CARTER COUNTY AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES NEWSLETTER

August 2025

Cooperative Extension Service
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Highlights:

⇒ Show off your prize winning produce at the Carter County Fair. Exhibits will be taken on August 5th from 12:00-2:00. View the exhibit hall nightly at the fair from August 5th—8th.

⇒ Be sure to get some fresh produce from the Carter County Farmer's Market.

⇒ Carter County has been selected to participate in the KY/TN Beef Leader-ship Conference during the first part of August. Extension Agents and two producers were asked to attend from 25 counties across the state. Bob Flaugher & Marcella Clay will be representing Carter County.

Enjoy your newsletter,

Rebecca Konopka

Rebecca Konopka,
Carter County Extension Agent for
Agriculture & Natural Resources Education

Upcoming Events

Denotes events where preregistration is required. Call 474-6686 or email Rebecca.k@uky.edu to register.

More details available at https://carter.ca.uky.edu/anr.

Carter County Fair Exhibit Hall Entries Due
Tue, Aug 5, 12:00 – 2:00pm Carter County Fairgrounds
Visit https://www.cartercountyfair.org/ for a complete fair schedule and exhibit hall categories.

Little Sandy Beekeepers Association
Tue, Aug 5, 6:30pm Carter County Extension Office
Speaker: Rick Sutton

Ag Advancement Council
Mon, Aug 11, 6:00pm Carter County Extension Office

Hike & Learn
Fri, Aug 22, 1:00pm Laurel Gorge Cultural Heritage Center

Pesticide Jug Rinse & Return
Tue, Sep 2, 10:00am – 1:00pm Kee's Farm Service

Little Sandy Beekeepers Association
Tue, Sep 2, 6:30pm Carter County Extension Office
Speaker: Scott Moore, KSBA
Topic: Honey Labels & Hive Product Marketing

Farm & Family Field Day
Tue, Sep 16, 5:00pm Butch & Nicole Flaugher's Farm

Hike & Learn- Mindfulness Walk
Thu, Sep 25, 1:00pm Grayson Sports Park

Barn Quilt Paint Party
Sat, Sep 27, 9:00am – 3:00pm Carter County Extension Office

Save the Date

Farm & Family Field Day
Tuesday, September 16, 2025
Butch & Nicole Flaugher Farm

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Carter County Soil Conservation District

Carter County FARMER'S MARKET

Seasonal Hours

Grayson
Thursday 2:00PM-Sell Out
Saturday 9:00AM-Sell Out

Olive Hill
Monday 3:00PM-Sell Out
Wednesday 8:00AM-Sell Out
Saturday 8:00AM-Sell Out

KY Beef Producer Survey

August 1st-9th

Visit www.cartercountyfair.org/ for all the fair details!

Cooperative Extension Service

Hike & Learn

Escape the Ordinary and Embrace the Extraordinary

Join us on a journey where the trails whisper tales and every step is an adventure waiting to unfold. We invites you to explore the great outdoors with our Hike and Learn program.

Please wear closed-toe shoes and bring your own snacks & drinks.
Hikes canceled due to inclement weather will not be rescheduled.

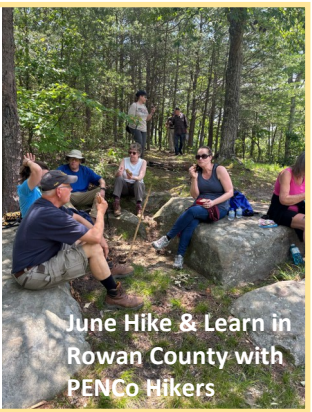
LAUREL GORGE
August 22 @ 1:00 PM

Meet in the Welcome Center & explore the gorge with us.
Length: ~2 miles.
Difficulty: Moderate

GRAYSON SPORTS PARK
September 25 @ 1:00 PM

Mindfulness Walk
FCS Agent Whitney Morrow will be guiding us as we appreciate the tranquility of the outdoors.
Difficulty: Easy

For More Details: (606)474-6686 https://carter.ca.uky.edu/anr
Facebook. @CarterCoKYAg



June Hike & Learn in Rowan County with PENCo Hikers

New World Screwworm–A Recent Threat to U.S. Farm Animals

Adult New World screwworm flies resemble the common blowfly but have multiple distinguishing features.

Recent news headlines have brought attention to the northward movement of a foreign animal disease towards the United States from Mexico: New World Screwworm (NWS). This parasite has been eradicated from the United States since 1966 with the most recent outbreak occurring in Florida Key deer in 2016. All living, warm-blooded animals, including birds and humans, can be infested with NWS.

What makes this fly and larvae different? While our normal, US-borne flies lay eggs that can cause wounds to be infested with maggots (called myiasis), the flies that cause NWS are much more aggressive and the maggot (NWS) feeds on living flesh.

What causes infestation? The female NWS fly lays eggs near or on a wound of an animal. The eggs hatch and the larvae (maggots) burrow into living flesh, enlarging the wound, attracting more flies and debilitating the animal. NWS flies seek out wounds from fighting injuries, tick bites, newborn navels and even human-made wounds from castration, ear tagging and dehorning procedures. After a week of feeding in the wound, the larvae drop to the ground and burrow where the adult NWS fly emerges.

New World screwworm flies, eggs and larvae around and deep within a wound.

What strategies are there for control? Three main tactics are used for controlling NWS. The first two are dependent on veterinarians and animal caretakers and include visual examination of wounds with subsequent treatment and quarantine, as well as movement controls from impacted areas. The third tool, called sterile fly release, takes advantage of the fact that a female fly mates only once in her lifetime. Male NWS larvae

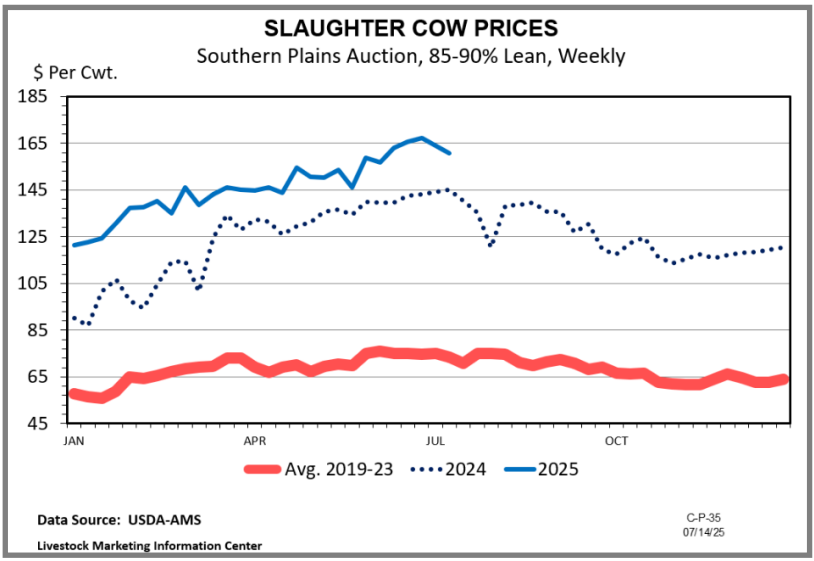
can be raised in specialized laboratories, sterilized and released into the wild to mate with females. The female NWS fly's eggs will not hatch after mating with a sterile male NWS fly.

What is the urgency? Recent northward detections of NWS in Mexico prompted United States Department of Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins to temporarily stop importation of cattle, horses and bison from Mexico at U.S. land ports. A detection in the United States could cost millions of dollars in livestock losses, trade restrictions and control efforts. Livestock, pets, wildlife and even humans could suffer and die from screwworm infestation. Look for animals that are depressed, not eating and off to themselves with enlarging, foul-smelling wounds. You may notice eggs laid near the wound and possibly moving maggots. NWS flies and maggots look like the common blowfly and maggot. If you suspect a case of NWS, contact a USDA veterinarian (502-395-2368) or Kentucky state veterinarian (502-573-0282) for help identifying it. We can work together to protect the United States from the re-introduction of this terrible disease. Find more information at: https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/cattle/ticks/screwworm

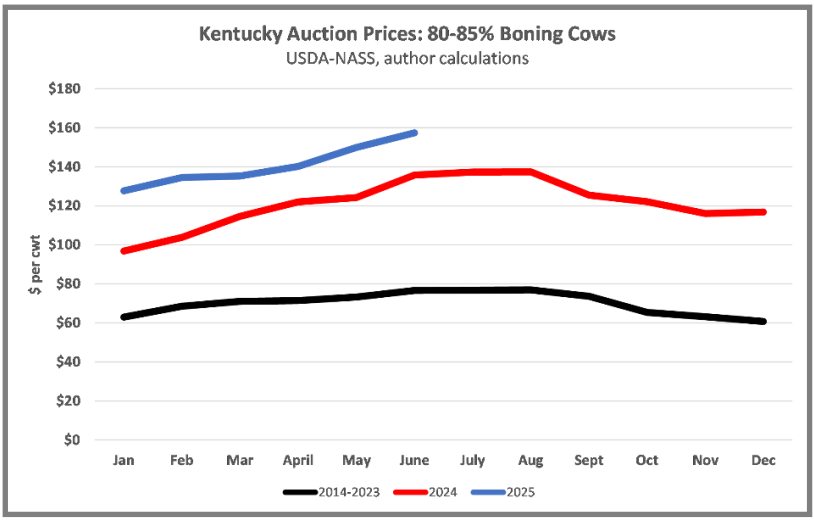
Several Factors are Driving Strong Cull Cow Markets

By: Kenny Burdine, University of Kentucky

Cattle markets have been impressive across the board in 2025, and cull cow markets have been no exception. The monthly average price for 80-85% average dress boning cows in Kentucky set a record in June and may set a new record in July. June 2025 prices were 16% higher than June of 2024 and 62% higher than June of 2023. This is a trend across all regions of the US as demand remains strong and cull cow supplies remain tight. I want to briefly discuss some specific factors behind these prices levels.



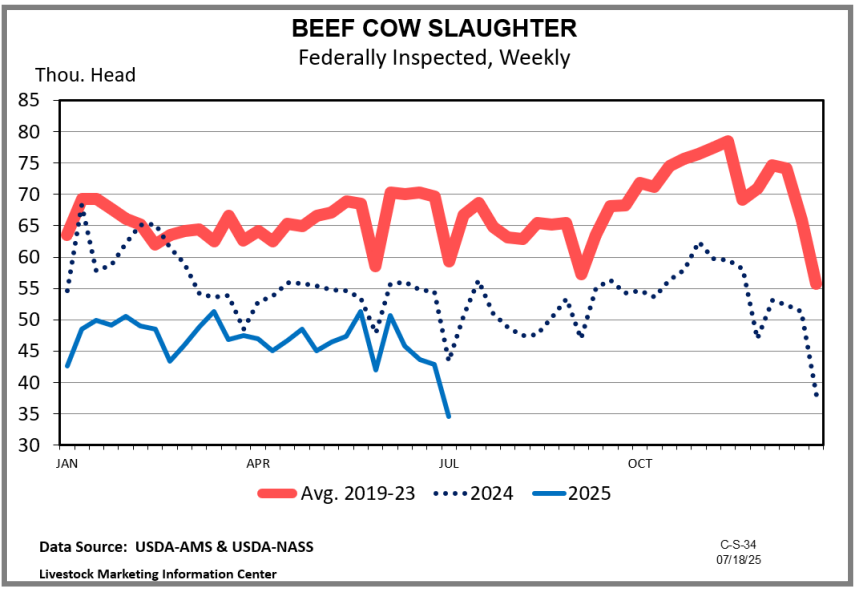
The most obvious reason for the extremely high cull cow prices has been sharp reductions in slaughter levels. As I write this in late July, beef cow slaughter is down 17% year-to-date from 2024. If this trend continued through the end of 2025, it would represent a



reduction in beef cow slaughter of more than 450,000 cows. The beef cow herd was culled hard from 2021 to 2023, so it is likely that a lot of poor performers had already exited the herd. And of course, the current calf market is encouraging producers to hold on to cows a bit longer than usual. It is also worth pointing out that dairy cow slaughter is down 7% for the year, which is also contributing to the tight supplies.

Consumer demand has been strong and has probably been overshadowed a bit by discussion of tight supplies. Ground beef represents a significant share of beef consumption, and a large portion of cull cow slaughter is targeted for the ground beef market. It is also likely that high retail prices are pushing some consumers towards lower priced ground beef, as opposed to higher priced cuts. While supply is absolutely a major factor, strong demand has added fuel to the fire.

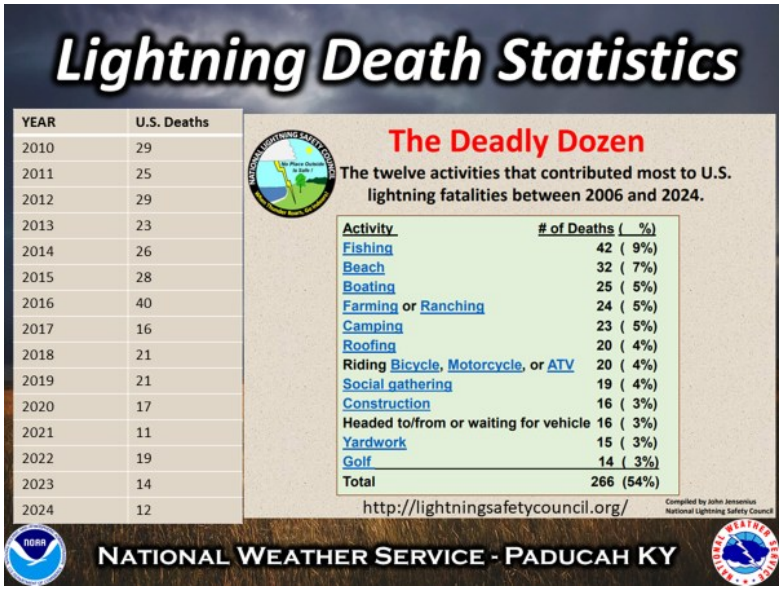
Finally, there is another element that has not gotten as much attention, but that I consider to be significant. Multiple dynamics have pushed cattle to higher slaughter weights over the last few years and that has led to a substantial increase in quality grades. For some perspective, 10.6% of cattle graded Prime in 2024 and that percentage is running at about 11.8% thus far in 2025. This increase in marbling also means there is an increase in the amount of fat in the trim, which creates additional demand for lean trim to be used for blending. Since cull cows are a source of lean trim, this has also contributed to strong cull cow markets.



Lightning Safety

By Derrick Snyder - National Weather Service Paducah, KY

While the risk for severe thunderstorms that produce tornadoes, large hail, and damaging winds is greatest during the spring across most of the country, the dangers of lightning can occur during all times of the year. Every year, hundreds of people are seriously injured from lightning strikes. The good news is that lightning deaths have trended downward in recent years thanks to greater preparedness and education. However, numerous people are still killed every year. Looking at the statistics for lightning fatalities, the majority of lightning deaths occurred while people were doing outdoor activities.



The deadliest activity when it comes to lightning strikes is fishing, followed by beach going, boating, camping, farming/ranching, riding bikes/motorcycles/ATVs, roofing, gathering outside, working construction, walking to a vehicle, yardwork, and playing soccer or golf. If you are caught outside during a thunderstorm, remember that there is *no* safe place outside from lightning. If a thunderstorm is occurring or nearby, seek shelter inside a sturdy enclosed structure. A hard-topped vehicle can also provide good shelter.

Keep these things in mind when it comes to lightning safety:

1. Your chances of being struck by lightning depend on how you react when storms are in the area.
2. Remember: “When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!” If you can hear thun-

der, you are close enough to be struck by lightning!

3. The threat of lightning increases as a storm approaches, peaks when it is overhead, and gradually diminishes as it moves away.

Many people wait too long to get to a safe place and then go back outside too soon before the threat is over. Wait about 30 minutes after you hear the last rumble of thunder to return outside.

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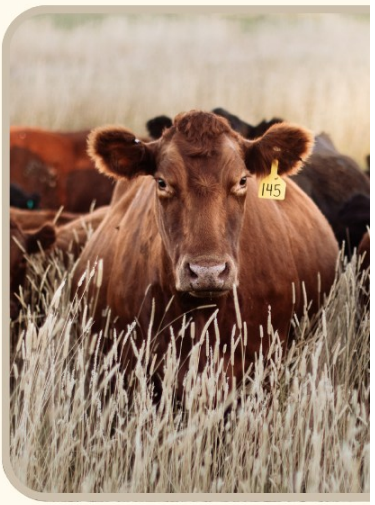
Proactive Pinkeye Management in Cattle



Pinkeye (IBK) is a major, costly disease for beef producers, quickly spreading and causing issues like reduced weaning weights and sale discounts. **Early risk reduction is vital.**

Pinkeye Prevention Strategies:

- Ensure good nutrition (trace minerals) and clean water.
- Minimize dust and UV exposure.
- Use IGRs, ear tags, dust bags, and back rubbers.
- Promptly treat symptoms with vet-prescribed antibiotics and isolate.
- Use commercial or custom vaccines 4-6 weeks pre-season, with boosters.

Contact your local county extension office for more information.

Source: Michelle Arnold, UK Extension
An Equal Opportunity Organization.

Hay Testing Even More Important in 2025

Dr. Chris Teutsch, UK Research and Education Center at Princeton

In many parts of Kentucky first cutting hay was delayed. Although yields were good, forage quality is another story. As the grass plant reaches maturity (gets mature seed) yield goes up, but quality decreases (Figure 1). This year we were on the right side of this figure, good yield but lower quality. We have already got our hay testing results back from the lab for our first cutting and that is exactly what they show (Table 1).

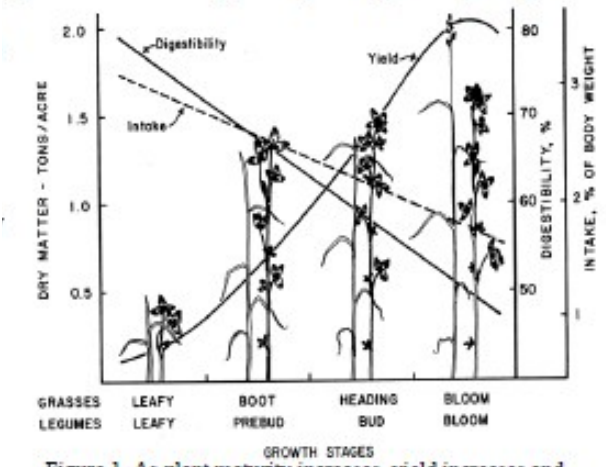


Figure 1. As plant maturity increases, yield increases and forage quality (digestibility and crude protein) decreases. The single most important factor impacting forage quality is stage of maturity at harvest.

I wish we could have been more timely in our hay harvest this spring but weather conditions were just not conducive to dry hay harvest. In fact, weather records indicate that we are seeing a trend toward fewer baling days in May (baling day = 3 curing days + 1 harvest day). It is just getting tougher to be timely with our first cutting harvested as dry hay. So, the question becomes what do we do? The list of practical solutions is short; in fact, there is really one viable alternative and that is baleage. High quality baleage can be made with a curing window as short as 2 days (one day to mow and wilt and a second day to bale and wrap). This provides more opportunities to harvest at the correct stage of maturity (late boot to early head).

Field	CP†	ADF	NDF	TDN	Meet CP Requirements		Meet TDN Requirements	
	%	%	%	%	Dry	Lactating	Dry	Lactating
1	8.9	40.1	59.1	55.5	yes	no	yes	no
2	9.9	39.4	60.0	56.2	yes	no	yes	no
3	8.2	41.6	67.2	53.8	yes	no	yes	no
4	10.6	41.0	64.5	54.5	yes	yes	yes	no
5	8.3	40.7	65.6	54.8	yes	no	yes	no
Avg	**9.2**	**40.6**	**63.3**	**55.0**	**yes**	**no**	**yes**	**no**

Table 1. Forage quality of 2025 first harvest hay at UK Research and Education Center in Princeton. †CP, crude protein, ADF, acid detergent fiber, NDF, neutral detergent fiber, TDN, total digestible nutrients.

Hay Testing Even More Important in Wet Years—In years like this one, hay testing becomes even more important. Since most of Kentucky's first cutting hay was put up at an advanced stage of maturity, testing is going to be a critical part of making sure that we meet the nutrient requirements of our cows this winter. The single most important factor impacting rebreeding in cow herds is body condition at calving. To design an effective supplementation program for our lower quality hay we must know what the quality it. If you have never tested your hay, this is the year to start!

FORAGE MANAGEMENT TIPS

✓	Test first cutting hay and use the results to develop a supplementation strategy for this winter.
✓	Graze summer annuals pastures and fertilize with 40-60 lb N/A if regrowth is desired.
✓	Identify pastures to stockpile for winter grazing. Pastures should be well drained and have a strong sod. Limit summer grazing so that they are ready to grow as conditions cool and rain comes in late summer.
✓	Do NOT mow hayfields or graze pastures closer than 4-5 inches.
✓	**Soil test pastures to determine nutrient needs.**
✓	Use UKY variety testing results to select varieties that will be planted in the fall.
✓	If drought occurs, confine animals to one pasture and feed hay.

Fusarium Wilt of Vegetables

By: Kim Leonberger, Plant Pathology Extension Associate, and Nicole Gauthier, Plant Pathology Extension Specialist

Fusarium wilts are common in vegetables grown in commercial fields, greenhouses, high tunnels, and backyard gardens. Tomato, peppers, eggplant, cucumber, watermelon, cantaloupe are susceptible to disease. Fusarium wilt symptoms develop when the fungus obstructs openings in vascular tissue (xylem), limiting the plant's ability to move water and nutrients. Infections ultimately result in plant death. Preventative practices and fungicides can reduce damage and limit yield loss.

Figure 1: Fusarium wilt symptoms begin as wilting, followed by yellowing and necrosis. (Photo: Gerald Holmes, Strawberry Center, Cal Poly San Louis Obispo, Bugwood.org)

Fusarium Wilt Facts

⇒ Symptoms first appear as a complete or partial wilting of plants. During the early stages of infection, plants may recover during the evening or after watering, but over time, wilting becomes permanent. Affected plants become yellow and then necrotic (brown/dead tissue) (Figure 1). Discoloration of the vascular system may be present and can be observed by cutting the stem open length wise (Figure 2). Diseased plants eventually die.

⇒ The fungal pathogen may be introduced via infected crop debris, seeds, transplants, weeds or infested soil.

⇒ Fusarium wilt is soilborne and is spread by water, such as irrigation or rain, or by movement of infested soil.

⇒ Warm temperatures, periods of rain or high humidity, and acidic soils favor disease development.

⇒ Fusarium wilts are caused by the fungal pathogen *Fusarium oxysporum*.

Figure 2: Vascular discoloration is characteristic of Fusarium wilt. (Photo: Clemson-USDA CES Slide Series, Bugwood.org)

This fungus has many host-specific strains called “formae speciales” that each target different crops.

Management

⇒ Purchase certified disease-free seeds or transplants.

⇒ Select cultivars with resistance.

⇒ Utilize soil solarization.

⇒ Manage weeds in or near plantings.

⇒ Rotate crops away from susceptible crops for a minimum of 5 years.

⇒ Increase soil pH to near neutral (pH 7), depending on crop.

⇒ Remove and destroy infected plants.

⇒ Clean and sanitize tools, pots, and equipment.

⇒ Remove and destroy plant debris at the end of the season.

Commercial growers can find information on fungicides in the Vegetable Production Guide for Commercial Growers (ID-36) and the Southeastern U.S. Vegetable Crop Handbook. Organic growers should consult the Organic Commercial Spray Schedules for Field Production series of publications available on the Plant Pathology Extension Publications website for fungicide recommendations. Homeowners should consult the Small Acreage & Backyard IPM Guides series for fungicide information or contact a county Extension agent for additional information and recommendations regarding fungicides.

Additional Resources

◊ Fusarium Wilts of Vegetable Crops (PPFS-VG-15)

◊ Cultural Calendars for Commercial Production (series)

Producers may also contact the local county Extension Office for a copy of these publications.

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With summer's arrival and rising temperatures, livestock also experience heat stress, becoming uncomfortable when the heat index reaches approximately 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

Check out the University of Kentucky's Agricultural Weather Center's Livestock Heat Stress Index to see statewide conditions.

Best Practices:

- Provide abundant, cool, clean drinking water
- Ensure there is adequate shade and ventilation
- Avoid working or transporting animals during periods of heat stress

Contact your local county extension office for additional resources.