



Livestock, Range & Watershed

Division of Agriculture & Natural Resources

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Counties of San Luis Obispo and Monterey

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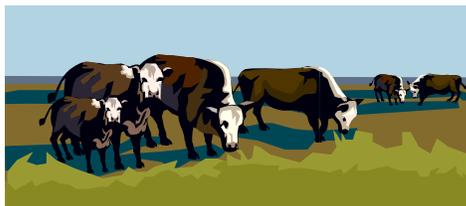
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Announcements

The University of California Cooperative

Extension office in Paso Robles has moved. Our new office is now at 350 N. Main Street, Suite B. Templeton, CA. 93465. The new phone number is (805) 434-4106. Royce Larsen, Watershed/Natural Resource Advisor for San Luis Obispo and Monterey Counties, and the Master Gardeners will be in this office. The Master Gardener hours are Wednesday from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM.

Workshop on grazing behavior, November 10, 2005. Held at the UC Cooperative Extension Auditorium, 2156 Sierra Way, from 8:00 AM to 4:00 pm. Featured speaker is Beth Burrit from Utah State University. She is a research associate participating in the BEHAVE program. For more information on BEHAVE see <http://www.behave.net>. For more information call (805) 781-5940.



Update on the California Trichomonosis Control Program

Wayne Jensen

Dr. John Maas, Extension Veterinarian at University of California, Davis provided this information to keep us informed on the status of this program.

The California Trichomonosis Control Program began on September 20, 2003, about 2 years ago. The program has recently been reviewed by the Department of Food and Agriculture and at the California Cattlemen’s Association mid-year meeting in Sacramento in July, additional policy was adopted regarding this program. Since the program began there have been 118 veterinarians certified (104 in California and 14 in Oregon) and laboratories approved to process the samples. In the first year (2003-2004) 36 infected herds were identified (35 beef and 1 dairy herd). The CDFA notified about 4-6 neighboring potentially exposed herds for each infected herd. For the first 5 months of the second year of the program, 20 infected herds were identified (5 herds were repeat infections). Therefore the rate of infected herds identified in the second year is running about the same as for the first year.

Determining Withdrawal Times

As a Livestock Farm Advisor I am part of loosely knit organization of advisors through out the West that communicate via the internet. This provides the opportunity to ask questions of our peers. Recently this question was asked, *How are drug withdrawal times determined for the various antibiotics? Can they be detected past the withdrawal period?*

Many of you participated in our Quality Assurance Programs and probably recall the answer to this question but as a reminder I'm providing Dr. Clell V. Bagley, Extension Veterinarian from Utah State University answer.

As a company seeks approval from FDA for a new antibiotic they have to show data from studies with tissue residues over time, especially kidney, liver, meat, etc. Also they have to show FDA a test or tests that will detect the antibiotic or metabolites of it so FDA know tests are available for its detection.

They have to show the half life and its pattern. For most drugs the withdrawal/ withholding time will be about 10 times the half life. That would usually achieve 99% + removal from the body. But that depends on the curve or pattern of its disappearance and also its presence in specific tissues and additional time may be added. Or, if the pattern is not consistent, the drug won't be approved. All of this is why it costs so much to get a new antibiotic approved.

There is also variation in animals and if one cow has poor kidney function, she may clear the drug much slower than a good healthy animal.

Detection: How long a drug can be detected depends on how sensitive the test is that is used. Some equipment can detect parts per billion (this can be compared to a few positive kernels of corn in a train car). So, for this test there would be a cut off point and if above that level the carcass would be condemned and if below, it would be passed.

But there are some older tests that still work and may be used. One is even for use on live animals, and the idea was that a producer could have this test run and then wait longer if needed before sending the animal to slaughter. For this, urine is collected from the live animal; a small piece of filter paper disk is soaked in the urine and then it is laid onto a plate of agar. On the agar a smear of live bacteria was swabbed all over the surface. The bacteria used are quite sensitive to antibiotics so if any is present in the urine/disk, the bacteria will not grow around the disk so you know that antibiotic is present in the animal.

There are other tests that have been developed for use in the slaughter plants with quite fast turn-

around times. One of the tissues most commonly used for testing is the kidney as it processes the disposal of most of many drugs and antibiotics. That is why the use of Gentamicin is so strongly discouraged (and it is illegal in food animals). But it will retain residues in the kidneys for 18 MONTHS.

Certainly not every animal is tested but good inspectors get so they can anticipate animals that may have been recently treated. The needles and the product do leave their mark under the skin or in the muscle for quite some time, so if a carcass looks suspicious it is side railed and tests run on the kidney or other tissue, etc. Then those producers that get caught with positive animals, they are "punished" economically by the packer, so it encourages them and others to better observe the withdrawal times.

The short answer to all of this is that as producers, we have to recognize that we are producing a meat product for someone's table – not just producing cows or critters. We have to assure that the product meets the standards established, not just what we might get away with. Also, those cull cows don't all go to hamburger. Many of their cuts end up at the cheaper "steak houses" or at the sandwich shops with sliced roasts, etc. That is another critical reason for avoiding muscle injections even in cull cows.

Water Rights (Stockpond) Fees Update

Royce Larsen

There are still many questions regarding the "Stockpond Fee" that has been assessed by the State Water Resource Control Board (SWRCB) and implemented through the Board of Equalization (BOE). Please see the article "Stockpond Fee" in the August 2004 issue of this newsletter for an explanation of water rights associated with stockponds.

There were some, including the California Farm Bureau Federation that felt that this assessed fee for water rights was an unconstitutional tax fee. This went to the Superior Court in Sacramento. See the following news release, April 2005 for more details.

Fees for water rights change each year. The SWRCB adopted the emergency regulations amending the water right and water quality certification fee schedule on August 29, 2005. If you have any questions regarding your billing for water right fees please contact the BOE. If the first two digits of your BOE account number is between 00-49 please call (916) 324-2290. If the last two digits of your BOE account number is between 50-99 please call (916) 445-1623. If you want to challenge (petition) your fees contact the SWRCB not the BOE. For any other questions regarding your water rights, or your fees, you may contact Victoria Whitney, (916) 341-5302, or John O'Hagan at (916) 341-5368, both are with the State Water Resource Control Board. You may also contact them through the internet at www.waterboards.ca.gov • or by email at info@waterboards.ca.gov.

News Release, State Water Resource Control Board.

Victoria Whitney, *State Water Resource Control Board.*

SUPERIOR COURT UPHOLDS WATER RIGHT FEES

Challenge to State Water Board's adoption of water right fees denied

Sacramento — A Sacramento County Superior Court judge has rejected a challenge brought against water rights fees adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board. The State Water Board established the fees at the Legislature's direction to support the State's water right program. The court found that the fees are legitimate regulatory fees and not unconstitutional taxes. The State Water Board's Division of Water Rights administers water rights through a permit and license system that protects water right holders, the public interest, and the environment. The legislature required the State Water Board to adopt regulations establishing fees to support its water right program.

Historically, the program has been primarily supported by the General Fund. The Legislature changed the program's funding source following a recommendation by the State Legislative Analyst's

Office that water right holders should bear the costs of the program.

Without the funding from fees, the State Water Board would have had to shut down much of the State's water right program. "The court's decision allows the State Water Board to continue to administer and protect water rights in California," said Arthur G. Baggett Jr., Chair of the State Water Board. "The regulatory program, which is supported by these fees, is essential to the administration of the State's water allocation system and protection of the environment. While we didn't request the change in our budget from general funds to fees, we were confident that the court would recognize that the fee structure we developed was reasonable and fair."

"The Legislature recognized that the activities of the water right holders create the need for the regulatory program," said Victoria Whitney, Chief, Division of Water Rights, "and it decided that the water right holders and not the general public should pay for that regulation." The court's ruling was in response to a challenge brought by the Northern California Water Association, the Central Valley Project Water Association and the California Farm Bureau Federation. Those entities claimed that the legislation authorizing the fees and the State Water Board's regulations were unconstitutional.

Judge Raymond Cadei upheld the water right fees in their entirety, recognizing that the fees challenged in the action are legitimate regulatory fees and that the State Water Board satisfied the law in developing the water right fee structure. His decision states that the fee structure was "developed after careful consideration of factors specific to the regulatory program of the Division of Water Rights."

Judge Cadei further noted the challenges that the State Water Board faced in developing a fee structure, stating "[I]t is significant that the water rights regulatory program presented unique challenges that appear to be unprecedented in the case law regarding regulatory fees.

Perhaps the greatest of these challenges was the fact that a significant portion of overall California water rights are held by the federal government."

The court concluded that it was reasonable for the State Water Board to determine that the federal government was unlikely to pay the fees and to allocate the fees to the federal government contractors. Judge Cadei also found that other aspects of the water right fee structure were reasonable. “The fact that other approaches might have been chosen or that reasonable minds might differ regarding the method chosen suggests that [the State Water Board] acted within the legitimate scope of its discretion.”

A copy of Judge Cadei’s opinion can be seen at http://www.waterrights.ca.gov/Fees/docs/fee_court_ruling.pdf. Additional information about the State Water Board’s water right program can be seen at <http://www.waterrights.ca.gov/>.

Rainfall and Forage Variability in San Luis Obispo County

Royce Larsen

This last growing season was a welcome relief from the previous four years in terms of forage production on our rangelands. Ranch management is very complex and challenging. Weather and subsequent forage production contributes too much of that complexity. Proper grazing levels, e.g. leaving proper residual dry matter (RDM) following grazing, is needed to protect soil against erosion and degradation. The concept is simple, but it is not easy to accomplish. To achieve proper RDM, animal units need to be matched to the forage production. With the exception of irrigated pasture, forage production changes yearly. Sometimes this change may be dramatic. In order to achieve proper grazing levels the manager must adjust animal

numbers or provide supplemental feed. This can be difficult and expensive.

To better understand this complexity in San Luis Obispo County forage production has been measured in various locations around the county for the last five years. Forage production is closely related to temperature, rainfall amount and rainfall timing. It is often said that an area receives an average rainfall of a given amount. For example, the average rainfall at the Paso Robles Airport is 13 inches over the last 55 years. However, the last five years has seen a low of 7 inches and high of 28 inches at the Paso Robles Airport, please see **Figure 1**. Note that other areas of the region receive different amounts of rainfall, but the patterns have been similar over the last five years.

With the change in rainfall amounts and timing comes a change in forage production. To better understand this variability forage sampling locations around San Luis Obispo County were established and measured. Initially 6 sites were sampled, and increased to 10 sites over the last five years. As shown in **Table 1**, a tremendous amount of variation can occur. For example, the site in Adelaida had a low production of 2400 lb/ac in 2001, and a high of 7900 lb/ac in 2005. This huge change in production takes an adaptable manager which can, and will, adjust management in order to keep the range in good condition. My observations over the last five years are that the rangeland has, for the most part, been kept in good condition. I commend all the owners and land managers for their efforts and hope this will continue. It is important to keep the range in good condition for future health of the rangeland and for the increasing regulations regarding water quality.



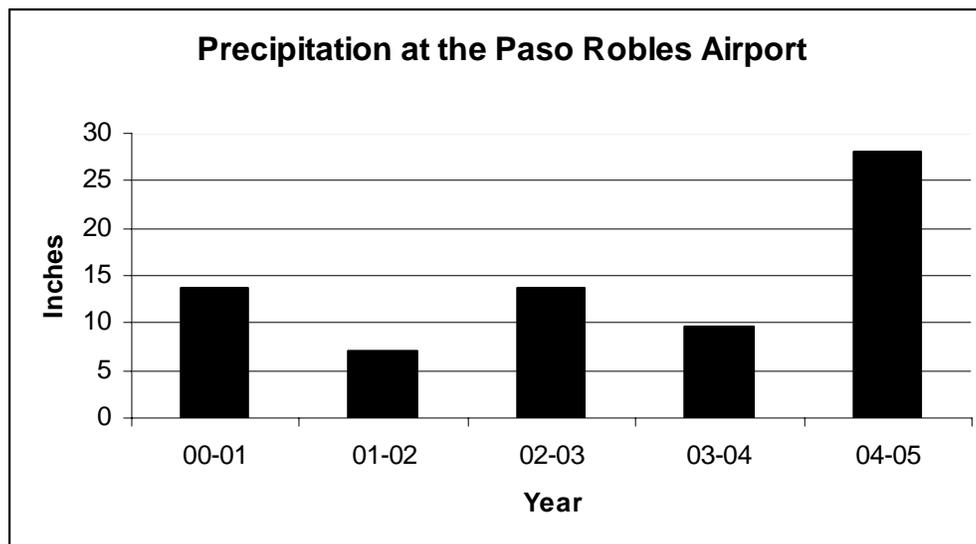


Figure 1. Rainfall amount based on the water year, July through June.

Table 1. Forage production in San Luis Obispo County.

Sites	Spring 2001 (lbs/ac)	Spring 2002 (lbs/ac)	Spring 2003 (lbs/ac)	Spring 2004 (lbs/ac)	Spring 2005 (lbs/ac)
Adelaida	2343	4359	5071	3106	7928
Bitterwater	n/a	n/a	n/a	1728	3840
Camatta Canyon	1854	1027	1983	876	1773
Cambria	6122	7334	9454	8135	8409
Carrizo	3457	833	2590	1974	4976
Creston	n/a	2171	3401	3313	3723
Huasna	4135	4219	4752	6455	9026
Morro Bay	3627	2316	5730	2949	7581
Shandon	n/a	n/a	2693	2328	5578
Soda Lake	n/a	n/a	n/a	730	2506
Average	3590	3180	4459	3159	5534

Royce Larsen
Watershed/Natural Resource Advisor
San Luis Obispo and Monterey Counties

Wayne Jensen
Livestock & Natural Resources Farm Advisor
San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties

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