

Co-Product Supplements

Farmers Attending Ill. Beef Conference Learn Co-Products' Role In Cattle Dietary Plan

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SPRINGFIELD, ILL.

Beef cattle producers were updated on feeding options to replace a short hay supply at the Illinois Beef Cattle Co-Products Conference in Springfield, Ill. Dave Seibert, University of Illinois Animal Systems Educator, gave an overview of the topics of the conference, which was attended by 180 beef cattle producers from throughout the Midwest.

According to Seibert, there was a tremendous amount of interest in the conference as a result of the shortage of hay due to the late freeze last

Dr. Daryl Strohbehn, beef cattle specialist from Iowa State University, outlined different rations for the cow herd and heifers with emphasis on combining crop residues, corn stalks, and wheat straw, with distillers grains. Dr. Rick Rasby, beef cattle specialist from the University of Nebraska, discussed storage option since most co-products are more reasonably priced in the summer but have the highest feeding use in the winter.

Also highlighting the conferences was Dr. Paul Walker, beef cattle professor from Illinois State University. He outlined the importance of proper mineral supplementation when feeding



Dave Seibert, University of Illinois Animal Systems Educator, and Ed Ballard, Retired University of Illinois Grazing Researcher, discussed the value of feeding co-products to beef cattle during a break at the conference. Photo by John LaRose Jr.

spring and the dry summer. What hay was harvested was fed last summer because of the dry summer and short pastures. Thus, beef cattle producers are searching for alternative options to feed their cow herd this winter. One of these is the use of co-products.

This need to find different ways to feed the cow herd resulted in producer attendance from six states including Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri and Iowa, as well as Illinois. Many of the producers were from the southern half of Illinois and Indiana, Kentucky and Missouri where the feed supply is drastically short.

"What beef cattle producers are confronted with is how to use co-products in their operation," Seibert said. "The traditional method of feeding the cow herd is hauling a bale of grass-legume hay and placing it in a round bale feeder. Also, mixed hay is fairly well balanced for the cow herd and traditionally raised on the farm. The problem with this is the terrible shortage of hay resulting in some of the highest prices ever."

However, Seibert indicated that the use of co-products brings on a host of feeding decisions because of the following situations: Where are the co-products plants locations? What types of products do they have available? What is the moisture content of these products? What is their nutritional composition? What is the cost of hauling these products from plant to the farm? How long can they be stored? How do they compare on protein, energy, mineral, etc. value to other feedstuffs? How do they mix with and complement other feedstuffs (maybe crop residues) already on the farm? Are there any ingredients in co-products that producers must be concerned with when feeding their beef herd?

The Illinois Co-Products Conference brought together eight beef cattle and research specialists from the three states of Nebraska, Iowa and Illinois, and from five universities. They covered topics from where the plants are located and the types of co-products available, price comparisons, storage, how to incorporate them into rations for all phases of products (cow, heifers/ stockers and feedlot), and the impact on quality-yield grades to new products coming out of these plants in the future.

corn co-products like distiller grains and corn gluten. Presenting a producer prospective was Dr. Ken Nimrick, beef cattle professor from Western Illinois University. Dr. Nimrick operates a 175-head beef cattle operation in western Illinois and utilizes only standing corn and corn gluten to winter his cow herd. He shared his cost for this method which is one of the lowest costs of wintering a beef cow in Illinois.

One of the most interesting speakers was Dr. Vijay Singh, professor and researcher from the University of Illinois Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering, who is internationally known. He spoke regarding the different processes that take place in a ruminant animal's digestion. He discussed additional nutrients that are found in the co-products, and how cattle feeding will change in the future.

As beef cattle producers search for alternative feed sources this winter they need to be aware that there are numerous co-products available. This was outlined by Seibert in his handout of 36 different Co-Products Plants located in and within 50 miles of Illinois. This list includes the products from the corn ethanol production, brewing industry, and soybean processing plants.

"Of major importance is to know the location of the plants and who serves as the marketing manager for each plant," he said. "This list contains the names of the marketing contact people and their telephone numbers. In summary, in and around Illinois there are 21 corn processing plants, 13 soybean processing plants, and two brewers' plants. Copies of the list can be obtained on the web by visiting the following website: <<http://web.extension.uiuc.edu/east-peoria-center/anisci.html>>

A copy of the proceedings from the conference that includes papers and presentations is available for \$10 by contacting Seibert. Please send a check payable to the University of Illinois to: Dave Seibert, East Peoria Extension Center, 727 Sabrina Drive, East Peoria, Illinois 61571. Please send additional requests to Seibert at <dseibert@uiuc.edu>

In a later edition, MidAmerica Farmer Grower will include other presentations from this event.

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