

KAUAI COUNTY LIVESTOCK NEWS

There and Back Again

Kauai livestock agent will be studying on the mainland until May

By Matt Stevenson



I consider myself very fortunate to be working in collaboration with the livestock producers of Hawaii to find lasting approaches to ranching systems. This year, we have been investigating beef tenderness and grazing management for weed control. Please see pages 3 and 4 for details on these projects that were funded by the County of Kauai and the USDA Western Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education program. To hone my skills to better meet my clients' needs

and to focus and increase the quality of my research and extension programs, I have decided to pursue more schooling in the Range Science program at Utah State University. The University of Hawaii has granted me leave for professional development so I can attend classes on USU's frigid campus in Logan from January through May 2012. I am eager to work with world renowned animal behaviorists Dr. Fred Provenza and Dr. Juan Villalba at USU as well as my colleague Dr. Mark Thorne,

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THERE AND BACK AGAIN (CONT'D FROM P. 1)

UH-CTAHR State Range Extension Specialist. While I regret having to be physically absent, I will be available by email for any questions or issues that can be resolved that way.

Furthermore, Dr. Thorne as well as my counterparts on the Big Island Glen Fukumoto and Mike DuPonte can field livestock or pasture management questions and offer advice. You can also find up to date information through the UH-CTAHR Beef Initiative Group facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Beef-Initiative-Group-University-of-Hawaii/175211562523344>.

I will be taking classes on poisonous plants, plant-herbivore interactions, animal metabolism, and sheep production and management. I intend to hit the ground running when I get back in May to apply these studies. Thanks to Kauai County Administrator Roy Yamakawa, Dr. Thorne, and the managers and crews of the

Mealani and Kauai research stations, we now have fence materials for the pastures at the Kauai station. My goal is, with your help, to have the fence up and livestock research on the ground by the end of next year.

If there are any topics you would like me to investigate while I am in this study mode, please don't hesitate to send me an email. Also, I am more than happy to continue fielding your questions by email. Send me pictures of weeds, pests, or animal health concerns for evaluation. I will do my best to remain in contact during my absence. 

If you would like to submit events or other announcements for the next newsletter, please e-mail me at stevens@hawaii.edu.

PUMPKIN PECAN PIE




From: Trail Boss's Cowboy Cookbook, Society for Range Management, Wheat Ridge, Colorado, 1985.

Nancy Reagan - Washington, D.C.

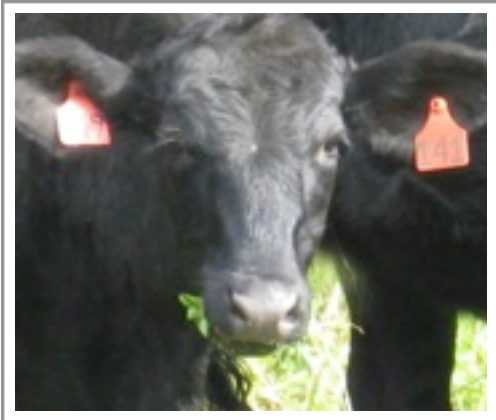
- 4 slightly beaten eggs**
- 2 c. canned or mashed cooked pumpkin**
- 1 c. sugar**
- 1 c. chopped pecans**
- 2 c. milk**
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon**
- 3/4 tsp. salt**
- 1 unbaked 9-inch pie shell**
- 1 tsp. vanilla**
- 1/2 cup dark corn syrup**

Combine ingredients except pecans. Pour into pie shell - top with pecans. Bake at 350° for 40 minutes, or until set.

GOT ORIGINAL RECIPES?

The Society for Range Management is reissuing their Cowboy Cookbook and is taking submissions. They are particularly interested in recipes that have a ranch or farm family story that goes with them. Send recipes to srmcookbook@yahoo.com with your name, ranch name, and city and state with each submission. Please write "SRM cookbook" in the subject line. 

COWS EAT WEEDS?




Kauai heifer trying wedelia.

New Study Evaluates Methods to Train Livestock to Eat Weeds

A great way to deal with a weed is to turn it into forage. This is the approach behind methods developed on the mainland to manage weeds that have firmly established a foothold in pastures. Of course, the best way to deal with weeds is to not have them in the first place, so diligent monitoring and swift action on new infestations is always important. But what about those plants that just seem to roll on despite your best efforts? Wedelia, bushy beard grass, spiny amaranth, balloon plant or japanese lantern, and elephantopus are among the repeat offending weeds that ranchers have targeted with herbicide, rotational grazing, and multiple species with limited success.

In collaboration with ranches on Kauai, Maui, and the Big Island and Utah State University, the CTAHR Beef Initiative Group received funding this summer from the USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program to evaluate efficacy of mainland developed methods on tropical weeds. Kathy Voth of Livestock for Landscapes (www.livestockforlandscapes.com) has developed a behavior-based approach to training livestock to overcome their fear of unfamiliar foods and ultimately incorporate weeds to their regular diet. Her work is the application of research

generated through the Behavior Education for Humans, Animals, Vegetation, and Ecosystem (BEHAVE) management network centered at Utah State University.

Work began in Hawaii in the late Fall, and preliminary results seem to show that yes, cattle, sheep, and goats will try pasture pests. The lingering questions are: will they continue to eat weeds to no ill effect on their health, reproduction, or meat quality, and will this be enough to keep weeds in check? We will monitor pastures, animals, and meat over three years to get at these questions. Also, for some weeds, further research is required to determine if a supplementation program can help animals deal with plant chemistry. When we complete data collection and analysis, results and recommendations will be presented in workshops throughout the state. Look for updates on the Beef Initiative Group facebook page and through future editions of this newsletter. 



Kauai sheep nibbling elephantopus flowers (left), and signs of grazing on target weed at end of training period (right).

KAUAI BEEF QUALITY EVALUATION PHASE II

County of Kauai funds Kauai Cattlemen's Association to continue study



In partnership with the Kauai Cattlemen's Association, CTAHR is continuing its assessment of beef produced on Kauai. Phase I of the study was a store shelf survey of ribeye steaks where samples originating from four local ranches available at retail were evaluated for tenderness, size, and marbling. Tenderness is the leading measure of beef consumer satisfaction followed by flavor. Results were published in a CTAHR Extension publication available at www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/oc/freepubs/pdf/FST-40.pdf.

Phase II is a focus study with a collaborating ranch to isolate factors shown to affect tenderness: age at slaughter and length of aging the beef. Ribeye steak samples were collected from cattle less than 24 months of age, and samples were aged for a total of two weeks (one week carcass dry age at slaughterhouse, and one week wet age of steak sample in refrigerator). We were able to purchase a shear force tester, used for objectively determining tenderness, and samples will be evaluated and compared to last year's survey. Also, Phase II will use trained flavor panels to assess Kauai beef some time starting next summer. 🐮

PHOTO QUIZ



Last issue's quiz - Why is there a difference in growth between these double rows of the Tarramba cultivar of *Leucaena leucocephala* planted at the same time in calcareous soils in the Mariana Islands?

Answer: While aboveground this site looks uniform, below the surface it is quite variable. Limestone bedrock or a hardpan layer can make for very shallow soils in short distances. The plants in the foreground at left are root bound whereas the others have found deeper soil.



This issue's quiz - What are these two Maui ranchers doing with all these peanuts? Send your ideas, comments, or sarcastic remarks to Matt at stenenso@hawaii.edu. The answer will be discussed in the next issue. 🐮

JANE KURIKI - ADIOS, KE ALOHA!



With heavy hearts, we at CTAHR Kauai County announce the retirement of Jane Kuriki. For over four decades, Jane has kept the office running smoothly. She has been the de facto county administrator and horticulture, livestock, and 4-H agent on many occasions drawing from her vast experience. Everyone in the Kauai Extension Office and Kauai Agricultural Research Station has been able to do their jobs better because of her dedication and expertise. Please be patient with us as we struggle to make the transition to run the office without her. We wish Jane the very

best in her retirement! Hopefully, we will still see her around the office for an occasional visit. 🐔

EXCELLENCE IN RANGE MANAGEMENT - BOBBY FERREIRA

Congratulations to Kauai's own Bobby Ferreira of Olumau Angus Plus for receiving the Excellence in Range Management award from the California-Pacific Section of the Society for Range Management. The Section awards one or two individuals each year in recognition of land managers who have made significant contributions towards advancing rangeland stewardship. While Bobby is now splitting his time between Kauai and Maui, the nomination was in recognition of the range improvements he made while managing Olumau Angus Plus in Puihi. In less than 8 years, Bobby transitioned the pastures from fallow sugarcane fields to highly productive legume-grass mixes supporting animals with top beef genetics for forage finishing in the tropics. Congratulations again Bobby!



*****NOTE*****

To conserve resources, the Kauai County Livestock News is now a completely digital publication. However, if you do not have Internet access or do not use e-mail and would like to receive a hard copy of this newsletter, please send me your name and mailing address.

“Management is the substitution of thought for brawn and muscle, of knowledge for folklore and superstition, and of cooperation for force.”

-- Peter F. Drucker



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