



HOMESTEAD & FARM NOTES

December 2012

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Happy Holidays

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Upcoming Events & Programs

For a listing of more programs visit: <http://union.ifas.ufl.edu>

Dec 3rd: **Personal Financial Management Program for Persons filing Bankruptcy** at the Alachua County Extension Office from 12:00 Noon to 4:30PM. Please call (352) 955-2402 to pre-register.

Dec 8th: **Union County Christmas Parade** 4-Her's meet at the Extension Office at 4:45PM.

Dec 12th: **Forest Stewardship Workshop - The "Green Value of your Woods"** at the Baker County Extension Office from 1:00PM to 4:00PM. Call (904) 259-3520 to register.

Dec 20th: **Marketing & Value Added Products** at the Alachua County Extension Office 6:00PM to 8:00PM. 2800 NE 39th Avenue, Gainesville. Call (352) 955-2402 to register.

Dec 24th & 25th: **Seasons Greetings!!!** Extension Office closed for holidays.

Jan 1st: **Happy New Year!!!** Extension Office closed. Be Safe!!!

Office News & Updates

Seasons Greetings

Hello Readers & Producers,

This year's Farm City Week celebration was held on November 19th at the Lake Butler Community Center. It was organized by the Union County Ministerial Association and the County Extension Office. Approximately 250 people attended and brought an array of delicious dishes. I would like to thank the Union Farm Bureau for providing the chicken which was prepared by Paul Waters. Our 4-H kids, staff and volunteers did a wonderful job of serving the food. Union Farm Bureau did an excellent job of decorating the venue.

The program began with an invocation and blessing, after which our guest speaker, Mr. Danny Raulerson provided some encouraging words to the audience. This was followed by an update from the County Extension Office. The second half of the evening session was a service organized by the Union County Ministerial Association. I would like to thank all of you for making this year's event a success.

Thank You, Basil Bactawar, Director/Agent



4-H Happenings

8 Dec 2012 @ 4:45PM we will meet behind the Extension Office to fix up our float. Be sure to check with your 4-H Club Leader, as each 4-H Club may have something a little different. We will go back to the Extension Office after the parade, so parents please make sure to pick up your 4-Her there.

Be sure you have everything ready for your animal project. Be sure to have the tag and weight in time and plan to be early.

Best of all this is the time we stop and enjoy our families and friends. Let us not forget those in harm's way, so we can enjoy the freedoms we share in the United States of America. Our men and women service in the uniformed and ununiformed service at home and abroad. These brave men and women voluntarily gave their time and efforts, so we at home are afforded our freedoms. Remember the two who voluntarily made this possible, God and the American service men.

Wishing you the best of the season, and an even better New Year to come.

Colan Coody

Livestock & Wildlife

Beef Calendar for December:

Check for external parasites (lice during cold weather) and treat.

Worm cows and heifers before putting them on rye pastures for supplementing.

Check cows daily for calving problems.

Rotate calving pastures.

Check bull health. If you are buying a replacement bull, investigate its health.

If you have dead animals, be sure to post them with your vet to prevent other deaths.

Keep your mineral feeders full. Low quality forages require more mineral for fiber digestion by cattle.

Check replacement heifers to be sure they will be ready to breed 3 - 4 weeks before placing them with main cow herd.

Wildlife Happenings for December

Snail Kites gather in large South Florida roosts, and nesting activity begins.

This usually is one of the best months to watch waterfowl on wetlands, lake and prairies.

Great Horned Owls and Barred Owls are courting.

Look for Goldfinches in your bird feeders in North Florida.

Bald Eagles start hatching near Christmas Day in North Florida.

Great Horned Owl



Small Ruminant Corner



Photo courtesy of: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/baalands/sets/72157594532904385/>

This month we will focus on the Dorper

By: Basil Bactawar

Origin: This mutton breed was developed in South Africa in the 1930's from Dorset Horn and Blackheaded Persia for the extensive regions of South Africa. The Dorper breed is not a true hair sheep. The Blackheaded Persian hair sheep originated in arid conditions of the Middle East where parasites were generally not a problem.

Coat & Color: Solid white or white with black head. Difference in color is a matter of preference. The coat is a mixture of hair and wool and will shed from animal in late spring/early summer.

Mature Weight (Lbs.): Ewe: 135 - 165 pounds; Ram: 220 - 250 pounds.

Disposition & Mothering Ability: Ewes are docile with good mothering ability. Produce large amount of milk.

Environmental Adaptability: Well adapted to hot and dry conditions. They are hardy and do well in range. Non-selective grazers that perform well under both extensive and intensive production systems. When selecting breeding stock, choose animals with good feet.

Breeding Season: Long / extended and not limited by season.

Lambing Interval: Can be 8 months. Ewes can lamb 3 times in 2 years.

Lambing Percent %: Given an average lambing percent of 150 and 3 lambing in 2 years, Dorper will produce 2.25 lambs on an annual basis under good management and forage conditions.

Average Birth Weight (lbs.): 9.5 pounds

Weight Gain/Daily: 0.55 lb. intensive production.

Market Weight/Live/Age: 110 - 130 pounds.

Resistance to Parasites: Lacking.

Horticulture Hints

This is the month to prune plants that produce flowers on the current season's growth. Examples of these plants are: Hibiscus, Rose, Golden Rain Tree, and Crape Myrtle. Detailed information, illustrations and the tools you need can be downloaded from the University of Florida IFAS Extension Information Distribution Service at the following site:

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/MG087>

Bulbs to Plant this month:

African Lily, Amaryllis, Anemone, Aztec Lily, Calla, Day Lily, Dutch Iris, Elephant Ears, Easter Lily, Freesia, Grape Hyacinth, Hurricane Lily, Iris, Ixia, Kaffir Lily, Moreae, Narcissus, Snow Flake, Spider Lily, Walking Iris, Watsonia and Zephyr Lily.



Amaryllis



Easter Lily

Annual flowers to plant this month:

Calendula, Carnation (Dianthus), Delphinium, Foxglove, Larkspur, Ornamental Cabbage & Kale, Pansy, Petunia, Shasta daisy, and Snapdragon.

Cool season vegetables to plant this month:

Beets, Broccoli, Brussels sprout, Cabbage, Carrots, Chinese cabbage, Endive, Kale, Leek, Mustard, Onions, Radish, Rutabaga, all can be planted this month. We have an excellent vegetable planting guide (varieties, dates of planting, pest control, etc.) at the office and can also be downloaded from our website. <http://union.ifas.ufl.edu>