



Tennessee Dairy News

Dates of Interest:

- Regional TN ADA Meetings (All meetings begin at 7 p.m. local time. Location announcements coming soon.)
- ◇ January 22—Athens
- ◇ January 23—Greeneville
- ◇ January 24—Lewisburg
- ◇ January 25—Paris
- January 31-February 1—Southern Dairy Conference, Atlanta, GA
- February 27-28—Tennessee Nutrition Conference, Franklin, TN
- June 5-6—Dairy Field Day, Dairy Research and Education Center, Lewisburg, TN

For more info on TN's Ag Enhancement Program and all of the application forms, check out our website!
<http://animalscience.ag.utk.edu/dairy/>

Volume 4, Issue 1

Winter 2006/2007

There Is Still Time To Take Advantage Of Ag Enhancement Money!

- Kristy Hill Campbell

Tennessee's Ag Enhancement Program is aimed at improving farm income to Tennessee livestock producers. This program was funded by the State of Tennessee and has been heavily used by the beef industry. However, only approximately 75 dairy producers have participated. They still have money for dairy producers and it needs to be utilized! Each producer is eligible for up to \$1725.00 to improve genetics, cattle handling equipment and now certain milking equipment. But time is running out. The Tennessee Department of Agriculture will accept applications until February 1, 2007.

The following information was taken (and partially summarized) from the Tennessee Department of Agriculture's Cattle Improvement Initiative Website.

Cattle Genetics Improvement Program:

A producer is eligible for up to \$875.00 per year for genetic work. This includes an optional herd evaluation by an approved herd evaluator (up to \$175.00). This money also includes any one or a combination of bull purchase, lease or semen for artificial insemination and supplies (up to \$700.00). (NOTE: A producer may also be eligible for up to \$875 in cattle handling facilities or milk quality equipment reimbursement.)

Requirements for Participation in Genetics Cost-Share Program-

1. Approved cost-share funds will be provided to producers on a reimbursement basis. Herd evaluation costs, up to the maximum, will be paid directly to the evaluator.
2. Payment shall only be made for approved cost-shared items and is subject to percentages and maximums established by the TDAS. Projects must be approved in advance.
3. Producers who intend to take part in the program must supply either a Social Security (SSN) or Tax ID (TIN) number and Premise ID and Premise Account numbers to receive payment.

Continued, page 2

Ag Enhancement, continued from page 1

4. Ownership requirements for purchased or leased bulls:
 - a. Ownership of purchased bulls must be maintained for a minimum of two successive breeding seasons, not in the same year.
 - b. Leased bulls can be leased for a minimum of 60 days up to one year.
 - c. Emergency early release of ownership is possible in case of physical or disposition problems, natural disasters or situations beyond the producer's control. Early release must be approved by the TDA following investigation of the circumstances necessitating the request.
5. Lifetime Net Merit Requirements:
 - All dairy breeds must be in the top 80th percentile for Lifetime Net Merit.
 - For Holstein bulls, producers have the option of using the Type and Production Index (TPI) as their qualifying criteria instead of Lifetime Net Merit. Holstein bulls must have a TPI rating of at least 1250 to qualify.
 - For Holstein semen, the semen must have a TPI rating of 1400 or greater to qualify.
 - For Jersey semen, producers must use the Production Type Index (PTI) or Jersey Production Index (JPI) as their qualifying criteria. Jersey semen must be from the top 100 bulls in PTI or JPI.
6. All bulls purchased or leased must pass a Breeding Soundness Evaluation prior to receiving cost-share funds.
7. The producer must identify each bull purchased and/or leased with an electronic identification tag and provide the number to the TDA.
8. The cost of accredited Artificial Insemination Technicians (or veterinarian fees for AI services) is eligible. Artificial Insemination Technicians utilized by producers must be affiliated with Artificial Breeding Companies. Producers that have been certified to do artificial insemination through an accredited program (for example, ABS or Select Sires, etc.) can do their own AI work. However, producer time and labor will not be compensated. **Cost of semen, synchronism supplies and other artificial insemination supplies are eligible for cost share reimbursement.**
9. Producers can choose to have his/her herd evaluated by a TDA approved evaluator. This evaluation will assist the producer in determining what type of bull/semen can best improve their herd. The producer must follow the recommendations of the evaluator for the bull/semen selected to qualify for additional cost-share assistance.

*** (Note: In all reality, only AI bulls will fit TDA's criteria for cost-sharing.) ***

Cattle Handling Equipment and Milk Quality Equipment Program:

A producer is eligible for 35% of cost, up to a maximum of \$850, for approved cattle handling equipment and/or milk quality equipment. The inclusion of milk quality equipment was announced on November 1, 2006 as a sub-set of the cattle handling equipment program. Producer time and labor are not eligible for cost-share reimbursement. However, the cost of materials and hired or contracted labor for approved projects are eligible for cost-share reimbursement.

Continued, page 3

*Ag Enhancement, continued from page 2**Dairy Cattle Handling Equipment Eligible for Cost-Share:*

Commercial headgate	Squeeze chute
Palpation cage	Holding chute
Curved or offset working chute	Loading chute
Crowding tub and gate	Weaning/holding pen
Hoof trimming table or chute	Semen tank
Headlock stanchions	Catch lanes

Milk Quality Equipment Eligible for Cost-Share:

Hot water heaters	Milk tanks
Water sterilization equipment	Plate exchangers for cooling milk
Milk vacuum pumps	Milker pulsation systems
Vacuum system regulators	Vacuum gauges
Milk pipelines	

To Apply for Cost-Share Assistance

To take advantage of these programs, you must meet four criteria:

1. Be a resident of Tennessee.
2. Own a minimum of 10 cows.
3. Register your farm for the National Animal Identification System.
(Applications are available at Farm Service Agency, local UT Extension, Farm Bureau, Tennessee Farmer's Co-op and our website.)
4. Have current certification under the Beef Quality Assurance Program, a two-hour educational course on cattle management and care sponsored by the Tennessee Cattlemen's Association.
(For more information on BQA certification, contact your local UT Extension Agent. The course is available on video for viewing in your local UT Extension office.)

Once your premise has been registered and you have completed BQA certification, applying for Ag Enhancement Funds is simple.

1. Complete an Application for Cost-Share Assistance through the TDA's Cattle Improvement Initiative. Applications are available from your local UT Extension Agent, Farm Bureau, Tennessee Farmer's Co-op and on our website. If applying for cost-share assistance for milk

Continued, page 4

Ag Enhancement, continued from page 3

- equipment, be sure to include the checklist of eligible equipment with your application.
2. Mail the completed application to the TDA's address on the application. Be sure to complete all of the required information. Incomplete applications can be disqualified.
 3. The application will be reviewed by the TDA's staff and you will be notified of approval or disapproval. Only projects approved in advance by the TDA will be eligible for cost-share assistance. If approved you will receive an Authorization to Grantee and Project Record Form.
 4. Once you have completed the approved project, complete and sign the Authorization to Grantee and Project Record Form and return it with other required items (see below) to the TDA by May 1, 2007.
 - a. For reimbursement from the genetic improvement program: supply a numbered and dated receipt containing buyer and seller information (names, addresses, telephone numbers of both buyer and seller), Lifetime Net Merit documentation, certification of a Breeding Soundness Evaluation and electronic identification tag number of the bull (for producers who purchase or lease bulls).
 - b. For reimbursement from the cattle handling equipment/milk quality equipment program: submit a receipt showing cost of the item(s) purchased, date of purchase, description of the item(s) purchased and names, addresses and telephone numbers of both buyer and seller. A photograph(s) of the item(s) purchased and installed must be submitted.
 - c. For herd evaluation: After receipt of the completed herd evaluation report from an approved herd evaluator on the TDA's list of vendors, the TDA will pay the vendor directly, up to a maximum of \$175.00. The producer must follow the herd evaluation recommendations to qualify for further cost-share assistance.

Don't let time run out and miss out on this opportunity! Due to the late edition of the milk quality equipment, the TDA will accept your application until February 1, 2007. To help you simplify the process, we have added a section on our website with Ag Enhancement Fund information.

You will find all of the necessary forms and documents on our website!

On October 26, 2006, the Tennessee Department of Agriculture announced a new focus for the Tennessee Ag Enhancement Program. Beginning Jan. 1, 2007, cattle and hay producers can apply for 35% cost-share assistance, up to \$3500, toward the construction of a new hay storage structure, or an addition to an existing structure. Building sites must be well-drained, and flooring must be concrete or 4-6 inches of gravel on plastic. Acceptable roofing materials include metal, shingles or polymer coated fabric. To be eligible, producers must be a TN resident, own at least 10 head of cattle or 50 acres of hay production. Livestock producers must register their premise with the National Animal Identification System. Applications should be available Dec. 1, 2006. Only applications post-marked after Jan. 1, 2007 will be accepted and producers have until April 1, 2007 to apply. *This program is separate than previous programs, and producers can participate in all of the mentioned programs. This program does require a separate application form.*

Tennessee To Have Certified Organic Milk Producers in 2007

-Gary W. Rogers

Dairy producers know that certified organic dairy production has been a hot topic of discussion for the last several years as the demand for certified organic milk from consumers has outstripped the supply. The Southeast Region of the US has essentially produced no certified organic milk until recently but the situation is about to change. Tennessee will have its first group of certified organic dairy producers operating by Spring 2007. At this point, it appears that 4 producers in Tennessee will be the first to actually supply certified organic milk from Tennessee. Organic Valley Cooperative (headquartered in LaFarge, Wisconsin) has worked hard to develop the industry here in Tennessee and Organic Valley Cooperative has arranged to have this first milk be processed at a nearby plant in Asheville, North Carolina. Several other dairy producers in Tennessee are also contemplating certified organic dairy production and several of these Tennessee producers will likely begin producing certified organic milk within the next 2 years.

Kentucky, Virginia and North Carolina are also in various stages of ramping up certified organic milk production. Growth in certified organic milk production in the Southeast US will likely continue for some time as the demand for organic milk is growing in the Southeast and consumers of organic products like to have their product produced locally. Retailers in the Southeast US now are demanding that local bottlers supply them with certified organic milk. Markets usually drive most changes in food production and the growth and development of the organic milk industry is an excellent example of market forces at work. Some people have appropriately questioned how long the certified organic dairy industry will continue to grow. However, it certainly looks like growth will continue for at least several years and perhaps even longer in the Southeast US.

Early adopters of new production opportunities just like early adopters of cost effective technologies tend to be those that benefit most from these opportunities and technologies. Anyone who is moving toward organic dairy production

should probably move quickly if possible. Current multiyear contract prices for certified organic milk are approximately 2 times the price of comparable conventional milk in the Southeast. On the other hand, the cost of production for organic farms is usually higher so any change to certified organic dairy production should be carefully considered from the economic perspective. Clearly some producers can convert to certified organic production much more readily than others and well-developed plans, including the financial aspects, should be made before deciding to convert to certified organic production.

Organic Valley Cooperative is not the only organization recruiting certified organic producers in the Southeast, but they have been the most active here in Tennessee to date. The other milk marketing organizations operating here in Tennessee also have interest in marketing certified organic milk. These marketing organizations and milk suppliers are currently engaged with additional processors in the Southeast Region to possibly increase the number of processors who will be bottling certified organic milk. Certified organic milk appears to have gone beyond the fashion stage and will likely be an important part of the dairy industry in the US in the future.

If you have any questions about the production or marketing of certified organic milk here in Tennessee, do not hesitate to contact your local county extension agent or Gary Rogers.



Results of the 2006 State Junior Dairy Show

- Jeff Mitchell

The State Junior Dairy Show was held October 20-21 in Murfreesboro at the Middle Tennessee State Ag Center. The event hosted 50 youth exhibitors showing 166 animals in six different breeds.

Breed Champions

Champion Ayrshire—Josh Jones, Marshall County
Reserve Champion Ayrshire—Lindsey Smith, Williamson County

Champion Brown Swiss—Jeff Turner, Wilson County
Reserve Champion Brown Swiss—Jeff Turner, Wilson County

Champion Guernsey—Matthew Manery, Bedford County
Reserve Champion Guernsey—Lucas Manery, Williamson County

Champion Holstein—Cole Beaty, Bradley County
Reserve Champion Holstein—Jeff Turner, Wilson County

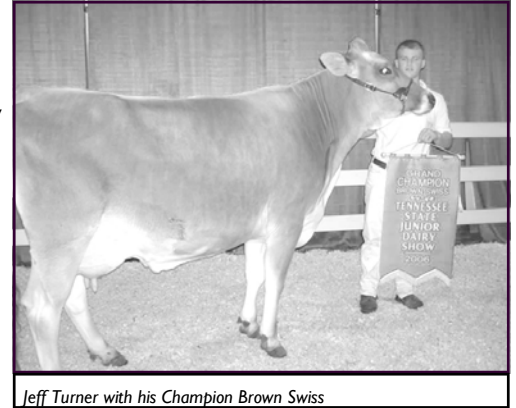
Champion Jersey—Brandon Nichols, Williamson County
Reserve Champion Jersey—Brittany Nichols, Williamson County

Champion Milking Shorthorn—Josh Hannah, Bradley County
Reserve Champion Milking Shorthorn—Josh Hannah, Bradley County

Showmanship Winners

Junior Level 1 (4th grade) - Bailey Womble, Bedford County
Junior Level 2 (5th & 6th grade) - Mitch Mullins, Campbell County
Junior High (7th & 8th grade) - Maura Gilbert, Hamblen County
Senior Level 1 (9th & 10th grade) - Andy McElroy, Rutherford County
Senior Level 2 (11th & 12th grade) - Jeff Turner, Wilson County

Other activities included a Little Britches show, a calf sale, Dairy Shrine Breakfast and junior exhibitor pizza party.



Jeff Turner with his Champion Brown Swiss

*You can download
show photos from
our website!*

Bailey Womble (Bedford Co) Junior Level 1 Showmanship Winner



Safety Tip.....Bulls

- Kristy Hill Campbell

Farming is one of the most dangerous occupations. Accidents can and do happen on a daily basis in our farming communities. We should always remember, herd bulls should never be trusted! Though it is my strong recommendation that all cattle should be bred through artificial insemination, I realize that it may not always be practical. So, here are a few safety tips to remind you and others to always be mindful of the dangers of herd bulls.

- **Socialization.** Raise bull calves in group pens with older, larger heifers or steers. When they reach the age at which they want to exert dominance, the larger animals will put them in their place. Bulls raised as individuals are the most dangerous because people become the 'herd,' and they will try to be the dominant animal.
- **Human interaction.** Never play butting games with calves, especially bull calves. It might be cute when they are small, but if you teach a calf that it is okay to butt, the adult bull or cow may assume that it is still okay. If you (or employees, children, visitors, etc.) want to pet a calf, do not pet a bull calf on the forehead or poll. This will encourage butting. It is better to stroke him under the chin, on the shoulders or near the rear.
- **Handling.** NEVER work around a bull alone. This is usually easier said than done as many herd bulls run freely within the lactating herd. If you must be in a pasture, pen or lot with a bull, always know where the bull is. Carry a cattle paddle and a cell phone.
- **Communication.** Everyone on your farm, from family to employees to family of employees to visitors must be warned of the dangers of bulls. They should know which pens/lots/groups have bulls in them and which do not. Posting signs is advisable.
- **Respect other's fears.** Some people fear bulls and will not work around them. If pressured into handling or working near bulls, their anxiety levels will be raised and might be sensed by the bull, creating a dangerous situation.
- **Size matters.** NEVER allow children around a bull. By size alone, children are lower on the social order in the herd, and they may not have the ability to determine when a situation could be dangerous.
- **Unpredictable.** Even though many bulls give warning signs prior to an attack, ALL bulls are unpredictable.
- **Warning signs.** In most cases, knowing these signs can save your life. Everyone on your farm that works around bulls should know these warning signs:
 - The broadside threat (Standing sideways with his head arched down and/or towards you, to show you how big and powerful he is. See picture on newsletter cover.)
 - Pawing the ground
 - Snorting or bellowing while focused on you
 - Rubbing the ground with his head
 - Swinging his head from side to side
- **Take back control.** In a threatening situation, you have two options: 1) reaffirm dominance and make the bull back off with the human version of the broadside threat (frontal stance with your paddle or arms raised). But keep in mind that this may entice a bull into fighting (with you) for dominance. 2) and the option I prefer is backing away slowly. NEVER run from a threatening bull.
- **NEVER turn your back on a bull,** whether his actions are threatening or not.

Continued on back

We're on the web!
<http://animalscience.ag.utk.edu/dairy/>

CONTACT US!

Kristy Hill Campbell
Extension Dairy Specialist
khill8@tennessee.edu
865-974-7289

Gary W. Rogers, Professor
and State Extension Dairy
Specialist
grogers2@tennessee.edu
865-974-7289

University of Tennessee
Department of Animal Science
114 McCord Hall
2640 Morgan Circle
Knoxville, TN 37996-4587

Bull Safety, continued from page 7

- **Cull.** At the first sign of aggression, a bull should be on the trailer leaving the farm because the second incident may involve an ambulance leaving the farm.
- **With age comes aggression.** Younger bulls tend to be less aggressive. Bulls are most aggressive around age 3 and from ages 7-10, but this does not always hold true. I have seen a pair of 14-month old Jersey bulls destroy a full size pick-up truck.
- **More bulls equals more trouble.** If more than one bull is needed to service the herd, remember that bulls have social orders. There will be a dominant male. The less dominant male may perceive handlers as potential threats to his lower social standing.
- **Lonely bulls are aggressive bulls.** An adult bull is usually safer if he spends most of his adult life penned with other animals. If it is necessary to keep a bull penned away from the herd for extended periods of time, it would be better to keep him in a group of bred animals.
- **NEVER trust a bull.**
- **ALWAYS maintain an escape route.**

Adapted from T.Grandlin (2006) and S.Bedgar (2005)

E12-4415-00-001-07

Copyright 2004 The University of Tennessee. All rights reserved. This document may be reproduced and distributed for nonprofit educational purposes providing that credit is given to University of Tennessee Extension. Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development. University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating. UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Knoxville, TN
Permit 481