Calf Price Trends

Trend of the Highest Price Reported for Various Weight Calves, Average of 6 East & Central Texas Livestock Auctions

Chart created by Dr. Jason Banta, Extension Beef Cattle Specialist

For a weekly email copy of this chart please email amsensing@ag.tamu.edu or contact a Texas A&M AgriLife County Extension Agent



Packer Cow PriceTrends

Trend of High and Low Prices Reported for Packer Cows, Average of 6 East & Central Texas Livestock Auctions

Chart created by Dr. Jason Banta, Extension Beef Cattle Specialist

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BODY CONDITION SCORE & BASIC REPRODUCTION IN CATTLE



JUNE 10, 2025

DR. VANESSA CORRIHER OLSON

BERMUDA GRASS CHALLENGES IN PASTURES & HAY MEADOWS





HYDROGEN CYANIDE & NITRATES IN BEEF CATTLE



AUG 12, 2025

DR. VANESSA CORRIHER OLSON

ALFALFA: TO GROW OR NOT TO GROW?





Click TITLE of each program or scan QR Code to register

ALL PROGRAMS START AT 6:00 PM

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Got nitrate concerns?

SOUTH CENTRAL

Unfortunately, drought and abnormally dry conditions have continued for much of the South Central region, and with these conditions come questions about nitrate toxicity.

Although nitrates can accumulate in a variety of forages and weeds, the species most likely to accumulate high levels include corn, sorghum, sudangrass, sorghum-sudangrass hybrids, johnsongrass, pigweed and cereal grains (e.g., oats, wheat, rye, etc.). It is important to distinguish it is the vegetative portions of these plants, and not the grain or seedheads, that are a concern.

Native grasses, timothy, bromegrass, bermudagrass, bahiagrass and old-world bluestems are not considered to be important accumulators of nitrates.

Nitrates accumulate when plants are pulling nitrates out of the soil but are not growing enough to convert these nitrates to amino acids and protein molecules. Nitrates generally accumulate in the lower portions of the stem. So when cutting hay or silage, one strategy to reduce nitrate levels is to raise the height of the hay cutter or silage chopper, leaving the bottom 3 to 12 inches of the stems in the field. Making silage can reduce nitrate levels 40 to 60 percent during the curing process; silages should be tested after the curing process has finished.

Nitrate content is generally reported as nitrate or nitratenitrogen; to convert nitrate-nitrogen to nitrate, multiply by 4.43. Most labs and university extension fact sheets provide feeding recommendations depending on nitrate content. For example, the recommendations may say samples below 3,000 parts per million nitrate are safe to feed to all cattle, while samples above 10,000 parts per million nitrate should not be fed. Samples in between these values can be fed at 25 percent, 50 percent or some other percentage of the total diet.

Levels considered safe to feed to all cattle (pregnant cows, lactating cows, calves, etc.) differ across states and labs. These differences are due to limited research on nitrate toxicity. Variations in diet composition, rumen microbial populations, rate of intake and local environments can affect how cattle respond to different levels of nitrates. Research from the Netherlands indicates nitrate-rich hay is more toxic than nitrate-rich grass. Additionally, cattle can adapt to higher levels of nitrates over time.

Strategies to deal with highnitrate forages include feeding corn or similar energy sources, mixing high-nitrate forages with low-nitrate forages or inoculating the rumen with certain strains of bacteria.



Associate Professo and Extension Beef Cattle Texas A&M University jpbanta@ag.tamu.edu

When dealing with nitrate-rich forages, visit with a nutritionist or veterinarian about strategies for your ~~~{ situation.





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