



# Hunter Nutrition

*The Program That Performs*

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2022

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## HOW A HAY/PASTURE PROGRAM SAVED MY FIELDS by Kim Runner

Hello, Spring is upon us once again, I swear every year seems to go faster and faster. It has been an interesting two years for inputs and prices, and we are all looking as always for greater results from our inputs. One of the crops I help clients with are forage seed and pasture mixes. For about three years, I have been working with several different companies to come up with a Hay and Pasture Management Program. It needed to accomplish a couple of things;

- 1) Quality/health of forage
- 2) Increase tonnage
- 3) Build soil health
- 4) Cost efficient

I used my own 28 acres to evaluate the affects of the Hay-Now Foliar feed and the

Liquid Carbon, Humic soil amendment. Why? In 2020, I was only able to get 78 round bales off my 28 acres first cutting. I sprayed Carbon, Hay-Now and Providence 2 Insecticide. 2nd cutting plants looked better, but not a lot of evidence things were starting to work other then the plants had greened up. 3rd cutting, I was able to get the same Tonnage as my first 78 round bale. Hmmm, I started to think something is working. I sprayed Carbon, Hay-Now and put the field to bed for the year. So here is where the rubber meets the road and why I'm convinced I've finally found a Hay/Pasture Program that works. Last spring (2021), I put Hay-Now and Carbon on with Insecticide. I honestly am

amazed at the tonnage we got off our field. 110 round bales on 28 acres that's 32 round bale more than last year. That is the best we have ever gotten. So, trying to keep this short is hard, and I wish that I had taken pictures, but I didn't life you know it gets busy. Many of my customers are now implementing the same management program and are liking what they are seeing. If you have questions my email is below . I won't promise I have the answers but I do enjoy working with my clients to find solutions that work. Best regards and have a wonderful Spring and Summer.

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### HAY AND PASTURE PROGRAM INCLUDES: HAY-NOW and LIQUID CARBON

Foliar applied, readily available plant food. Both can be applied with herbicide.

- 7 -9-5 analysis with Sulfur, Iron and Zinc.
- Promotes root development for sustainability and plant growth.
- Reduces compaction from cattle, while promoting root development and moisture retention.
- Promotes conversion of organic matter, releasing nutrients to your hay crops and pastures.

Hay-Now - is a foliar applied liquid fertilizer containing N, P, K with Sulfur, Iron, and Zinc. It is specifically formulated to deliver readily available nutrients during the vegetative growth stages to enhance growth and root development. Hay-Now assists your hay crops and pastures during periods of stress to maximum production. Hay-Now is easy to use and can be tank-mixed with herbicides and pesticides. When diluted in water, Hay-Now is safe to apply to fields where animals are present.

Liquid Carbon - a activated humic technology product. Enhances micronutrient uptake and breakdown of plant residue.

# JOINT ILL IN LAMBS

Dr. Jackie Kurz of the Wyoming State Veterinary Laboratory gave Wyoming Wool Growers Association members an overview of joint ill in lambs, explaining that the bacterial polyarthritis usually appears when lambs are five to ten days of age. Joint ill is lameness caused by bacterial infection of the joints, and is a common disease of neonatal lambs, resulting in deaths, loss of body condition (or poor growth), and costs associated with treatment. The first symptom may be a generally tucked-up appearance in the lamb, but the disease quickly progresses with multiple inflamed joints and lameness, or the lambs are down and do not try to get up because of pain.

## TRANSMISSION

Although joint ill is often referred to as navel ill because infection can occur due to contamination of the umbilical cord, it can also enter the lamb through any wound or even the respiratory tract.

## AVOIDANCE

The most effective means to minimize the risk of joint ill are to keep a clean, dry lambing environment, and ensure timely and adequate colostrum in newborn lambs, Kurz said. Any lamb that isn't nursing within two hours of birth should be given supplemental colostrum. Kurz said that fresh/frozen colostrum is best, at a rate of 1 ¼ cups within two hours of birth, and five cups within the first 24 hours. Applying navel dip is important, but the 7% navel iodine may need to be purchased through a veterinarian or ag supply network. Chlorhexidine (2% or 4%) is also a viable option for navel dip. Regardless of what dip is used, producers need to be sure that the dip fully covers the navel.

## TREATMENT

Kurz emphasized that early treatment is vital for a successful outcome. As soon as signs of joint ill are noticed, producers should



by Cat Urbigkit

begin treatment with antibiotics and anti-inflammatories. Work with your veterinarian on a treatment program, which will involve subcutaneous injections on a daily basis for a number of days (generally 3-10 days depending on the antibiotic).

## WHEN IS IT TOO LATE?

Lambs treated immediately can be treated successfully with antibiotics and anti-inflammatories. But lambs treated more than five days after initial symptoms have a poor prognosis due to severe and irreversible damage to the joint capsule, and the loss of cartilage resulting in bone changes and painful bone spurs, according to Kurz. Lambs that are badly affected, or that fail to respond to treatment, should be euthanized for humane reasons.

# SPRING ANIMAL HEALTH & NUTRITION



Spring brings the hope of a good growing season. However the new season does create animal health and nutrition concerns. Concerns with performance (gain), grass tetany, fly season, and bloat should be addressed with preventative measures.

The lush early spring forage is mostly water and thus low in nutritional value. Animal performance suffers due

to their inability to eat enough of the wet forage to meet dry matter, mineral, and energy requirements. Provide free choice hay prior to turn out and continue feeding hay until the forage increases in dry matter content. Feeding a small amount of grain as a source of energy is also very helpful.

The lush, wet, fast growing pasture often causes grass tetany. This magnesium deficiency causes neurological problems; 'grass staggers', convulsions, and possibly death. Magnesium is needed for many physiological functions. Magnesium is a component of bone, important to nervous system function, and needed for enzyme function. Providing magnesium through the feed and/or with free choice mineral is very important. Cows should be on our High Magnesium 2:1 Beef Mineral to control cattle. Sheep

by Jeff Hunter

and Goats which are less susceptible to tetany, so they can be on our regular mineral program.

Begin your fly control program four weeks prior to 'fly season'. Control flies with oral larvicides, residual premise spray, and/or fly 'catchers'. When using an oral larvicide such as Rabon or Altosid, an early start is critical to success. Oral larvicides go 'through' the animal into its manure, when fly eggs hatch in this manure, the larvae are killed by the larvicide. A good nutrition program is just as important during maintenance as it is when livestock are in a productive state. The spring move to maintenance should be a time of rebuilding and nutritional fulfillment – allowing stock to be ready to reach their full potential.

# THE JOYS OF MAKING HAY

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THE SHEPHERD MAGAZINE

Yesterday, (Aug. 11) we finished baling some second cutting grass hay that had been in the swath for over a week.

It started out as beautiful stuff – mostly smooth brome, orchardgrass and a little fescue with a lush undergrowth of birdsfoot trefoil and red clover. Since it was second cutting, there were no seed heads. At an average grass height of about 18 inches, it looked to potentially outyield the first cutting, which is very unusual for cool-season grasses.

That was last week and this morning I'm wondering if the livestock will eat it come winter. If so, will it do them any good?

2021 has been an interesting year, weatherwise, here in God's Country. We started the year wrapped in drought and that is still the case. There's very little subsoil moisture to tap into, but just enough rain has fallen to keep the topsoil moist and most of our crops unaffected by hail look fairly good. In the meantime, we've had some of the most persistent stretches of high humidity I can remember.

Our recent efforts to put up quality hay were hampered by dew points in the tropical 80 degree-plus range for days. All of that humidity produced only three-tenths inch of rain. But with nearly calm winds and smoke from northern and western wildfires blocking the sun, we couldn't get the hay dry even with multiple turnings. Yesterday, with rain chances again climbing to 50 percent, we finally gave up and baled it. The moisture tester on the baler read as high as 24 percent, producing 1,800-lb. bales that without a chemical inhibitor would likely mold or, worse yet, catch on fire. Then, wouldn't you know it, the rain chances evaporated into nothing!

A good friend and fellow sheep herder from northwest Iowa told me years ago that he had quit trying to make hay and instead concentrated on putting up all of his winter forage needs during 10 sunny, dry days in September – in the form of

## Dispatch from Mormon Trail Farm



Clark BreDahl

corn silage. Weather-wise, it certainly does make sense. But in other regards, like so many things, it all depends.

Corn silage is excellent feed. But it is not cheap (inexpensive) feed. Unless you want to take your chances with used, outdated equipment, machinery costs can be very high. Likewise for fuel. Then you have to have a place to store it. The only upright silos in our part of the world were built at least 40 years ago. Construction

costs today are prohibitive along with expensive maintenance.

Heavy mil plastic bags work well if the chopped material isn't too dry. But the bags are prone to tears and resulting spoilage. Plastic disposal can be an issue and the bags, too, are not cheap.

The preferred silage storage method in our area is in bunkers. Best results come with concrete floors and side walls which can be constructed either above or below ground level. Local farmers who don't usually cut silage sometimes store "bunkers" of chopped corn on bare ground packed between walls of big round bales. Though useful in emergencies, a significant portion of that silage often is hauled back to the fields the following spring as manure.

For us, the more of our winter feed that we don't have to harvest, the better. Cows and ewes have feet to carry them to the feed and mouths to harvest it. The two key variables are availability and access.

Obviously, if everything is harvested mechanically or grazed close during the growing season, feet won't help much in finding winter feed. Availability is limited. And, in our country, fences must be livestock tight, water must be available and deep snow or hard ice can sometimes

interfere. Access can be an issue.

Weather can frustrate winter grazing as much as summer hay harvest. But both sheep and cattle are surprisingly good at digging out high quality forage if they know it's there. And considerable research from Canada indicates cows (and presumably ewes) can survive even harsh northern winters with only snow as their water source.

In Iowa, where row crops predominate, farms that still maintain cows or ewes seem to prefer harvesting and hauling feed to the animals rather than utilizing stockpiled forages in the field. One of the "unfair advantages" we have in this state is the plentiful supply of residue left behind following corn grain harvest. With minor supplementation of vitamins, minerals and occasionally protein, corn leaves and husks can provide adequate nutrition for dry, early-mid gestation cows and ewes. Whether it's economically feasible via mechanical harvest, however, is open for debate.

Despite the fact that new two-strand high tensile electric fence around Iowa's row crop fields can pay for itself in as little as two years, more farmers are tearing fences out than putting them in. Perhaps that tells us those producers weren't really as hard up as they claimed last year when corn prices slipped below three dollars per bushel. A year around forage supply is vital for

*A year around forage supply is vital for ruminant livestock production. All harvest and delivery systems have benefits and risks, and none are effective 100 percent of the time.*

ruminant livestock production. All harvest and delivery systems have benefits and risks, and none are effective 100 percent of the time. But our hay-making headaches of the past week emphasize once again the advantages of letting the animals do the work. They don't mind a little shower of rain and if humidity bothers, they'll gladly park in the shade and chew cud for a while. They set their own schedule, pay no heed to weather forecasts and never get frustrated over equipment breakdowns. After a few millennia of evolution, they've pretty well got the system figured out. We're supposed to be the smart ones. Maybe we should pay closer attention.

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## 'WHAT'S NEW'

by Jeff Hunter

It's hard to believe that another year has gone by so quickly. While 2021 will certainly be remembered, 2022 might be even more interesting. Our company was blessed with record tonnage and sales in 2021. 2022 is off to a great start, but has some challenges. Labor and Transportation issues have increased the price of everything and made production more difficult.

I hope you find this newsletter informative. This issue has some timely forage articles which I think you will enjoy. Our plan is to have three newsletters in 2022.

*Be sure to take us up on the great offer to the right for a free subscription to The Shepherd Magazine. I think the magazine is one of the best sources for accurate, useful information on sheep production.*

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