.82	35.00	\$271.82	0.00	\$0.00
8 FT BRACES 4"-5"	EACH	\$7.23	6.00	\$43.40	6.00	\$43.40	6.00	\$43.40	0.00	\$0.00
8 FT FARM CUT LOCUST POSTS	EACH	\$6.30	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	100.00	\$630.00
BRACE PINS - 10"	EACH	\$0.92	6.00	\$5.52	6.00	\$5.52	6.00	\$5.52	6.00	\$5.52
BRACE PINS - 5"	EACH	\$0.61	6.00	\$3.68	6.00	\$3.68	6.00	\$3.68	6.00	\$0.00
BRACE WIRE - H. TENSILE	FOOT	\$0.044	240.00	\$10.49	240.00	\$10.49	240.00	\$10.49	240.00	\$10.49
HIGH TENSILE BARBED WIRE	ROLL	\$57.38	2.27	\$130.41	3.03	\$173.88	3.79	\$217.34	0.00	\$0.00
CONVENTIONAL BARBED WIRE	ROLL	\$87.64	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	3.03	\$265.59
FARM GATE - 14 Ft	EACH	\$118.39	1.00	\$118.39	1.00	\$118.39	1.00	\$118.39	1.00	\$118.39
GATE HANGING BOLTS	EACH	\$11.52	2.00	\$23.05	2.00	\$23.05	2.00	\$23.05	2.00	\$23.05
TWIST STICKS 2 FT (PTP)	EACH	\$4.58	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	6.00	\$27.49
BATTENS 40"	EACH	\$3.32	38.00	\$126.22	38.00	\$126.22	38.00	\$126.22	0.00	\$0.00
BATTEN CLIPS	EACH	\$0.06	114.00	\$7.18	152.00	\$9.58	190.00	\$11.97	0.00	\$0.00
STAPLES - BARBED FOR HT	LBS	\$1.75	2.13	\$3.72	2.84	\$4.95	3.55	\$6.19	0.00	\$0.00
STAPLES - STANDARD	LBS	\$1.41	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	4.18	\$5.88
POST DRIVING (MACH & LABOR)	HOURS	\$55.83	4.83	\$269.85	4.83	\$269.85	4.83	\$269.85	10.97	\$612.27
LABOR	HOURS	\$18.03	10.72	\$193.33	12.22	\$220.37	13.72	\$247.42	13.73	\$247.54
TOTALS		MATERIAL COSTS PER 1000 FT		\$871.31	\$918.41		\$965.51		\$1,086.40	
		MATERIAL COSTS PER FOOT		\$0.87	\$0.92		\$0.97		\$1.09	
		LABOR COSTS PER 1000 FEET		\$463.17	\$490.22		\$517.26		\$859.81	
		LABOR COSTS PER FOOT		\$0.46	\$0.49		\$0.52		\$0.86	
		TOTAL COSTS PER 1000 FEET		\$1,334.48	\$1,408.63		\$1,482.77		\$1,946.21	
		TOTAL COSTS PER FOOT		\$1.33	\$1.41		\$1.48		\$1.95	
Assumptions		Labor Requirements					Wire Spacing (Inches)			
1000 Feet of Fence		Building Brace Assemblies - Single Span = .75 Hours					3 Wire - 13-11-12			
Single Brace Assembly on each end		Driving Line Posts = 6 minutes per post					4 Wire - 6-7-10-12			
Equivalent of 2 corners or 4 dips/rises		Driving Brace Posts = 8 minutes per post					5 Wire - 6-7-8-9-10			
8 Ft between brace posts		Driving Farm Cut Posts = 7 minutes per post								
25 Ft between line posts - HT		Stapling Wire - 1 minute per staple								
1 batton between line posts - HT										
12 Ft between line posts - non HT										
All brace posts driven 48" in ground										

Table 7. 2009 Fence Materials Construction Cost

Materials		Your Farm	Average	Range	
				Low	High
8 FT BRACE POSTS 6"-7"	EACH		\$12.74	\$11.08	\$15.73
8 FT LINE POSTS 5"-6"	EACH		\$9.55	\$8.45	\$10.71
7 FT LINE POSTS 4"-5"	EACH		\$7.77	\$6.00	\$12.06
12 FT CORNER POSTS 5"-6"	EACH		\$19.50	\$19.50	\$19.50
12 FT Braces 4"-5"	EACH		\$15.90	\$15.00	\$16.80
10 FT Braces 4"-5"	EACH		\$10.96	\$8.00	\$14.12
10 FT Braces 5"-6"	EACH		\$15.30	\$11.75	\$18.85
8 FT BRACES 4"-5"	EACH		\$7.23	\$6.60	\$7.98
8 FT FARM CUT LOCUST POSTS	EACH		\$6.30	\$6.30	\$6.30
WIRE CONV. 1047-6-11 20ROD	ROLL		\$251.37	\$208.95	\$271.95
WIRE HT 1047-6-12 1/2 20ROD	ROLL		\$225.75	\$220.50	\$231.00
WIRE HT 949-12-330 Fixed Knot	ROLL		\$211.58	\$208.95	\$214.20
WIRE HT Deer Fence 8 FT	ROLL		\$423.15	\$408.45	\$441.00
BARBED WIRE - CONV. 12 1/2	ROLL		\$87.64	\$83.95	\$91.34
BARBED WIRE - H. T. 15 1/2	ROLL		\$57.38	\$47.20	\$65.10
TUBE GATE - 12'	GATE		\$105.79	\$89.25	\$147.00
TUBE GATE - 14'	GATE		\$118.39	\$94.50	\$163.80
TUBE GATE - 16'	GATE		\$125.48	\$97.65	\$173.25
GATE HANGING BOLTS	EACH		\$11.52	\$11.50	\$11.55
BRACE PINS - 9" - 10"	EACH		\$0.92	\$0.59	\$1.16
BRACE PINS - 4" - 5"	EACH		\$0.61	\$0.35	\$0.84
BRACE WIRE - H. TENSILE	FOOT		\$0.04	\$0.02	\$0.06
H.TENS.WIRE 12.5 GA.	FOOT		\$0.02	\$0.02	\$0.03
SPRINGS	EACH		\$6.07	\$5.67	\$6.56
INLINE STRAINERS	EACH		\$2.69	\$2.31	\$3.45
TWIST STICKS 2 FT	EACH		\$4.58	\$3.41	\$6.92
BATTENS 40"	EACH		\$3.32	\$2.73	\$4.19
BATTEN CLIPS	EACH		\$0.06	\$0.04	\$0.07
CRIMP SLEEVES	EACH		\$0.16	\$0.13	\$0.22
INSULATORS	EACH		\$0.21	\$0.19	\$0.23
WRAP AROUND INS SLEEVE	EACH		\$1.36	\$0.89	\$1.70
STAPLES - BARBED FOR HT	LBS.		\$1.75	\$1.42	\$2.09
STAPLES - STANDARD	LBS.		\$1.41	\$1.40	\$1.42
POST DRIVING (MACH & LABOR)	HOURS		\$55.83	\$15.00	\$100.00
LABOR	HOURS		\$18.03	\$10.00	\$50.00
OTHER					
T-Posts 5 FT	EACH		\$3.84	\$3.15	\$4.40
T-Posts 5.5 FT	EACH		\$3.74	\$3.29	\$4.19
T-Posts 6 FT	EACH		\$4.54	\$3.34	\$5.49
T-Posts 6.5 FT	EACH		\$4.66	\$3.71	\$5.24
T-Posts 7 FT	EACH		\$5.63	\$4.60	\$6.29
T-Posts 8 FT	EACH		\$7.86	\$6.28	\$9.44
T-Posts 10 FT galvanized	EACH		\$12.99	\$12.59	\$13.39

Trade and brand names are used only for the purpose of providing information. Virginia Cooperative Extension does not guarantee or warrant the standard of any product named to the exclusion of others which also may be suitable.

Legal Considerations for Building a Line Fence in Virginia

By Eric Eberly (eeberly@vt.edu), Extension Agent, Farm Business Management, Central District, and Tom Stanley (stanleyt@vt.edu), Extension Agent, Farm Business Management, Northwest District

There are a number of important considerations for those planning to build a fence in Virginia. Fences can enhance property value, be aesthetically pleasing, and serve a number of legal functions to protect the interest of landowner. Fences can also be a source of ill-will between neighbors.

Fences are erected for many reasons. Typically, they serve to restrain the movements of animals or people across a given boundary. Sometimes a fence's primary purpose is to mark a boundary line. In the state of Virginia, localities have the authority to choose general guidelines for laws pertaining to boundary fences.

Some Virginia localities have chosen a fence law guideline that traces back to Virginia General Law laid down in the 18th century. In these counties, a landowner that does not wish to have a neighbor's livestock encroach upon his/her property is obligated to construct a fence sufficient to keep livestock out. These localities are known as "Fence-Out" counties.¹

Other localities have chosen a fence law guideline that traces back to the English Common Law of the 17th century. In these counties, a landowner that keeps livestock is obligated to restrain the movements of his livestock by erecting a fence sufficient to keep them on his/her property. These localities are known as "Fence-In" counties.²

In reality, the obligation to construct a fence is considerably more complicated than these two legal provisions suggest. A livestock owner that knowingly permits his livestock to enter a public road is very likely to be found negligent should the animals cause an accident, regardless of whether the locality is "Fence-In" or "Fence-Out." Furthermore, other sections of Code of Virginia pertaining to fences appear to supersede the "Fence-Out" or "Fence-In" law.

The type of fence constructed is dictated by the fence purpose and the consequences for the landowner should the fence fail will largely dictate what type of fence is appropriate. A lawful fence is defined in Code §55-299 of the Code of Virginia.³ Practical, safe and functional fence designs and materials are available with a wide range of costs. New fence materials such as

¹ "Fence In" Counties are Albemarle, Arlington, Augusta, Botetourt, Buckingham, Campbell, Charles City, Chesterfield, Clarke, Culpeper, Cumberland, Dickenson, Fauquier, Floyd, Fluvanna, Gloucester, Goochland, Grayson, Greene, Halifax, Hanover, Isle of Wight, King George, Loudoun, Louisa, Madison, New Kent, Orange, Page, Patrick, Pittsylvania, Pulaski, Rappahannock, Roanoke, Rockingham, Russell, Scott, Southampton, Spotsylvania, Smyth, Sussex, Washington, Wise, Wythe, York.

² "Fence Out" Counties are Accomack, Alleghany, Amelia, Amherst, Appomattox, Bath, Bedford, Bland, Brunswick, Buchanan, Caroline, Carroll, Charlotte, Chesapeake, Craig, Dinwiddie, Essex, Fairfax, Franklin, Frederick, Giles, Greensville, Hampton, Henrico, Henry, Highland, James City, King & Queen, King William, Lancaster, Lee, Lunenburg, Mathews, Mecklenburg, Middlesex, Montgomery, Nelson, Newport News, Northumberland, Northampton, Nottoway, Orange, Powhatan, Prince Edward, Prince George, Prince William, Richmond, Rockbridge, Shenandoah, Stafford, Suffolk, Surry, Tazewell, Virginia Beach, Warren, Westmoreland.

³ Code of Virginia Online <http://leg1.state.va.us/000/src.htm>.

fixed-knot high tensile woven wire and high tensile electric fences can reduce the cost of effectively controlling livestock on farms. Electric fences are legal to have as boundary fences in Virginia provided the fence charger meets the standards laid out in the Code. The cost of the fence materials is very often the limiting factor in determining what a landowner chooses. Fence construction costs can be referenced in a related article in this newsletter or on the internet at: <http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/446/446-048/446-048.html>.

Where should a property line fence be placed? The answer is “it depends,” but as a general rule it is in the best interest of a landowner to place it directly on the boundary line. There is generally no reason for a landowner to give up the use of any of his/her land by building a division fence inside the property line. Virginia case history does allow for reasonable levels of activity on ‘the neighbor’s side’ for the purposes of repairing or maintaining fences. Topography will be another factor that might affect where a fence is built. Where the property line is a stream or especially difficult terrain, neighbors often negotiate to ‘split-the-difference’ with the fence on one side of the obstacle for a given distance and then crossing over the boundary and covering a compensatory distance on the opposite side.

Fence construction is sometimes dictated by the urgency of the need. A fence that has failed to restrain livestock is a liability concern of the livestock and land owner. Each could be found negligent if he/she fails to correct the problem in a timely manner. Construction conditions are another factor. Post driving with specialized equipment is extremely efficient and generally results in very sturdy posts to which fence wire or boards can be attached. However, post drivers often do not work well when the soil is extremely dry and hard.

There are generally two choices for constructing fences: do-it-yourself or hire a professional fence builder. Cost, available time, and skill level of the landowner often dictate whether a contractor is called in or not. The local Soil and Water Conservation District often maintains a list of fence contractors that operate in that particular area.

Who is responsible for building a fence in the State of Virginia is the “\$64,000-question?” The answer is, “It depends!” The Code of Virginia draws a distinction between a newly constructed fence and a pre-existing fence. In some cases, a landowner wishing to construct or repair a division fence can compel their neighbor to cover half the cost of the fence. The clearest situation justifying such an arrangement is where two adjoining landowners both have livestock but the extent to which a fence must be repaired or the type of fence to be constructed is still a possible source of disagreement. The duty to pay half the cost becomes less certain when one of the landowners does not keep livestock. See Code of Virginia §55-317 and §55-319 to see some of the distinctions that the law attempts to draw.

Interestingly, Virginia fence law refers only to landowners. The Code does not mention ‘tenants’ or ‘owners of livestock.’ This has very real implications for landowners who lease land to farmers with an understanding that the farmer-tenant maintains all fences. Landowners should be aware of their potential obligations and liability related to maintaining boundary fences.

Annual Youth Conference Planning Underway

By Dixie Watts Reaves (dixie@vt.edu), Associate Professor, Agribusiness Management and Marketing, Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, Virginia Tech

The Virginia Cooperative Council will again offer its Youth Leadership Conference at Graves Mountain Lodge in scenic Syria, Virginia, in 2010. The annual conference, targeted to 16- to 18-year olds, provides an opportunity for participants to learn about the cooperative form of business in an interactive and engaging way. The conference begins with an opening luncheon on Friday, April 9, and runs through early afternoon on Sunday, April 11. Friday's schedule includes ice-breakers and team-building activities, presentations by managers and employees of different types of cooperative organizations, and a Co-op Jeopardy game to gauge beginning knowledge levels. The evening ends with a presentation of the Case Study method of analysis. Teams of participants then assess a real world case related to cooperatives, focusing on problem identification, identification of possible alternatives to solve the problem, and selection of the best alternative. Based on thoroughness of assessment, a winning Case Study team is selected and has an opportunity to defend its case decision to the group. In years' past, comments and suggestions from the student groups have been utilized to make improvements in existing co-op businesses and the Council's youth education programs.

On Saturday, participants are placed into business teams and compete for market share and net worth. In the process of learning how businesses are run, teams make decisions about pricing, inventory, financing, labor management, and advertising. A behind-the-scenes computer simulation determines each team's profit and market share over the course of a simulated business year. Students often comment on how confusing and hectic the first few decisions are, but by the end of the conference, participant confidence and business decision-making skills are greatly improved. Further, leadership skills are enhanced, as each business simulation team elects a general manager to provide oversight for the team, and creates working groups for each major decision area.

Mixed in amongst the work and decision-making, recreational opportunities abound. Conference participants take a break on Saturday afternoon to participate in a scenic hike or outdoor sporting event. Saturday evening concludes with a steak dinner, a presentation about the national cooperative youth conference, a Casino Night, and a dance with a DJ.

On Sunday morning, participants learn a few more basic business concepts and make their final business decision. During the awards luncheon, the winning business team is announced, and top conference participants (based on their reporting on their visit to a co-op, two content-based test scores, and participation) are selected to attend an all-expense paid trip to the National Institute on Cooperation, where they meet and interact with other co-op youth scholars from around the U.S. The 2010 national conference will be held on the University of Tennessee campus in Knoxville, Tennessee, in July.

The annual youth leadership conference is supported through scholarship donations from Virginia cooperatives, thus making the conference free to youth participants. Individuals with recommendations for youth attendees should contact Phil Miller at phil.miller@sscoop.com. Additional information can also be requested from Dixie Watts Reaves, dixie@vt.edu. The

worthwhile nature of cooperatives' investment in Virginia's youth is evidenced through conference evaluations where, for a number of years, 100 percent of conference attendees indicated that they would recommend the conference to a friend.

New Publications from the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics

By Gordon Groover (xgrover@vt.edu), Extension Economist, Farm Management, Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, Virginia Tech

The Virginia Cooperative Extension Publication 2911-1418, *Resources for Rural Families Coping with Economic Stress and Anxiety* by Rose Bradshaw, Tenille Richardson , and Darrell Shomaker is now available at <http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/2911/2911-1418/2911-1418.html>. This publication provides information on coping with economic stress and anxiety and includes these topics.

- How do I know when to seek support?
- Warning signs
- What to do
- Resources in your community
- Resources Online

Computer Usage on Virginia Farms

By Gordon Groover (xgrover@vt.edu), Extension Economist, Farm Management, Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, Virginia Tech

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) released the most recent summary of on farm computer usage and ownership. The August 2009 report and past years can be viewed at <http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/MannUsda/viewDocumentInfo.do?documentID=1062>.

A few interesting highlights from this publication are listed below:

- Sixty-eight percent of Virginia's farmers have access to computers. This is a little above the national average of 64%. This is only a 3% increase since 2005 for Virginia's farmers.
- Surprisingly, of the Virginia farmers with access to a computer, only 32% use the computer for farm business; nationwide, the average is slightly higher at 36%.
- Virginia farms with internet access is 67% compared to nationwide access of 59%. Yet 39% of Virginia farmers access the internet via dial-up service (nationwide only 23% use dial-up) and 56% are using higher speed access provided by DSL, Cable, Satellite, and Wireless.
- Overall, the majority of Virginia farmers have access to computers and the internet yet they tend to lag behind in using computers as a tool for day-to-day management and for decision-making support.

Winter Forage Conferences to Feature Grazing Innovator, Greg Judy

By Gordon Groover (xgrover@vt.edu), Extension Economist, Farm Management,
Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, Virginia Tech

Virginia Cooperative Extension and the Virginia Forage and Grassland Council will be hosting a series of four Winter Forage Conferences on January 25-28, 2010. This year's conference sponsor is USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. The conference theme will be **"Managing Risk in Grazing Systems"** and will feature grazing innovator, Greg Judy from Clark, Missouri. Greg and his wife, Jan, operate a 1,400 acre grazing operation on owned and leased land and direct market grass-fed beef, pork, and lamb. He has authored two books: "NO RISK RANCHING, Custom Grazing On Leased Land" and "COMEBACK FARMS, Rejuvenating Soils, Pastures And Profits with Livestock Grazing Management."

The conferences will be held at four locations throughout Virginia:

- Monday, January 25th at the Brandy Station Fire Hall in Brandy Station, VA
- Tuesday, January 26th at Mrs. Rowe's Country Buffet in Mt. Crawford, VA
- Wednesday, January, 27th at the Southern Piedmont Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Blackstone, VA
- Thursday, January 28th at the Wytheville Meeting Center in Wytheville, VA.

Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. and the conferences will end at 3:45 p.m.

These conferences will provide an ideal opportunity for all livestock producers to understand the application of Holistic High Density Grazing to improve profitability and animal performance. Mr. Judy's afternoon discussion will focus on his knowledge and more than a decade of experience building and maintaining relationships on more than 1,400 acres of leased land and ten different landlords.

This day-long program will provide the motivation to help all livestock producers consider alternatives to improve animal performance and overall production, improve forage quality and quantity, and ultimately increase farm profitability. Presenters at the conference will provide information on a wide range of topics, including ways to shrink feed costs with extended grazing systems, determining your farms profitable stocking rates, and alternative profits from marketing your farm's wildlife and environmental amenities. The program for the Winter Forage Conferences will be:

8:30 a.m.	Registration
9:00-10:30	Rethinking Grazing Paradigms – Holistic High Density Grazing , Mr. Greg Judy, livestock farmer, author, and speaker from Clark, Missouri
10:30-11:00	Break, visit sponsors and network with other participants
11:00-12:00	Shrinking Feed Costs with Extended Grazing , Dr. Chris Teutsch, Extension Forage Specialist, Southern Piedmont Agricultural Research and Extension Center
12:00-12:15	VFGC Business Meeting , Jerry Swisher, President, Virginia Forage and Grassland Council
12:00 -1:15	Lunch and visit with sponsors

- 1:15-2:00 **Determining Profitable Stocking Rates for your Farm**, *Dr. Gordon Groover, Department of Agricultural Economics, Virginia Tech*
- 2:00-2:45 **Alternative Profit Centers – Marketing Wildlife and the Environment**, *Dr. Jim Parkhurst, Department of Fisheries and Wildlife Science, Virginia Tech*
- 2:45 - 3:30 **Building and Maintaining Tenant-Landlord Relationships**, *Mr. Greg Judy, livestock farmer, author, and speaker from Clark, Missouri*
- 3:30 – 3:45 **Questions**
- 3:45 p.m. **Adjourn**

For more information or to register for the conference, contact Margaret Kenny (makenny@vt.edu) at (434) 292-5331 or view the brochure at vaforages.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/2010-VFGC-Winter-Conferences-Beef-Brochure.pdf. The \$25 early registration fee must be postmarked by January 1, 2010. After New Year's, the registration fee is \$35 per person.

Calendar of Events

December

- 2-3 Income Tax Seminar. Fredericksburg. General Session: 8:30 AM – 4:45 PM; Evening Session: 5:00-7:00 PM. Cost: \$270; after October 1: \$300. A two-hour farm session is offered on Day 1. Ethics session offered on Day 2 is \$20 extra. Contact Income Tax School Registrar by phone at (540) 231-3306 or by email at vttax@vt.edu.
- 7-8 Income Tax Seminar. Williamsburg. General Session: 8:30 AM – 4:45 PM; Evening Session: 5:00-7:00 PM. Cost: \$270; after October 1: \$300. A two-hour farm session is offered on Day 1. Ethics session offered on Day 2 is \$20 extra. Contact Income Tax School Registrar by phone at (540) 231-3306 or by email at vttax@vt.edu.
- 9-10 Income Tax Seminar. Chesapeake. General Session: 8:30 AM – 4:45 PM; Evening Session: 5:00-7:00 PM. Cost: \$270; after October 1: \$300. No farm session is offered at this location. Ethics session offered on Day 1 is \$20 extra. Contact Income Tax School Registrar by phone at (540) 231-3306 or by email at vttax@vt.edu.
- 14-15 Income Tax Seminar. Richmond II. General Session: 8:30 AM – 4:45 PM; Evening Session: 5:00-7:00 PM. Cost: \$270; after October 1: \$300. No farm session is offered at this location. Ethics session offered on Day 2 is \$20 extra. Contact Income Tax School Registrar by phone at (540) 231-3306 or by email at vttax@vt.edu.

January 2010

- 25 Managing Risk in Grazing Systems. Brandy Station Fire Hall, Brandy Station. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. and the conferences will end at 3:45 p.m. Contact Margaret Kenny by email at makenny@vt.edu or by phone at (434) 292-5331 or view the brochure at vaforages.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/2010-VFGC-Winter-Conferences-Beef-Brochure.pdf The \$25 early registration fee must be postmarked by January 1, 2010. After New Year's, the registration fee is \$35 per person.
- 26 Managing Risk in Grazing Systems. Mrs. Rowe's Country Buffet, Mt. Crawford. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. and the conferences will end at 3:45 p.m. Contact Margaret Kenny by email at makenny@vt.edu or by phone at (434) 292-5331 or view the brochure at vaforages.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/2010-VFGC-Winter-Conferences-Beef-Brochure.pdf The \$25 early registration fee must be postmarked by January 1, 2010. After New Year's, the registration fee is \$35 per person.

- 27 Managing Risk in Grazing Systems. Southern Piedmont Agricultural Research and Extension Center, Blackstone. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. and the conferences will end at 3:45 p.m. Contact Margaret Kenny by email at makenny@vt.edu or by phone at (434) 292-5331 or view the brochure at vaforages.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/2010-VFGC-Winter-Conferences-Beef-Brochure.pdf. The \$25 early registration fee must be postmarked by January 1, 2010. After New Year's, the registration fee is \$35 per person.
- 28 Managing Risk in Grazing Systems. Wytheville Meeting Center, Wytheville. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. and the conferences will end at 3:45 p.m. Contact Margaret Kenny by email at makenny@vt.edu or by phone at (434) 292-5331 or view the brochure at vaforages.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/2010-VFGC-Winter-Conferences-Beef-Brochure.pdf. The \$25 early registration fee must be postmarked by January 1, 2010. After New Year's, the registration fee is \$35 per person.

February

- 5-12 North American Farmers' Direct Marketing Association (NAFDMA) Annual Convention. Lancaster, PA. Please see their web site for details as they become available at <http://www.nafdma.com/>.
- 2 & 9 A Comprehensive Approach to Farm Business Succession Planning.” A workshop series to be held on at the Randolph Pavilion, Virginia State University, Petersburg, from 9:00 AM – 3:30 PM. Contact Peter Callan by phone at (540) 727-3435, Extension 342 or by E-mail at peter.callan@vt.edu.

March

- 3-4 **Early Notice** - Agricultural Trade: From Farm to Port to the Global Marketplace. Sheraton Norfolk Waterside, Norfolk.