



# UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA EXTENSION

Ben Hill County

## BEN HILL COUNTY AGRICULTURE NEWS (Livestock)

Sat 23	82°/72°		PM Showers	☀ 51%	↙ NE 4 mph
Sun 24	88°/72°		AM Clouds/PM Sun	☀ 24%	↓ N 4 mph
Mon 25	91°/65°		Mostly Sunny	☀ 13%	↘ NW 6 mph
Tue 26	88°/66°		Sunny	☀ 3%	↘ NNW 7 mph
Wed 27	87°/66°		Partly Cloudy	☀ 6%	↘ NNE 6 mph
Thu 28	86°/65°		Partly Cloudy	☀ 17%	↙ ENE 8 mph
Fri 29	86°/66°		Partly Cloudy	☀ 19%	↙ NE 8 mph
Sat 30	85°/68°		Mostly Cloudy	☀ 23%	↙ ENE 8 mph
Sun 31	85°/69°		Partly Cloudy	☀ 24%	↙ ENE 8 mph
Mon 01	85°/69°		PM Showers	☀ 31%	↙ ENE 7 mph
Tue 02	87°/69°		Partly Cloudy	☀ 24%	↘ NNE 7 mph
Wed 03	87°/69°		Partly Cloudy	☀ 24%	↘ NNE 7 mph
Thu 04	87°/70°		Partly Cloudy	☀ 24%	↙ NE 7 mph
Fri 05	88°/70°		Partly Cloudy	☀ 24%	↙ NE 7 mph

(Forecast from The Weather Channel for Ben Hill County)

Link to Georgia Livestock Review

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/lswgeorgia.pdf>

Link to Feeder Cattle Futures Quotes

<https://www.cmegroup.com/markets/agriculture/livestock/feeder-cattle.html>

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AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

4-H YOUTH

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## Small Ruminant Journeyman Program Coming Jan-Feb 2026

A 6-week hybrid training for  
new and experienced small  
ruminant owners.

### ABS AI School - Live Oak, FL Sept 26-28, 2025

REGISTRATION FEE: \$500. This covers the cost of supplies and practice cows used at the school. This program is limited to 15 students in order to insure as much one-to-one help during practice as possible. Therefore, registrations will be accepted on a first-come, first serve basis. Contact Brandi to get registration form.



#### August

- August 14-16, 2025 - Georgia Young Farmer Association Livestock Show- Perry, GA
- August 15-16, 2025 - Clarke Oconee Cattlemen's Association Youth Livestock Show- Heritage Park Watkinsville, GA.
- August 21-24, 2025 - Chattooga County Agricultural Fair - Summerville, GA.
- August 21, 2025 - Rabun County FFA Alumni Market Goat Show - Tiger, GA.
- August 22, 2025 - Rabun County FFA Alumni Beef Cattle Show - Tiger, GA.
- August 23, 2025 - Rabun County FFA Alumni Market Hog Show - Tiger, GA.
- August 23, 2025 - The Peach Drop Goat Show - Jackson County Ag Facility Jefferson, GA.
- August 23, 2025 - Trojan Town Throwdown Hog Show - Johnson County Ag Center Wrightsville, GA.
- August 23, 2025 - Bring on the Heat Market Goat and Lamb Show - Billy Walker Ag Center Douglas, GA.
- August 23, 2025 - Jolly Roger Southern Classic Lamb Show - Upson-Lee Ag Center Thomaston, GA.
- August 29-31, 2025 - Peach State Labor Day Throwdown Pig Show and Goat and Lamb Show - GNFA Perry, GA.
- August 30, 2025 - Dawson FFA Alumni PIG JIG - Roger D Slaton Ag Center Dawsonville, GA.
- August 30, 2025 - UGA Block and Bridle Lamb and Goat Summer Classic - UGA Livestock Instructional Arena Athens, GA.

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## Nitrate Toxicity: Dennis W. Hancock

[https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%20915\\_7.PDF](https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%20915_7.PDF)

### Effects of High Nitrates on Animal Diet

Nitrate ( $\text{NO}_3^-$ ) is reduced to nitrite ( $\text{NO}_2^-$ ) by 32 - 2- microbes in the digestive tract of cattle, sheep, goats, horses, and other animals. In most cases, the microbes further convert the nitrite to ammonia and ultimately to amino acids and proteins. However, ingestion of high concentrations of nitrates builds up nitrite levels and the nitrite is absorbed into the animal's bloodstream. **Once in the bloodstream, nitrites bind with hemoglobin** (creating methemoglobin) and prevent the normal transfer of oxygen. Depending upon the amounts consumed, symptoms of nitrate poisoning may be hardly noticeable. **Low nitrate intake levels often cause lower milk production, abortion, breeding problems, or symptoms that mimic a nutritional deficiency.** A key diagnostic feature of acute nitrate toxicity is dark brown or **"chocolate-colored" blood**. Unfortunately, acute toxicity may appear suddenly (often within one to two hours of ingesting toxic nitrate levels) and animals are often simply found dead. In most cases, **treatment is not practical due to the rapid onset of symptoms.** Thus, prevention is the primary way to combat nitrate toxicity.

### Nitrate Accumulation in the Plant

Plants take up nitrogen primarily in the form of nitrate. Early in the plant's growth, nitrate uptake is relatively high, and nitrates may become concentrated. As plant growth slows, the plant continues to take up nitrates, but the nitrates do not convert to amino acids and proteins. This causes **a buildup of nitrates in the plant**. Periods of drought or cloudy weather that slows the rate of photosynthesis are often associated with slowed plant growth and the accumulation of nitrates. Plants in vegetative stages are most likely to have high nitrate levels. **Forage crops that receive high nitrogen fertilization** are more likely to contain high nitrate concentrations. Thus, it is common for summer annuals, warm-season perennials, and small grains to have high nitrates

### Decreasing Risk of Nitrate Toxicity

**Fertilization** - Nitrogen fertilization is critical to high forage yields. However, splitting the nitrogen applications throughout the growing season rather than applying the full rate at the beginning of the season reduces the risk of high nitrate concentrations.

**Harvest Techniques**- Effectively limit the total nitrate intake by providing supplements (cottonseed, corn gluten, or soybean hulls) or feeding low-nitrate roughage prior to turning animals into pasture that is high in nitrates.

**The most risky harvest method is to green chop.** In addition to high initial nitrate levels, forage harvested as green chop will often undergo a heat cycle that increases the conversion of nitrates to nitrites.

Avoid elevated nitrate concentrations in the lower parts of the plant stem and any low growing weeds by raising the cutting height.

**To prevent nitrate toxicity, producers should test several representative samples from any forage suspected to be high in nitrates.**

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Table 1. A selection of common plants known to accumulate nitrates.

Grasses		Forbs
Bermudagrass	Rescuegrass	Cudweed
Brown top millet	Rye	Dock
Crabgrass	Ryegrass	Horsenettle
Corn	Sorghum	Jimsonweed
Tall fescue	Sudangrass	Lambsquarter
Johnson grass	Sorghum x Sudan	Nightshade
Oats	Wheat	Pigweed
Pearl millet		

Table 2. Management of various nitrate levels in beef cattle rations.

Forage Nitrate (ppm dry forage)	Guidance
<4,500	Safe to feed with adequate feed and water
4,500 - 6,500	Safe under most conditions but, if feeding pregnant animals, restrict to one-half (1/2) of the ration
6,500 - 9,000	Limit to one-half (1/2) of the ration
9,000 - 15,000	Limit to one-third (1/3) of the ration
15,000 - 18,000	Limit to one-quarter (1/4) of the ration
>18,000	Potentially lethal, very risky, dilute carefully



Mobile Shade Structures.

**Not for long term shade in one area!!**

Good for rotational grazing in pastures.

After a couple of days, the area will be trampled and covered in manure, so don't leave the structures in the same place for long!

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#### A new era of fence?

Gallagher has a system that uses cellular connection to fence in livestock using a virtual fence. **There is much information that is needed about this.**

This would be great for rotational grazing in large pastures or to graze certain areas that have not been grazable before.

It could also be useful in winter grazing of cover crops.

**A perimeter fence should still be utilized.**

If you have any questions, please reach out!

#### Extension Value added services:

There are several resources your county agent has access to for assisting the public:

- **SpotOn Digital Sprayer Calibrator & nozzle cleaner tool** - Accurate flow rate checking of individual sprayer nozzles.
  - **Fertilizer Spinner-Disc Spreader Calibration** - spread pattern testing of fertilizer spreaders.
  - **Hay Moisture Tester** – Evaluation and assessment of hay to bale at optimum moisture content - decrease mold growth and increase feed value. Test baled or unbaled (in field)
  - **Forced Motor Planter Calibration** – at-plant insecticide hopper box calibrations. Potential benefits: increase insecticide application efficacy with the appropriate and effective application of product label and recommended control rate. Decrease
  - **Mobile Irrigation Lab** – Pivot efficiency evaluation/Irrigation audits to support water conservation and decrease irrigation costs.
  - **Harvest Moisture Testing** – Corn and soybean moisture testing to decrease drying time and fuel costs.
  - **Enviroscape Watershed Model** - Environmental education programming tool. Interactive demonstration of the sources and effects of water pollution. Present and illustrate watershed/stormwater concept.
  - **Rainfall Simulator Tabletop Educational Program tool** -
  - **Digital wind meter educational tool** – Anemometer measures wind speed to support safe pesticide applications and reduce drift.
  - **Pivot Calibrations**
  - **Drone imagery/scouting**

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