



Carter County Newsletter



Cooperative Extension Service

Carter County
94 Fairground Dr
Grayson, KY 41143-9520
(606) 474-6686
Fax: (606)474-8542
extension.ca.uky.edu

Feb 2019

Upcoming Events

- Feb 4** First Day to place Strawberry plant, Blackberry Plant, or Raspberry Plant Order at the Carter Co Extension Office.
- Feb 5** Little Sandy Beekeepers Meeting, 6:00pm in the Carter County Extension Education Building.
- Feb 6** Private Pesticide Applicator Trainings, 9am, 2pm, and again at 6pm, at the Franks Education Building, Boyd County Fairgrounds, Canonsburg, Ky.
- Feb 11** Backyard Fruit Webinar Series #1: Proper Fruit and Site Selection, 6:00pm-7:00pm in the Carter County Extension Office Board Room.
- Feb 13** Sheep and Goat Webinar, Using Estimated Breeding Values and A.I. Mating, 7:00pm-9:00pm at: www.ansc.tv for home viewing.
- Feb 18** Backyard Fruit Webinar Series #2: Small Fruit Disease ID and Control, 6:00pm-7:00pm in the Carter County Extension Office Board Room.
- Feb 21** North East Area Livestock Association Meeting, Stafix/Patriot Fence Chargers and Fencing Systems, meal sponsored by Kee's Farm Supply at 6:00pm in the Carter Co Extension Education Building.
- Feb 21** Tobacco GAP Training, 6:00pm in the Sharpsburg Community Center, Sharpsburg, Ky.
- Feb 23** Small Ruminant Grazing Conference, 7:30am-2:30pm in the Derrickson Agricultural Complex, Morehead State University, Morehead, Ky.
- Feb 23** Northeastern Ky. Beekeeping School, 9:00am-3:30pm, at the Maysville Community and Technical College, Maysville, Ky.
- Feb 23** Small Farm and Garden Equipment Expo, 9 am—3 pm at the Boyd County Fairground.
- Feb 25** Carter County Agricultural Advancement Council Meeting, 10:00am in the Carter Co Extension Office Board Room.
- Feb 25** Backyard Fruit Webinar Series #3: Small Fruit Insects ID and Control, 6:00pm-7:00pm in the Carter County Extension Office Board Room.
- Feb 26** Industrial Hemp Production Meeting, 6:00pm in the Franks Education Building at the Boyd Co Fairgrounds, Canonsburg, Ky.
- Feb 28** Dicamba Mandatory Certification Training, 6:00pm in the Mason County Extension Office, Maysville, Ky.
- Feb 28** Tobacco GAP Training, 6:00pm at the Maysville Community and Technical College, Maysville, Ky.
- Feb 28** Last Day to place Strawberry plant, Blackberry Plant, or Raspberry Plant Order at the Carter County Extension Office.

(continued on next page)



Upcoming Events Continued -

Feb 28 Third delivery of cows to the Chop Shop for the Beef Solutions Ground Beef Program.

Mar 2 Tree Fruit Field Day, 10:00am-2:00pm, Grafting, Disease and Insect Control, Wildlife Control, at the Fleming County Extension Office and at Browning's Orchard.

Order Strawberry, Blackberry, and Raspberry Plants Now



The Carter County Extension Office is now taking orders for strawberry, blackberry, and raspberry plants. Three varieties of strawberries are available. They are: Earliglow, an early season variety; Allstar, a midseason variety; and Seascape, an ever-bearing variety.

The cost of the Earliglow and Allstar are \$18.00 per 100 and Seascape is \$22.00 per 100. Orders can be made in quantities of 25.

Two varieties of raspberries are available. Heritage, an ever-bearing red raspberry is available at \$3.00 each. Jewel, a winter hardy, productive, vigorous black raspberry is available at \$4.00 each.

One variety of blackberry is available: Prime Ark Freedom, a thorn-less, semi-erect blackberry plant that produces large, flavorful fruit, on first year canes is available for \$4.50 each.

Order forms are available at the Carter County Extension Office. Payment is due with the order. Orders will be taken until Thursday, February 28th, 2019. For more information, call 474-6686. Plants will be available for pick up in early April.



Beef IRM Calendars Available

The 2019 Beef IRM Calendars are now available at the Carter County Extension Office. These are excellent for recording breeding and calving due dates as well as all management records. Come in and get yours while the supply lasts.

Sincerely,



Myron Evans, County Extension Agent for Ag/Natural Resources

Beef Timely Tips

Dr. Les Anderson, Beef Extension Professor, University of Kentucky

Spring-Calving Cow Herd

- *Study the performance of last year's calf crop and plan for improvement. Plan your breeding program and consider a better herd sire(s). Select herd sires which will allow you to meet your goals and be willing to pay for superior animals.
- *Consider vaccinating the cows to help prevent calf scours.
- *Keep replacement heifer calves gaining to be cycling by the start of the spring breeding season.
- *Start cows on the high magnesium mineral supplement soon. Consider protein supplementation if hay is less than 10% crude protein. If cows are thin, begin energy (grain) supplementation now.
- *Get ready for calving season! See that all equipment and materials are ready, including obstetrical equipment, record forms or booklets, eartags, scales for obtaining birthweights, etc. Prepare a calving area where assistance can be provided easily if needed. Purchase ear tags for calves and number them ahead of time if possible. Plan for enough labor to watch/assist during the calving period.
- *Move early-calving heifers and cows to pastures that are relatively small and easily accessible to facilities in case calving assistance is needed. Keep them in good condition but don't overfeed them at this time. Increase their nutrient intake after they calve.



Fall Calving Cow Herd

- *Provide clean windbreaks and shelter for young calves.
- *Breeding season continues. Keep fall calving cows on accumulated pasture as long as possible, then start feeding hay/grain. Don't let these cows lose body condition!
- *Catch up on castrating, dehorning and implanting.

General

- *Feed hay in areas where mud is less of a problem. Consider preparing a feeding area with gravel over geotextile fabric or maybe a concrete feeding pad.



- *Increase feed as the temperature drops, especially when the weather is extremely cold and damp. When temperature drops to 15°F, cattle need access to windbreaks
- *Provide water at all times. Cattle need 5 to 11 gallons per head daily even in the coldest weather. Be aware of frozen pond hazards. Keep ice "broken" so that cattle won't walk out on the pond trying to get water. Automatic waterers, even the "frost-free" or "energy-free" waterers can freeze up in extremely cold weather. Watch closely.
- *Consider renovating and improving pastures with legumes, especially if they have poor stands of grass or if they contain high levels of the fescue endophyte.

Purchase seed and get equipment ready this month.

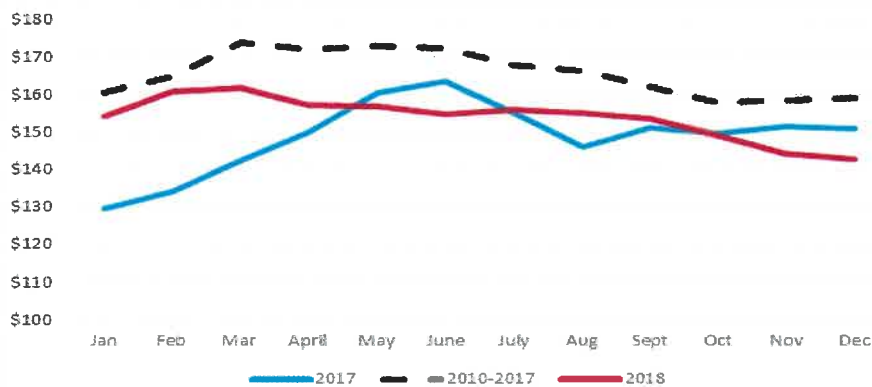
Kentucky Beef Cattle Market Update

Dr. Kenny Burdine, Livestock Marketing Specialist, University of Kentucky

The first of the year is typically a good time to review cattle markets and think about the upcoming year. While there will always be debate about which is worse, drought or mud, there was little question about which was the greater issue in 2018. One doesn't have to drive around rural Kentucky very long to see multiple examples of challenges created by excessive rain. Pasture growth was good well into fall, but muddy conditions brought its own set of challenges. And, winter feeding certainly tends to put those challenges on showcase.

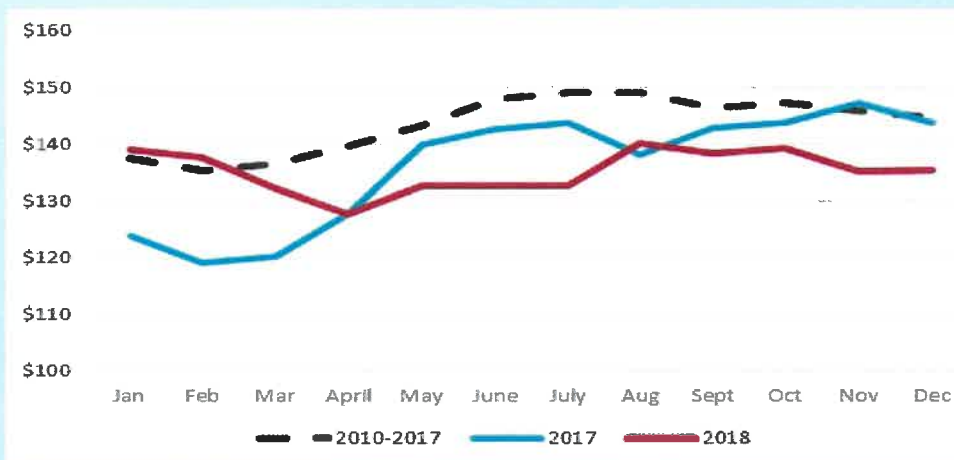
Despite showing a lot of resilience through summer, calf prices fell sharply in the fourth quarter of 2018. The state average price for a 550 lbs steer fell by roughly \$12 per cwt from August to December, settling in the low \$140's to end the year. This was approximately \$8 per cwt lower than December 2017. Figure 1 tells the story best. Calf prices in 2018 actually averaged above 2017 levels for the year, but were lower October through December when most calves were sold.

**Figure 1. 550# Medium & Large Frame #1-2 Steers
KY Auction Prices (\$ per cwt)**



I said several times this fall that I was surprised by the strength of heavy feeder cattle markets. Figure 2 depicts state average prices for 850 lb steers, but this chart doesn't do a very good job telling this story. Largely due to lot size differences, there is always a sizeable difference in state average prices and prices received for loads of steers. For example, when state average prices for 850 lb steers were in the upper \$130's late summer / early fall, groups of 850 lb steers were selling at prices well into the \$150's. Even for December, loads of these steers were still moving in the \$140's.

**Figure 2. 850# Medium & Large Frame #1-2 Steers
KY Auction Prices (\$ per cwt)**



Beef Market Update-

While I hate to say it, I expect 2019 to bring more of the same. I fully expect calf prices to increase significantly by spring due to stocker demand, but the fundamentals don't point to any signs that would suggest a stronger overall market in 2019. Much is being made about cow slaughter in 2018 and it was up substantially through the first 11 months. But, I think a lot of this was due to dairy cow slaughter. When I try to pull out the dairy cows, I estimate that we slaughtered about 250,000 to 275,000 more beef cows in 2018 than 2017. Given that the USDA estimated the beef cow herd was more than 500,000 head larger in 2018, I don't think we have culled enough cows to suggest decreasing beef cow inventory.

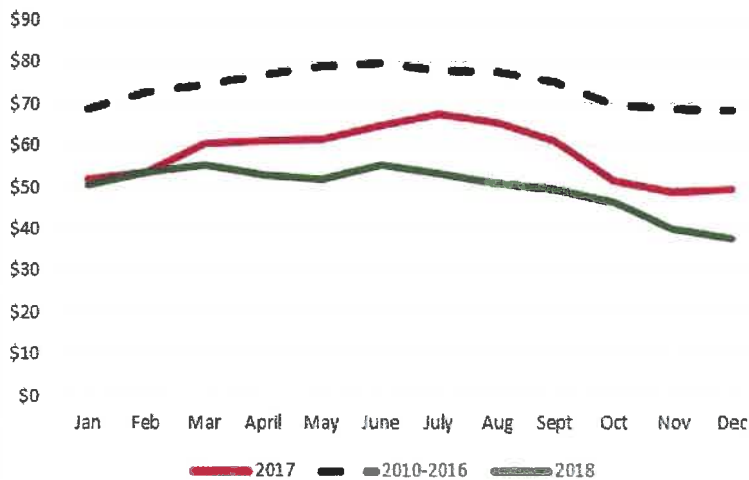
A slightly larger cowherd for 2019 means a slightly larger calf crop to work through markets. And, as we have talked before, production increases are still on the horizon with USDA forecasting 2019 production increases of 3.5%, 5.3%, and 1.4% for beef, pork, and broilers respectively. While surprises are always possible, there is simply no way that I can look at those supply factors and forecast higher cattle prices year-over-year for 2019.

Trying to Make Sense of the Current Cull Cow Market

Despite the fact that calf prices ended 2018 roughly \$8 per cwt lower than 2017, taking another bite out of cow-calf returns, cull cow markets have been getting most of the attention as of late. Cull cow markets typically have one of our more predictable seasonal patterns. Prices tend to be lowest late in the year and move up to make their highs in late spring or early summer. The dotted black line in Figure 1 shows this pattern for 85% boning cows from 2010 to 2016, but 2017 and 2018 have similar trends. Let's start by discussing why this is the typical seasonal pattern for cull cow prices.

Figure 1. Cull Cow Prices – Boning 80-85% KY Auctions (\$ per cwt)

Source: USDA-AMS, Livestock Marketing Information Center, Author Calculations



First, we tend to sell more cull cows late in the year. The majority of our cows calve in the spring and cow-calf operators like to sell their cull cows when they sell their weaned calves. One could also argue that cows are likely in poor condition at that time, which may also affect the prices they receive. At the same time, there have always been individuals who purchase cull cows with the intention of keeping them for a short time and reselling them or trying to get another calf out of them. The cost of doing this is higher late in the year because we are several months away from pasture growth.

This higher cost structure is reflected in lower values for those cows.

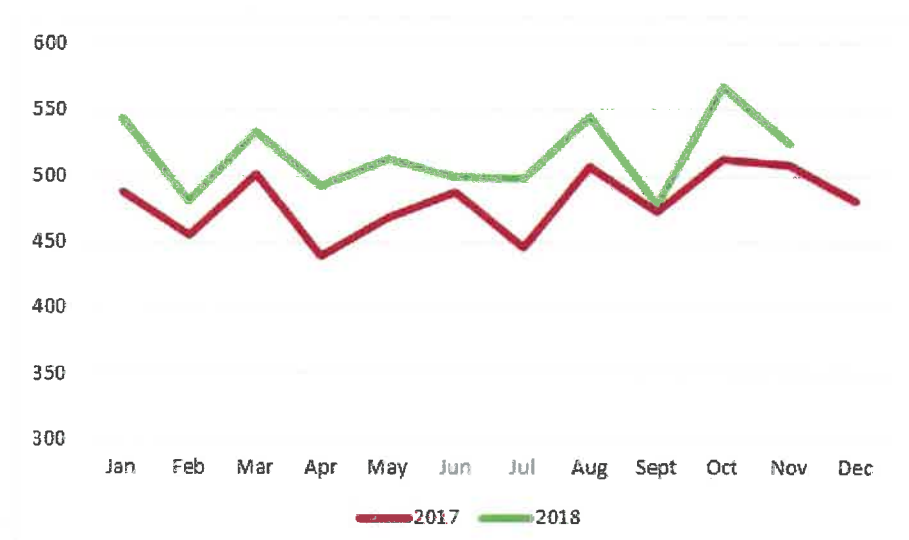
(continued on next page)

Admittedly, there has to be more than seasonality at play this year, as the drop has seemed to be larger than usual. Plus, while Figure 1 shows a state average price for 85% boning cows in the upper \$130's, I am hearing a lot of reports of much lower prices on given days at given locations. As I work to think through what is going on, I would point to three factors that are a bit unique to the current market.

First, we are seeing larger than normal cow slaughter. Figure 2 depicts federally inspected cow slaughter, by month, for 2017 and 2018. Cow slaughter in 2018 has exceeded 2017 levels in all 11 months for which data existed at the time of this writing. For the first 11 months, cow slaughter was 7.2% higher in 2018 than 2017. While beef cow slaughter is actually up by larger percentage than dairy cow slaughter for the year, dairy slaughter was up by roughly 10% in both October and November. This basic supply comparison explains part of what is making the current situation unique.

Figure 2. Monthly Federally Inspected Cow Slaughter (1,000 head)

Source: USDA-NASS and Livestock Marketing Information Center



Secondly, I think we have to acknowledge that weather is partly to blame here. Cold and wet conditions are never supportive to cattle prices and the last several months have been just that. In addition to affecting the demand for cull cows, weather like this also has an impact on their quality. Cattle are stressed, thin, and simply are not as marketable.

Third, I want to mention something that I brought up in my December article in *Off-the-Hoof*. There is no denying that we are seeing increased production levels across beef, pork, and poultry. My colleague in Oklahoma, Dr. Darrell Peel made a good point in Oklahoma State's *Cow/Calf Corner* newsletter back in the fall. He suggested that increased pork and poultry supplies may be having a disproportionately large impact on ground beef. I think this makes sense, given that the price levels for most pork and poultry products are more comparable to ground beef than middle meats. Since cull cows tend to be a largely ground beef market, it makes sense that cull cow markets would be more impacted than steers and heifers.

Regardless, I still view this cull cow market as a short-term phenomenon. Granted, we will have to contend with growing meat supplies and the bulk of winter still lies ahead. But, while the increased supply of cull cows could be a signal of the cycle turning, this level of year-over-year increase won't be sustained. Like is often the case in cattle markets, spring weather is probably the best cure for this problem.



 Cooperative
Extension Service

DISTRICT 1 COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE PRESENTS:

BACKYARD FRUIT WEB SERIES

ALL FEBRUARY CLASSES WILL BE AT YOUR LOCAL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION OFFICE.

PLEASE CALL YOUR LOCAL EXTENSION OFFICE BY FEBRUARY 8TH TO REGISTER.

FEBRUARY 2019 6PM-7PM

- FEBRUARY 11-FRUIT SELECTION
- FEBRUARY 18- SMALL FRUIT DISEASE
- FEBRUARY 25- SMALL FRUIT INSECTS

MARCH 2, 2019 TREE FRUIT FIELD DAY

10AM- 2PM @ FLEMING CONTY EXTENSION OFFICE
1384 ELIZAVILLE RD, FLEMINGSBURG, KY

LUNCH SPONSORED BY:



- GRAFTING
- DISEASE & INSECT CONTROL
- PRUNING @ORCHARD
-  WILDLIFE CONTROL @ORCHARD

****MUST ATTEND AT LEAST 2 OF THE FEBRUARY CLASSES TO ATTEND THE FIELD DAY.**



University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment
Cooperative Extension Service

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
GRAYSON, KY
PERMIT 115

Carter County
94 Fairground Dr
Grayson, KY 41143-9520

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

