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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Grass Tetany Prevention**

Last week I promised to have more details about the prevention of grass tetany. The Beef Cattle letter provided this article written by Rory Lewandowski, OSU Extension Educator in Wayne County, which provides more details about it.

As pastures and small grain fields begin to green up, and livestock owners make plans to begin early spring grazing passes, keep in mind the risk of grass tetany. Grass tetany is caused by low blood magnesium (Mg) level. Magnesium is one of the macro minerals required by animals and it is involved in crucial metabolic functions such as the transmission of nerve impulses and muscle contraction. About 70% of the total body content of magnesium is stored in bones and teeth and adequate blood levels of magnesium are dependent upon daily magnesium intake.

Cool season grasses and small grains such as wheat and rye grazed in the early spring present the greatest risk for grass tetany problems. These forages are most often low in magnesium and calcium and high in potassium. In addition, during the early spring when soils are cool and if soil potassium levels are high, these species will take up potassium more readily than magnesium, adding to the risk of grass tetany developing in susceptible animals.

All livestock are not at equal risk to develop grass tetany. A cow's requirement for magnesium increases after calving. Cows nursing calves that are under 4 months of age are at greatest risk for grass tetany when they are grazing lush, rapidly growing grass pastures. Steers, heifers, dry cows and lactating cows with calves over 4 months in age are all at lower risk for grass tetany. In general, mature animals are more at risk than young animals because mature animals are not able to mobilize Mg from bones as readily as a young animal when blood Mg levels drop.

The best way of dealing with grass tetany is through prevention. High risk animals grazing lush, rapidly growing grass pastures should be provided with supplemental magnesium. Free-choice high magnesium mineral should contain 12 to 15% magnesium from magnesium oxide. Cattle need to consume four ounces of the mineral supplement daily. To help encourage intake, it can be mixed with grain or a flavoring agent like molasses. A high magnesium mineral mix can be started at least one to two weeks before the early spring grazing period and continue through late spring when forages are more mature and temperatures are consistently warmer.

### **Getting Planters Ready**

It will not be long before planters will be rolling. There may already be some in action in some areas. It is always a good idea to check things out before you are ready to go.

Double checking the calibration of your planters is something that could pay off down the road.



I recently read about a study done by Purdue with soybean farmers in Indiana concerning planting depths. The recommendation is to plant the soybeans three fourths of an inch to one and one half inches. Planting deeper tended to reduce the yields. The amount of time it takes for soybeans to emerge from say two inches could be 3 weeks or more. Also, this amount of time for emergence could also expose the seed to more pathogens, thus hindering the yield even more.

Going over the planters to calibrate everything for the best chance at a good yield is only part of the battle. While going over the planter, make sure all bearings are in good shape, and that everything is greased. Once the weather shapes up, you will want everything in tip top shape for keeping that planter operating toward getting a good stand, and your maximum yield.

### **Meal and Auction at Highland Co. Fairgrounds**

This Saturday, April 4 we will be having a meal and auction to help support Extension programming in Highland Co. The meal will consist of roasted pork, chicken breast, mashed potatoes, cole slaw, green beans and outstanding desserts.

Following the meal there will be karaoke, a silent auction and a live auction with many interesting things to bid on. The event will begin at 6:00 p.m. and will be held on the fairgrounds. For more information call the Highland Co. Extension Office at 393-1918.

### **Dates to Remember**

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| County Cattlemen | Annual Cattlemen Banquets: Highland County is April 1, Adams County is now changed to April 9, and Brown Co. is April 11.  |
| Pesticide Test   | April 13 at the Old Y Restaurant begins at noon. These tests are offered on the second Monday of each month. Go to <a href="http://pested.osu.edu">http://pested.osu.edu</a> or call the Ohio Department of Agriculture at 800-282-1955 to register. Space is limited. |
| GAP for Tobacco  | April 14 at 7:00 p.m. in the cafeteria at Eastern Brown High School. Call Barbie to register at 544-2339.  |
| COBA AI Class    | COBA/Select Sires will again offer the training for artificial insemination at the United Producers in Hillsboro on the evenings of April 28, 29 and 30 beginning at 6:00 p.m. For details contact COBA at 800 837-2621.   |