A number of commodity feeds derived as by-products from food processing are available to Florida ranches as winter supplement for beef cattle. The one most available and currently inexpensive, especially during the winter months, is dry, pelleted citrus pulp. The past few winters dry citrus pulp has been priced between $40 and $60 per ton, FOB Okeechobee.

Dry citrus pulp has a good energy level (74% TDN), but low in crude protein (6%). Dry citrus pulp could be fed alone at moderate levels to mature brood cows, but needs additional crude protein when fed to yearlings and first or second-calf cows. A medium to high crude protein liquid feed could provide the needed crude protein.

Whole cottonseed is a commodity feed that could be mixed with citrus pulp to provide protein. Cottonseed contains 23% crude protein and 96% TDN; and 25% oil which stimulates reproduction. Whole cottonseed is feed alone and on the ground in many areas of the southeast. Do not feed cottonseed to young bulls or heifers because of the gossypol toxin problem.

Two by-products from corn processing are hominy and corn gluten feed. Hominy contains 12% crude protein and 86% TDN, slightly higher than corn. Corn gluten feed contains 21% crude protein and 75% TDN. Corn gluten feed could be mixed with low protein ingredients to provide a better protein balance.

Soybean hulls contain 11% crude protein and 70% TDN. Soy hulls contain a relatively high level of a fiber. However, this fiber is very digestible, but allows ad lib feeding soy hulls without causing founder. Many ranches feed soy hulls alone as a weaning or growing supplement with good results. Research at Ona
showed that soy hulls are equal to corn when fed at moderate levels to yearling cattle. Soy hulls are fluffy, but pelleted soy hulls are available at a similar price.

Wheat middlings are a by-product of processing wheat into flour. Wheat midds contain 16% crude protein and 75% TDN. Wheat midds can be fed alone and research studies in Florida show that wheat midds are equivalent to corn when fed to provide up to 50% of the total diet TDN. Wheat midds are currently priced at about $50 per ton FOB Okeechobee.

The above shows a number of commodity or by-product feeds available to Florida cattlemen. Their prices are very variable depending on supply, thus, it is important that costs be regularly monitored to purchase those with the lowest price.

Commodity feeds are sold in bulk or truckload lots, thus a disadvantage to cattlemen with small herds. Check with several feed dealers and determine if they might have commodity feeds that could be bagged at a reasonable price. Another possibility is that several small ranches may coop to purchase truckload lots.

For questions or comments regarding this publication contact Findlay Pate