



UNIVERSITY OF  
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EXTENSION

Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences



# Animal Science Newsletter

March 2002

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## Dates To Remember

### March 2002

2	Florida Bull Test Sale – Marianna
14	Beef Cattle Herd Health Management Seminar - Wauchula
19-20	Tri-State In-Service Training – Auburn University, Alabama
26	Equine In-service Training – Gainesville
26	Beef In-service Training –Gainesville
27	Forages In-Service Training – Gainesville

### April 2002

16-18	Beef Cattle Reproductive Management School – Wauchula
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"Not every forage crop grows well in every climate," said Ann Blount, assistant professor at UF's North Florida Research and Education Center in Marianna. "Unfortunately, some producers overlook this fact and sell the same product in every market. Some hunters end up with forages that won't tolerate local conditions."

With deer season largely closed throughout the Southeast, Blount and other UF experts are monitoring about 20 commercial cool-season forage blends planted in locations around Florida to evaluate their yield, quality and cost per acre. Hunters and other wildlife enthusiasts use the blends to grow food for animals during winter months.

"As a yardstick for comparison, we've also planted mixtures of forage grasses and legumes developed jointly by UF and the University of Georgia," she said. "Because our varieties were developed specifically for Florida growing conditions, they perform better for us."

Blount, along with UF horticultural specialist Steve Olson and UF forage specialists Ken Quesenberry, Ron Barnett and Gordon Prine, has released recommendations for several wildlife blends that can be assembled with Florida and Georgia varieties available at many feed stores, she said. Named "UF Best Bang for Your Buck," "UF Double Threat" and "UF Triple Threat," the blends should be suitable for light, sandy soils throughout the Southeast.

In future trials, UF researchers will seek data on the nutritional value and "appetite appeal" of the blends, said Ken Quesenberry, agronomy professor at the UF campus in Gainesville.

"There isn't much hard data on these subjects, and we'd like to generate some because there's plenty of public interest," he said. "Our county extension agents get inquiries all the time from hunters who want to know which forages perform best in Florida. We've also been contacted by private companies."

Pennington Seed, the world's largest producer of wildlife forages, already markets blends

developed for soil and climate conditions found in specific states and may eventually add Florida to the list, said John Carpenter, national sales manager of forage and wildlife products.

"We depend on return business, so we want to make sure our products really meet the customers' needs," he said.

While commercialization remains only a possibility, some hunters already use the UF blends. In cooperation with UF researchers, employees of Neal Land and Timber near Blountstown, Fla., are using "Best Bang for Your Buck" on a 20,000-acre tract the company maintains, said Emory Godwin, wildlife management officer.

"We've tried other forages before, but this one has gotten the most response from wildlife," he said. "We'll keep using it."

Ideally, forages should be palatable to wildlife but not irresistible, said Donald Lee Francis, area wildlife biologist with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Francis is based at Joe Budd Wildlife Management Area, a 10,500-acre state-managed tract that includes 80 acres of cool-season forage and also hosts UF forage trials.



Donald Lee Francis, left, biologist with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Steve Olson and Ann Blount, researchers at the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, examine forage at Joe Budd Wildlife Management Area near Quincy (Tuesday, 2/5). UF researchers are testing forages that can be planted for wildlife during the winter months. The new forages improve wildlife habitats and opportunities for hunters in North Florida. (AP photo by Milt Putnam, University of Florida/IFAS)

"You don't want to plant something that's so delicious it's like putting out a bowl of ice cream," he said. "If that happens, the deer will completely obliterate it right away. You want forage that will supplement their natural diet when they need it."

The UF blends are used to establish "nutrition plots" that support long-term herd health, rather than "attractant plots" meant to bring animals to specific areas, Olson said.

"In the last few years, hunters have become more interested in ways to improve wildlife habitat, and establishing nutrition plots is one way to do it," he said. "Animals get most of the benefits from these cool-season forages after hunting season ends, so it represents an investment."

UF researchers also are studying warm-season forages, which are planted in spring or early summer to produce high-quality forage during the summer and benefit hunters when deer seasons open in the fall. The wildlife forage research is part of the North Florida Forage Program, a cooperative effort between UF and the University of Georgia to develop better cattle forages.

NOTE: Further information regarding wildlife forage can be found at the following web site: [http://nfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/News\\_Letters/NEWSLETTER\\_3\\_21\\_01.htm](http://nfrec.ifas.ufl.edu/News_Letters/NEWSLETTER_3_21_01.htm)

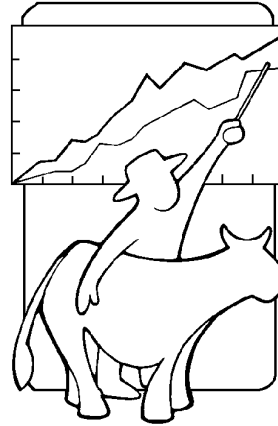
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## Livestock Summary

Weather took a heavy toll on the beef sector in 2001. The extreme winter during the first part of the year in the feedlot-states resulted in poor feed lot performance and reduced slaughter weights.

The weather drama continued during the second half of the year with a drought that forced a sell off of breeding stock. When combined with the slowing economy and jitters over September 11, slaughter weights set record highs as days on feed increased while consumers retreated from traditional venues that served beef.

The drought induced sell off of herds has now reduced the availability of heifers and cows for breeding programs as well as stockers for feedlots. The resulting prediction is that beef production is likely to decline through 2004 because of the reduced availability of breeding stock. Retail prices for choice beef have declined from the June peak of \$3.48 a pound, but remain well above the fall 2000 average of \$3.11. The farm-to-retail spread is at a record level, with the wholesale-retail spread very wide as feed cattle prices have declined.

All things being held equal, retail beef prices are likely to decline through late winter as excess production is eliminated. However, most of the help in aligning beef supply and demand will come from declining feedlot placements.

In 2020, if the economy returns to its pre-recession vigor and the war ends successfully, pricing will be strong on feeder cattle heading for feedlots.

enjoyed by the throngs of people during the 2002 Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City, Utah.

This product shipment is the direct result of Certified Angus Beef becoming the official branded beef supplier to the Winter Olympics, says Scott Witzig, RMH Foods' director of sales and marketing. And this is the first time RMH Foods has ever supplied the Winter Olympics.

### The CAB difference

Here's how the deal came down in Witzig's own words.

“The Salt Lake City organizing committee has a foodservice director who made the decision that Certified Angus Beef is the best beef you can buy,” Witzig told the **Meatingplace.com**. “In becoming the official branded beef supplier, the foodservice director asked Certified Angus Beef for products that could be easily warmed up and integrated into recipes that wouldn't take a lot of preparation time and yet have great flavor and tenderness.

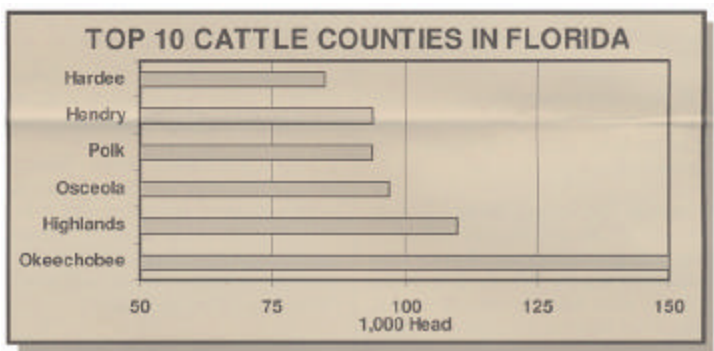
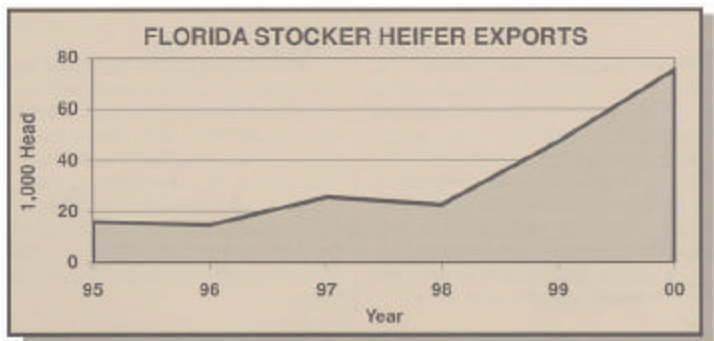
Next, he chose several value-added products from the Certified Angus Beef line and one of them was our Quick-n-Easy, heat-and-serve pot roast,” he added.

For those **Meatingplace.com** readers who are unfamiliar with this particular product, it is a fully cooked chuck roll that is cooked for about 13 hours to achieve maximum tenderness.

“It falls apart; you basically can cut it with a fork,” Witzig said. “It tastes a lot like what Grandma used to make. They will feed this pot roast to thousands of people including spectators, the athlete feeding areas, the sponsor venues, and the broadcasting and other print cafeteria areas. We're very proud to be a part of this program.”

The Certified Angus Beef program will be supplying about 350,000 pounds of CAB products, which includes the pot roast as well as fresh cuts, hot dogs, barbecue products and a CAB chili.

“I believe this 350,000 pounds of CAB products translates into about one million servings,”



**SOURCE:** The Florida Agri-Journal  
Released – February 1, 2002  
Researched by Les Harrison  
Development Rep. I,  
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## Chicago-Area Processor's Pot Roast Heading To Winter Olympics



Morton, Ill.-based RMH Foods LLC recently shipped out 25,000 pounds of its Quick-n-Easy brand pot roast that will be

Witzig said. "We're hoping these people enjoy what they eat and then go back to wherever they live and seek out other sources for CAB products."

When asked if RMH will be shipping more pot roast to Salt Lake City, Witzig answered: "It's possible; but at this point we don't have that assurance. They'll let us know if and when they'll need more pot roast."

**SOURCE:** <http://www.meatingplace.com>  
Release – January 30, 2002

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## **Smithfield Food Unveiling Product Promotion Tour On Wall Street Next Week**

On Feb. 6, Smithfield Foods Inc., the world's largest pork producer, will unveil its "Smithfield Taste the Future Tour" on Wall Street in New York City. The tour will showcase what the company is calling quick-and-easy, lifestyle-fitting meal solutions featuring its Smithfield Lean Generation and Premium Ham brands -- products that can go from the store to the table within minutes.

Among other things, the company said that pre-marinated Smithfield Lean Generation chops and loins feature "goof proof" home-cooking ease, and its Premium Ham is ideal for quick meals on the go. Smithfield's Lean Generation line of pork also offers many meat cuts that are lower in fat than chicken. And several of these products carry a Heart Healthy seal from the American Heart Association.

Including a professional chef team and an 18-wheel mobile kitchen, the tour will make more than

120 appearances from March through December this year. During the tour, Smithfield will distribute more than a quarter-of-a-million free, 20-page cookbooks featuring recipe tips.

Why was this program developed? Smithfield executives said that with 77 million baby-boomers retiring in the next decade and entire generations of time-starved Americans burnt out on fast-food and takeout food, home-cooked family meals are on the rise.

"Smithfield has designed products for the new generations of cooks in America, which include entire generations that have grown up on fast-food, restaurant take-out and ethnic cuisine," said Jim Schloss, vice president of sales and marketing for Smithfield Packing Co. "Our goal at Smithfield is to meet the unique convenience, cultural, lifestyle and dietary demands of all families."

### **Rolling down the highways**

Using an expandable full service mobile kitchen, the neighborhood-by-neighborhood campaign will feature a team of chefs who will demonstrate easy-to-prepare recipes that fit into any lifestyle, life stage, pantry or family size, according to the company. Along with interactive cooking demonstrations and product sampling, the Smithfield Taste the Future Tour will offer a variety of branded product giveaways and promotions--and it will provide consumers with a chance to win state-of-the-art kitchen or other outdoor prizes.

"The Smithfield Taste the Future Tour marks the first time a branded protein producer has shown this type of commitment to helping Americans cook and eat better," Schloss says.

During its pilot year, this tour will primarily visit fairs, festivals and other retailer locations in the Northeast, which make up Smithfield's fastest-growing markets. The tour will enter new regions of the country in the future, according to the company.

Smithfield Packing Co. Inc. is a subsidiary of Smithfield Foods Inc. It is the largest vertically integrated pork processor in the world. Smithfield Packing produces and markets fresh pork and

processed meat under a number of brands, including Smithfield Lean Generation Pork, and Smithfield Premium and Smithfield Premium Tender 'n Easy.

**SOURCE:** <http://www.meatingplace.com>  
Release – January 31, 2002

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## Agriculture Budget Proposes Increases In Key Areas

### Veneman Points to Increases in Farm Program Spending, Homeland Security, Food Safety, Trade and Feeding Assistance Programs

Washington D.C. - Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman released details of the Bush Administration's proposed FY 2003 USDA budget, which includes full funding for farm safety net programs, substantial increases for homeland security, funds meat inspection programs at record levels, increases spending for international trade and provides greater resources for low-income Americans who need food assistance.

"The President's budget underscores the importance of spending in key areas significant to agriculture," Veneman said.

In a detailed briefing, Veneman noted that the budget supports the goals outlined in the Administration's policy book, *Food and Agriculture Policy: Taking Stock for a New Century*, released last summer.

"The proposed budget reflects the Bush Administration's commitment to support an additional \$73.5 billion over 10 years for farm programs," said Veneman. "This budget supports strong farm programs, helps protect the food supply and helps low-income Americans in need of assistance."

Veneman announced that the budget proposes a \$146 million increase for programs to protect the nation's food supply from animal and plant pests and diseases, strengthen food safety programs and support specific research activities. In his State of the Union address, President Bush stressed the need for more homeland security protections.

"This budget builds on our efforts to protect agriculture and the food supply from intentional and unintentional risks," Veneman said. "This increase, along with \$328 million in supplemental funds provided in the 2002 Defense Appropriations Act, provides needed resources for more border inspectors at ports of entry, increased security at our laboratories and new research into emerging diseases that threaten crops, livestock and our food supply."

In addition, "The 2003 budget reflects our commitment to a nutrition safety net by including a record \$41 billion for domestic nutrition assistance programs, such as the Food Stamp, Child Nutrition and the Women, Infants and Children programs," Veneman said. "The budget also allows for more than \$2 billion in contingency funds to cover any unanticipated increases in domestic feeding program participation levels."

The budget proposes legislation that would add \$4.2 billion to the Food Stamp Program over the next 10 years to include eligibility for legal immigrants who have resided in the U.S. for at least five years, streamline the applications process and revise eligibility requirements for working families.

The FY 2003 budget calls for \$74.4 billion in spending, an increase of \$11 billion over the FY 2002 budget submitted by the President last year, and \$6 billion above actual budget outlays in FY 2001. The FY 2002 budget is estimated to reach \$76.6 billion due to reasons related to the slowed

economy, homeland security and other uncontrollable events such as forest fires.

Additional highlights of the FY 2003 USDA budget include:

- ❖ Record funding for the Food Safety and Inspection Service at \$905 million, a \$28 million increase above 2002.
- ❖ \$6.4 billion in spending for international trade programs, a \$50 million increase, designed to promote U.S. agricultural exports, develop long-term markets overseas and improve world food security.
- ❖ \$6.1 billion in spending for the Natural Resources & Environment Agencies. This includes approximately \$1.5 billion in funding for the National Fire Plan; a \$36 million increase in conservation operations in the Natural Resources Conservation Service; and a \$50 million increase for National Forest System to support programs such as the National Energy Plan and wilderness management activities.
- ❖ \$2.3 billion to support ongoing research programs in high priority areas such as research on new prevention and control strategies for emerging, reemerging and exotic disease of animals such as Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) and Foot and Mouth Disease research. Other research will support the development of biotechnology, industrial and bioenergy products, environmental protection, and expanded market opportunities.
- ❖ \$11.6 billion to support rural community development programs.

Veneman said that the proposed budget reduces funding in some areas, including elimination of earmarked research projects so that peer-reviewed and national priority research work could be increased.

The budget also examines the programs and services the Department manages and proposes

several management initiatives to better integrate computer systems and technology to provide employees and customers the necessary tools to efficiently operate and deliver services in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

“We must look at ways to better serve our customers and ensure programs are delivering their intended purpose,” said Veneman. “We look forward to working with the Congress in passing this budget, which supports farmers and ranchers and increases benefits to consumers.”

A complete guide to the FY 2003 agriculture budget is available at <http://www.usda.gov>. Resource materials include a complete budget summary, fact sheets, camera-ready graphics, transcripts, audio feeds and press releases. For additional information, please contact USDA Communications at (202) 720-4623.

**SOURCE:** Alisa Harrison  
USDA  
Washington D.C.  
(202) 720-4623  
<http://www.usda.gov>  
Release – February 2, 2002

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