

For Immediate Release
Contact Clinton Laflin
785-483-3157

The Importance of Feed Testing
By: Clinton Laflin, Midway Extension Livestock Agent

It was 53 degrees as I walked out of my house yesterday morning. As we turn the page from summer to fall, it is important to begin testing feedstuffs for nitrates, prussic acid and nutritional value. Winter will be here soon, and as producers we must make sure what we are feeding meets the nutritional needs of our livestock.

If you would like to test your feeds, the extension office can help you. We have free feed probes that you can borrow to take hay bale samples. If you bring these samples into our Russell or Ellsworth offices we can submit these samples to area labs for testing. We can also receive standing forage samples, grain, and complete rations.

As the producer you are in control of what tests are ran on each sample submission. Common tests check for nutrient content such as crude protein, total digestible nutrients (TDN), and moisture content of the sample.

If you are feeding alfalfa hay the lab is able to test for Relative Feed Value (RFV), and Relative Forage Quality (RFQ). These tests help you determine the quality of your feed and helps us determine in what amounts to feed it to meet your cowherd's nutrient requirements.

Using these sample results I can help you formulate a ration for your cattle that fit's your available feed resources, marketing strategy and cattle weight and performance goals. The software I use is known as BRANDS.

Common feedstuffs like sorghum-sudan carry a risk of nitrate and prussic acid poisoning especially in dry conditions or after a frost. Our labs can test for these potentially fatal toxins in a fast and cost-effective manner.

Typically tests take 3-5 business days to complete. Once I receive test results back I will promptly call you to discuss test results, and discuss next steps that fit your individual needs. Most tests are reasonably priced ranging from \$5 to \$30 per test.

If you have further questions about feed testing, or the services I provide as your local livestock extension agent please send me an Email at cllaflin@ksu.edu, or call me at the Russell office at 785-483-3157 or Ellsworth, 785-472-4442. Looking forward to working with you!