

Ongoing Drought Conditions Bring Worries For Cattle, Hay Producers

Besides the effect of reduced production due to lack of moisture, drought also creates other negative aspects for cattle and hay producers.

Warm-season annual grasses, such as forage sorghums, sorghum-sudan hybrids (haygrazer types), and the various millets can also accumulate nitrates to a level that is toxic to cattle during periods of dry weather.

Typical nitrate accumulation occurs with excessive N fertilization followed by a period of drought, although toxic levels of nitrates have been observed in warm-season annual grasses with as little as 50 lbs. of N/ac under drought conditions.

While aboveground plant growth is reduced, nitrate uptake continues

to occur and concentrates in the forage tissue.

Ruminants are affected because microbes in the rumen are able to convert nitrate to nitrite.

Nitrite is then absorbed into the bloodstream where it converts hemoglobin, which carries oxygen throughout the bloodstream, into methemoglobin, which does not carry oxygen. Cattle death is due to asphyxiation.

The total level of nitrate in forage will determine whether or not the forage is safe to feed.

Remember: Nitrate levels in hay do not diminish with time!

Nitrate levels, however, in silage, may be reduced by 50 percent or more, but may still be excessive for

safe feeding.

Only a forage analysis for Nitrate (currently \$5 at the Texas A&M University Soil Testing Lab) will determine whether or not the fresh forage, hay, or silage is safe to feed to livestock.

Nitrate levels of 5000 ppm or greater may be dangerous to feed to animals and greater than 15000 ppm are toxic to most classes of livestock.

The official Texas A&M University advisory is to not feed forages that contain greater than 10,000 ppm nitrate.

The more conservative number of 5000 ppm, however, may be a much safer number to use in actual practice.

Producers using warm-season annual forages or johnsongrass should have their hay crops tested prior to

harvesting. Look at the forages carefully.

If the forage to be harvested for hay has been under drought stress, there is a good likelihood that it is high in nitrates.

If a good precipitation event occurs and plant growth is reinitiated (good green color, no droopy leaves), then the forage may be safe to feed, but a forage analysis for nitrate would still be advisable.

Do not harvest the forage and then test! To do so could wind up costing you time, effort, and money and result in a hay crop that you will not be able to feed.

Likewise, cattle should not be pastured on warm-season annual grasses or johnsongrass if conditions are such that nitrate levels could be elevated to a toxic level.

Again, only a forage analysis can determine if the forage is safe to graze.

If nitrate toxicity was not enough to worry about, there is also the issue of prussic acid (hydrogen cyanide) poisoning.

Forages belonging to the genus Sorghum can produce prussic acid following light frosts or drought.

In well-cured hay crops, prussic acid is not a concern since volatilization of the compound into the atmosphere occurs during the field curing process.

Cattle, however, may succumb to prussic acid poisoning while grazing if plants have been subjected to drought stress.

Again, do not turn cattle into pastures of drought-stressed sorghums or johnsongrass.

Wait until better growing conditions before pasturing cattle on any stressed warm-season annual plant or johnsongrass.

Millets, while still capable of accumulating nitrates to a toxic level, do not produce prussic acid.

As cattle producers, it is bad enough that dry weather conditions have reduced forage production, and in some cases, surface water supplies.

Not paying attention to the weather conditions and the forages that can cause the death of animals due to nitrate accumulation and prussic acid poisoning can only make matters worse.

If you are in doubt, or have additional questions, please contact your local county extension agent.

HOROSCOPES

ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20

Expect to be in a wonderful mood the entire week, Aries. You'll experience a string of good luck that trickles down to all that you do. Share the wealth with others.

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21

Take some time to stop and smell the roses, Taurus. You can't keep hurrying through life at the breakneck speed you've been maintaining. Force yourself to relax.

GEMINI – May 22/June 21

Things at work get a bit hairy when you're involved with a disagreement with a coworker. Since you work in close proximity to this person, lie low for a while.

CANCER – June 22/July 22

There's a chance for promotion at work and you're on the fence as whether to shoot for it. With the stars pointing to strong financial success, the answer is to go for the position.

LEO – July 23/Aug 23

You'll be a social butterfly for the next few days, Leo. Others will not be able to keep up with your level of energy, so don't expect them to. You'll slow down by early next week.

VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22

It's time to address a health concern that you pushed to the back burner several months ago, Virgo. If you leave it untreated it will only get worse. Seek support from family.

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23

Don't be surprised when you hit a rough patch in regards to your romantic life. The sparks have fizzled out and now you're faced with just some glowing embers.

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22

Things get rough at work when a supervisor finds fault with something you said. You have the right to your opinion, but don't make any additional waves for the time being.

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21

You need to spend a lot of time mending some emotional fences with family members, Sagittarius. Right now you are considered an outcast and not much in favor.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20

Jealousy is not becoming on anyone, let alone you, Capricorn. Stop envying what your friends have and think about all of the wonderful things that fill your life.

AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18

Stop turning a deaf ear to what others have to say, Aquarius. Most of these people have a solid head on their shoulders and are qualified to give out good advice.

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20

Think about what you want to achieve in the next month or so, Pisces, then put your plan into action. Dawdling will get you nowhere fast.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

JUNE 18
Roger Ebert, Film Critic (64)
JUNE 19
Mia Sara, Actress (39)
JUNE 20
Lionel Richie, Singer (57)

JUNE 21
Juliette Lewis, Actress (33)
JUNE 22
Todd Rundgren, Musician (58)
JUNE 23
Selma Blair, Actress (34)
JUNE 24
George Pataki, NY Governor (61)

Add Flair To Your Wedding

When it comes to wedding receptions, couples are looking for ways to give a unique, personal flair to their celebration, says Beverly Clark, wedding book author, and designer of the Beverly Clark Collection. "More and more brides and grooms want to express their own style, and they don't want to have a cookie-cutter wedding," she says. "So they are branching out to more elaborate and unique receptions, locations and themes."

How can you add some personal touches to your wedding?

- Slideshows. During the reception, present a slideshow set to music with photos of you and your spouse from birth to present.

- Themes. Incorporate you and your spouse's heritage into the décor and food. Some possible wedding themes may also stem from your favorite hobby, a season, a historical period (such as the Roaring '20s or Renaissance eras), or a fairytale theme complete with a castle-shaped wedding cake.

- Creative table numbers. Instead of using numbers to identify tables, name your tables after phrases or words that have special meaning to you as a couple, such as your favorite travel spots.

- Monograms. Make your name part of the day. For example, wedding planner Tracie Morris had a client whose new last name started with an "M," so the couple put the letter "M" on top of their wedding cake and on their cocktail napkins. They also used a video projector to project an "M" onto the dance floor during the couple's first dance as husband and wife.

- Poetry. Write letters or poems to one another and read it during the reception.

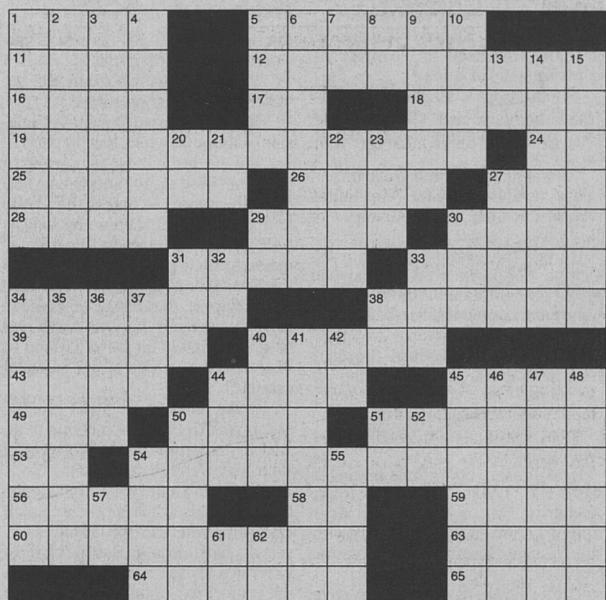
CLUES ACROSS

- Person doing menial work
- Hacks
- Japanese waist pouch
- Family connections
- Heroin
- Iridium
- To fidget, (Scot.)
- Assembly
- 1/3 of Santa's expression
- More tense
- Keep
- Calendar month (abbr.)
- Observed
- The end of gestation
- 11th U.S. president
- Volcanic tuff
- Sierra lake
- Exchanged
- Small mission
- Afghan city
- City in Papua New Guinea
- Ruler or chieftan
- Docile
- One point east of southeast
- Perch
- Serum (pl.)
- Denoting group with common origins

- denotes past
- Internet look-up
- Herb used as a preservative
- Promotional material
- Mackerel shark
- Dispute angrily
- Phil, former CIA
- Coating on a porous surface
- Geek

CLUES DOWN

- The twelfth sign of the zodiac
- A way to express by writing
- Red and yellow
- Noodle
- ger: Roy's horse
- Supplies oxygen
- Forty
- Farm state (abbr.)



- Distinctive spirit of a people
- The land of Israel
- Vermont (abbr.)
- A specific formation
- Struck with surprise
- Regarding (abbr.)
- Trauma center
- Smoke residues
- Big Blue
- Qatar capital
- Tantalum
- Golf score
- Vietnamese offensive
- Road (abbr.)
- Denotes three
- Mother
- Do over, as of a house
- Dry
- Female patriots
- For instance
- Indian dress
- Come out from a source
- Point between north and east
- Cablegram (abbr.)
- Medicine man
- Become mad
- Quarrel foolishly
- Repeated
- Point that entangles
- Spanish be
- Tellurium
- Small integers
- German river
- New Testament (abbr.)
- California (abbr.)
- Aluminium

News From The Courthouse

Twenty-eight individuals were sentenced in Colorado County Court on Wednesday, June 14.

They included:

–Joshua L. Alaniz, driving while license invalid, three days jail, \$350 fine.

–Deyon E. Batiste, disorderly conduct, 45 days jail with work release.

–Suzanne Baxter, possession of marijuana, three days jail, \$500 fine.

–John Edwin Blair, driving while intoxicated, second conviction, 70 days jail, one year drivers license suspension.

–John D. Colletti, fail to identify giving false info., 60 days jail.

–Shawndee Felder, driving while license invalid, 12 months deferred adjudication, \$100 fine.

–Diane Dolch Fuller, driving while intoxicated, 180 days jail, probated 12 months, \$500 fine, 50 hours community service, and \$140 restitution.

–Carlos Jose Hernandez, driving while license invalid, three days jail, \$350 fine.

–Leonard A. Lopez, theft of services of less than \$500, 12 months deferred adjudication, \$350 fine, 20

hours community service, and \$223.50 restitution.

–Granvel R. Meyer Jr., driving while license invalid, three days jail, \$350 fine.

–Stephen C. Smith, driving while license invalid, three days jail, \$250 fine.

–Zachary A. Smith, driving while license invalid, three days jail, \$271 fine.

–Charles B. Taylor, driving while license invalid, three days jail, \$350 fine.

–Daniel G. Veracruz, possession of marijuana, six months deferred adjudication, \$250 fine.

–Michael A. Alvarado, evading arrest/detention, 30 days jail.

–Chad Lynn Biddle, driving while license invalid with previous conviction, 20 days jail.

–Christopher E. Clifton, possession of marijuana, three days jail, \$350 fine.

–Charles A. Davis, criminal mischief of less than \$1,500, \$500 fine, \$185.34 restitution, 15 days jail.

–Joshua James Desormeaux,

possession of marijuana, three days jail, \$350 fine.

–Mauricio Ponce Hernandez, fail to identify fugitive from justice, 30 days jail.

–Damien L. Hood, criminal mischief of less than \$1,500, one year deferred adjudication, \$500 fine, 50 hours community service, \$419.46 restitution.

–Marcus Jackson, possession of marijuana, condition of probation modified, five days jail.

–Michael W. Mikulka, driving while intoxicated, 94 days jail.

–Cuauhtemoc Rios III, assault causes bodily injury to family member, 25 days jail.

–Brigido Ruiz, violation of protective order, 90 days jail.

–Theresa Torres, theft, stolen property of less than \$500 by check, 10 days jail, \$216 restitution.

–Anthony S. Williams, driving while license invalid, three days jail, \$350 fine.

–Mark Junior Williams, possession of marijuana, three days jail, \$350 fine.

Correction

In last week's edition of the Headlight the County Tax Value story should have continued on the back page, but it did not. Following is a reprint of the story in its entirety.

Property values on the tax rolls in Colorado County increased 13.1 percent in the last year, with about half of increase due to increased oil and gas values and other half due to improvements and reappraisals.

That was the preliminary estimate released by Billy Youens, chief appraiser of the Colorado County Appraisal District.

Figures on increases were given to the taxing districts in the county this week.

The appraisal district also mailed notices to approximately 30,000 property owners, showing new property values.

Property values are subject to revision, with the final tax roll to be certified by July 25.

Owners of property have 30 days to protest the values.

Property values in the county are estimated at \$1.416 billion, an increase of \$164.6 million.

Approximately half of the increase, is due to oil and gas values, Youens said.

Based on the current county tax rate, the increase would generate approximately \$700,000 a year in additional revenue.

Overall, the Rice School District had the largest increase of the three school districts in the county, with a 17.8 percent increase in values, or \$83.6 million.

Youens said almost all of that figure was due to increases in oil and gas values. Total value in the Rice District is \$550.9 million.

Meanwhile, values in the city of Eagle Lake increased by 3.6 percent or \$2.77 million. Total property values in the city stand at \$78.9 million.

In the Weimar School District, the new preliminary figures show a \$10.8 million increase, or 5.3 percent. The new total value for the district is

\$212.45 million.

Youens said most of the increase in the Weimar District was in new improvements and reappraisals. He said there was a slight decrease in oil and gas values.

For the city of Weimar, the new figures show an increase of 8.1 percent or \$6.96 million, with the total figure now standing at \$92.8 million. Again, Youens said most of the increase was reappraisals and new improvements.

By comparison, the Columbus School District had an increase of 6.6 percent or \$33.2 million, bringing the district's total values to \$535.6 million.

In the city of Columbus, values increased by 5.4 percent or \$9.6 million, for a total of \$188.7 million.

Youens said any taxpayers who have questions about the values should contact his office at 732-8222. He said new owners of homestead, agriculture or wildlife property must file new applications for exemptions.

Classifieds

Continued from previous page

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