

## Extension Notes

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AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

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### Help Livestock Thrive in Summer Weather

Summer is here and we've already experienced the heat and humidity. People aren't the only ones who suffer when the temperatures rise. Farm animals feel it, too. You can recognize when livestock may be in danger from the heat and what you can do to increase their comfort.

Livestock become uncomfortable when the heat index reaches about 90 degrees. The heat index is a combination of air temperature and humidity and is used to describe how it feels outside.

The University of Kentucky Agricultural Weather Center regularly monitors heat indices across the state and provides an index of its own – the Livestock Heat Stress Index – to help producers know when heat stress could create a problem for their animals. The county-by-county index indicates three levels of heat stress: no stress, danger stress and emergency stress.

Periods of heat stress call for livestock producers to be vigilant in making sure their animals are adequately prepared. One of the most important things you can do is provide cool, clean drinking water. Providing an adequate source of drinking water helps keep animals' internal body temperatures within normal limits. You should shade above-ground water lines so they do not act as solar water heaters and make the water too hot to drink.

It is also important for animals to have shade and for buildings to be as open as much as possible for adequate ventilation. Sprinkler systems that periodically spray a cool mist on the animals can also be beneficial.

It is best to avoid working your animals during periods of heat stress. You should also avoid transporting livestock during those times. When you must transport livestock, haul fewer animals per load. Plan trips so you can load animals immediately before leaving and quickly unload upon arrival to help minimize the risk.

To keep up-to-date with the livestock heat stress index, access the Agricultural Weather Center's website <http://www.agwx.ca.uky.edu> or go to the Carter County Cooperative Extension Service's website <https://carter.ca.uky.edu/anr> and click on the weather link.

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#### **Upcoming Events:**

- The **Grayson Farmer's Market** is open on Saturdays from 9:00 AM until sell out. The market is located

in the shed behind the Extension Office. The **Olive Hill Farmer's Market** is located in the Save-a-Lot parking lot and is open on Saturdays and Wednesdays at 8:00 AM and Mondays at 3:00 PM until sell out each day.

- Farmer's Market Kid's Days will be on July 29<sup>th</sup> from 9:30-11:00 at the Grayson Farmer's Market. There will be a variety of activities for youth to participate in and earn Kid's Bucks to be spent at the market.