

UF/IFAS

Range Cattle Research & Education Center NEWS

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Spring 2015

UF Beef Cattle Economics Webinar Series

Chris Prevatt, Regional Specialized Agent II, Beef and Forage Economics



Southeast beef cattle producers are encouraged to tune-in to the upcoming UF Beef Cattle Economics Webinar Series. The event is hosted by the Range Cattle Research and Education Center and the South Florida Beef-Forage Program. The webinar series is being conducted to discuss ways to increase your herd's production, performance, and profitability. Cattle producers saw record feeder calf prices and profits in 2014 that changed the dynamics of the cow-calf industry. The goal of this webinar series is to provide timely production and economic information that can help producers operate in this volatile marketplace.

This series of presentations will take place on Wednesday nights from 6:30-7:00 pm (EST) during June and July. The following lists all the scheduled webinars:

June 24th, 2015 -
Beef Cattle Market Outlook

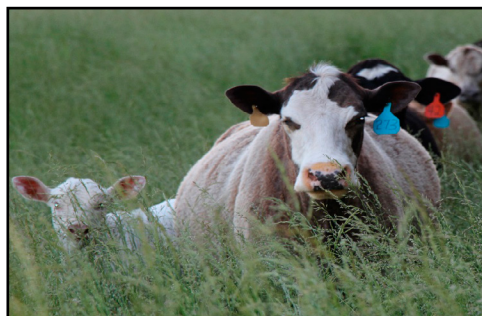
July 22nd, 2015 -
Projecting 2015 Cow-Calf Profitability

July 1st, 2015 -
Marketing Opportunities for Feeder Calves

July 29th, 2015 -
Replacement Heifer Economics

July 15th, 2015 -
UF 2015 Cow-Calf Budget

Participants will be able to interact with the presenter by submitting questions and comments, and will be able to make recommendations for topics at future webinar sessions. Each program can be viewed on your individual personal computer with access to the internet. Registration is open and free to all, but is limited to the first 100 participants. For registration information please visit <http://rcrec-ona.ifas.ufl.edu/Economics/index.shtml> or contact your County Livestock Agent. If you incur problems registering please contact Chris Prevatt at prevacc@ufl.edu.



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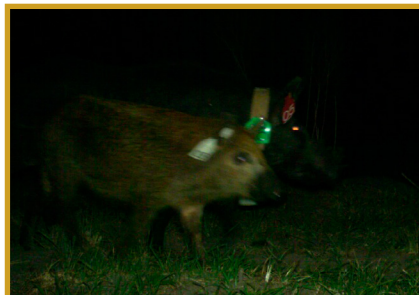
Rangeland Feral Swine Study Begins

Dr. Raoul Boughton, Assistant Professor, Rangeland Ecosystems and Wildlife

In May, the Rangeland Ecosystem Wildlife Team initiated a long-term feral swine monitoring study at Buck Island Ranch in collaboration with Conservation Science Partners, Fort Collin, CO and Tejon Ranch Conservancy, Tejon, CA, funded by the USDA Veterinary Services - Center for Epidemiology and Animal Health (CEAH). This work will collect much needed data to establish feral swine population sizes and densities. It will also allow for the calculation of effort and costs required to reduce the population, how long populations take to recover after control efforts and establish accurate costs associated with strong feral swine control. To achieve the required data collection we have to trap and individually mark all swine captured and establish an array of motion-activated cameras to re-sight swine activity throughout the ranch. To begin, Buck Island Ranch was divided into thirty-one 1 km² grid cells and a motion-activated camera installed in each one. Cameras were installed along travel corridors most likely to be used by feral swine. Feral swine are now being trapped, marked with ear tags and collar bands and some are fitted with GPS devices. Along with photographs of marked and unmarked swine, the motion-activated cameras record photographs of other wildlife species (see photos). Although feral swine will be a focus of the study, the array could very easily be used to study other wildlife in a similar manner, for example, estimating White-tailed deer abundance.

By tagging and collaring the feral swine, we can begin answering questions regarding swine population size and density in Florida rangeland, as well as space use and habitat selection. Three different mathematical models will be employed to estimate swine density. These models will examine number of photographs of marked individuals compared to the number of unmarked individuals across the thirty-one 1 km² grid cells. GPS collared individuals (typically one sow within a sounder) will provide us with how often and how far feral swine are "off" grid allowing accurate calculations of swine numbers per unit area. We will also be able to study social group behavior, space utilization, social interactions and territoriality among groups, and habitat use. Ultimately, this is a major scientific study that will fill many gaps in general knowledge about feral swine ecology, which is essential for management.

Photos. *Wildlife – including marked and unmarked feral swine, coyote, bobcat, and raccoon are from the first few days of pictures from the camera array. More to come soon....*



Visit the Rangeland Ecosystem Wildlife Team's Website:
<http://www.rangelandwildlife.com> for more information.

Faculty News



Dr. John Arthington, Professor and Center Director of the UF IFAS Range Cattle REC was named the American Society of Animal Science (ASAS) Southern Section President. Picture - Incoming ASAS Southern Section President, Dr. John Arthington (left), accepts the gavel from outgoing Southern Section President Dr. David Lalman.

Recent Publications

Adewopo, J.B., Silveira, M.L., Xu, S., Gerber, S., Sollenberger, L.E., and Martin, T.A. 2015. Management intensification effects on autotrophic and heterotrophic soil respiration in subtropical grasslands. *Ecological Indicators* 56:6-14

Meet the Staff



Meet Jacob Miller, the newest staff member at the Center. Jacob came to work with us in January 2014 as an other personnel services (OPS) employee to assist the farm crew, primarily with fence building (repair, maintenance, and new construction). Recently he was hired on full time as an Agriculture Technician and will continue working with the farm crew assisting with the day-to-day tasks that are needed. His work will include: cattle work, hay baling, and fence building.

An Arcadia native, Jacob says he enjoys the variety in his work at the Center, that every day is different. He graduated from DeSoto County High School in 2009 and then attended Lee County High Tech, becoming a certified diesel mechanic. Prior to coming to the Center, he worked on his family's farm and baled hay for his uncle (Johnson Hay Service). When not at work Jacob works as a dayworker and operates his own land service company, Miller Land Service.

Graduate Student News



In April, Wes Anderson, Ph.D. Student in the UF Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Department, received a \$750 student research grant from the Society of Wetland Scientists - South Atlantic Chapter to support his dissertation project. He also received a departmental (Wildlife Ecology & Conservation) competitive scholarship for \$2000 called the Jennings Scholarship. This scholarship was available to first-year graduate students.

From Pennsylvania, Wes graduated from Cocalico Senior High School in 2005. He then began pursuing a B.S. in Biology at Davidson College, near Charlotte, North Carolina. At Davidson he worked under the advisement of Dr. Michael Dorcas where he received formal training in field and laboratory techniques related to ecology and conservation biology, particularly of herpetofauna. He also spent a semester living in Botswana through the School for International Training and taking ecology-related coursework.

After graduating from Davidson College in 2009, Wes attended Texas Tech University where he received an M.S. in Wildlife, Fisheries, and Wildlands Science and Management in 2012. Under the advisement of Dr. Gad Perry, Wes examined aspects of the ecology and conservation of the Texas horned lizard in an understudied part of its range for research related to his thesis. He also had the opportunity to travel to a small private island in the British Virgin Islands to study the ecology of a reintroduced population of a highly imperiled iguana species, the stout iguana.

Before beginning a Ph.D. program at the University of Florida, Wes worked in the private sector and taught English abroad for several years. As an environmental consultant back in Pennsylvania, he dealt with development issues related to endangered species, particularly turtles and rattlesnakes, as well as issues dealing with wetland delineation, permitting, and monitoring. As an English teacher in Montevideo, Uruguay, he taught businessmen and women English at their workplaces.

Wes began pursuing a Ph.D. at the University of Florida in 2014, advised by Dr. Raoul Boughton. He remains broadly interested in ecology and conservation, particularly of herpetofauna, and has developed a strong interest in conservation in agro-ecosystems. For his dissertation research, Wes plans to study the effects of habitat disturbance caused by feral swine on Florida rangeland seasonal wetlands and amphibian communities.

Cattle & Forage Field Day Summary

On April 9, the RCREC hosted its most recent field day with 214 in attendance. Following Dr. John Arthington's welcoming address, Dr. Jack Payne, UF Senior Vice President of Agriculture and Natural Resources provided an IFAS update with introductory remarks about UF's new President, Dr. Kent Fuchs. Following Dr. Payne's remarks, Dr. Brent Sellers gave attendees instructions for the day. This year attendees enjoyed a new program structure which included two firsts, indoor air-conditioned presentations and an afternoon graduate student program. Prior to the steak lunch at noon, attendees took part in morning faculty presentations, which were both in the field and in our newly constructed Mosaic Grazinglands Classroom inside the Grazinglands Education Building. Completed in November 2014, we are very grateful for the generous gifts from The Mosaic Company and The Florida Cattleman's Foundation that made this new educational facility possible.

Five of the seven RCREC faculty members were on hand to share their program's present work. Missing this year are Drs. Joao Vendramini and Maria Silveira who are enjoying a time of professional development on sabbatical in Australia and will return in September. Faculty presenting inside the Mosaic Grazinglands Classroom included Animal Scientists, Dr. Phillip Lancaster presenting his work in Fetal Programming in Livestock and Dr. John Arthington explaining he and Graduate Student Juliana Ranches' work with Pasture Selenium Application – Impacts on Selenium Status of Forage-fed Cattle. They were joined by Cattle and Forage Economist, Regional Specialized Agent II Chris Prevatt who provided information on Replacement Heifer Economics. In the field, Pasture and Rangeland Weed Management Specialist, Dr. Brent Sellers provided

information on the Control of Perennial Grasses and Rangeland Ecosystems and Wildlife Specialist Dr. Raoul Boughton, revealed The Environmental and Economic Cost of Wild Hogs. Produced by UF IFAS Communications, videos of each of the faculty presentation are available for viewing online as well as the photos of the event: <http://rcrec-ona.ifas.ufl.edu/vclassroom/video/vcvideo.shtml>.

Eleven RCREC graduate students and one biological scientist took part in the Graduate Student Program held inside the Mosaic Grazinglands Classroom after lunch. Each introduced themselves and gave a summary of their research.

The RCREC greatly values the support of our clients and partners. This year's field day sponsors were AgriLabs, Creel Tractor Co., Crosby & Associates, Inc., Dow AgroSciences, Farm Credit of Florida, Florida Feral Hog Control, Inc., Florida Fence Post Co. Inc., Lakeland Animal Nutrition/Alltech, Merck Animal Health, Merial, Micronutrients, Multimin USA, SMI Beef Supply, SweetPro Premium Feed Supplements, The Andersons, Inc., W & W Supply Company of Florida, Westway Feed Products, LLC, Zinpro Corp., and Zoetis.



Graduate Student, JK Yarborough's field day presentation.



Margaret Hodges Blanco, Dr. Elver Hodges (former RCREC Agronomist), and Edgar Davis at the field day.

Upcoming Events

Florida Cattlemen's Asso. Annual Convention
- June 16-18, Champions Gate

For more information go to:
<http://www.floridacattlemen.org/events/annual-convention/>

UF/IFAS Range Cattle REC Youth Field Day
- June 25, Ona

See page 5 and <http://rcrec-ona.ifas.ufl.edu/>

The Year of Soil, Teach the Teacher Workshop
- July 28, Ona

For more information and to register, go to:
http://nfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/year_of_soil/index.shtml

Winter Supplementation Program (SFBFP)
- August 13, Bartow

Call Bridget for more information: 863-519-8677

Grazing Management Program (SFBFP)
- September 24-25, Ona

Call Pat for more information: 863-763-6469

Beef Cattle Reproduction School (SFBFP)
- November 3-5, Longino Ranch, Sarasota

Call Lindsey for more information: 863-674-4092

Don't Miss the 8th Annual Youth Field Day!

When: June 25, 2015 – 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Where: 3401 Experiment Station Rd., Ona, FL

Who: Students ages 8-18, parents, & youth leaders

What: Morning class rotations, lunch, & an educational learning expo

Registration is required and space is limited.
See the details and register:

<https://rcrec-yfd-2015.eventbrite.com>

Questions

Contact us at ona@ifas.ufl.edu or 863-735-1314 ext. 204.

Pictures of the 2014 youth field day.



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ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

This newsletter is a publication of the UF/IFAS Range Cattle Research and Education Center (RCREC) located in South Central Florida in the heart of Florida's cattle country. Our goal is to keep you up to date on RCREC happenings, publications, research, faculty & student news, upcoming events and bring you beneficial information you can use in your beef cattle or forage operation.

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