

News Flash for Thursday, July 26, 2012

Drought

The recent drought in Missouri has severely withered crops. With temperatures in the upper 90s to mid-100 degrees Fahrenheit, farmers worry about the harmful conditions on corn, soybeans, and other crops. Vegetable and fruit growers are worried they will lose their produce -- just as many did last year, especially in the Bootheel where there was severe drought and flooding.

Cattle farmers are also being hit hard as the pasture for their animals dries up. Some are buying hay at higher prices in order to feed their herd while others are selling part of their herd to cut costs.

Unless things improve and we get significant rainfall, the effect on society will be adverse. For example:

- 1) The increase in the price of corn and hay will push the price of cattle feed up, which will lead to desperate decisions by some farmers to sell part of their herd.
- 2) Depending on how many of the animals sold are sent to be slaughtered and at what rate, the price of beef may rise or fall for consumers.
- 3) The price of all products made from corn, soybeans, and other affected crops will rise so consumers will pay more for such items as corn syrup, sweeteners, ethanol (gas), and tacos.
- 4) Because of the loss of fruits and vegetables, consumers will have to pay higher prices for produce shipped into the local market from more distant locations.

For more information, visit Doane's website at: <http://www.doane.com/>

Ruminants

Goats are able to graze in harsh conditions. But, if this type of drought continues to occur on a regular basis, farmers may be better off diversifying ruminant production. This can be achieved by adopting the co-grazing method of raising large and small ruminants together using a rotational paddock form of grazing to increase farm profits.

Overall, this drought, which has been seen as the worst in the past 25 years (Jefferson City Tribune, July 2012), will ruin the livelihood of many and cause hundreds of millions of dollars in losses.

For those who may not have heard, Dr. Steve Meredith, Dean of the College of Agricultural and Natural Sciences at Lincoln University, communicated the following to faculty and staff on July 24, 2012: “The Governor sent out two Executive Orders 12-07 and 12-08 yesterday for producers that need immediate assistance with water for crop and/or livestock. Please let your Extension staff know to help get the word out. Here is a link on the state web page and people can apply at their local SWCD. <http://www.dnr.mo.gov/drought-relief.htm>

Please check it out and pass it on to those who may need it.

Below is the average price for goat and sheep obtained from St. Joseph Goat and Sheep Stockyard auction through the Missouri Department of Agriculture:

Goat Sale:

Slaughter Kids: Selection 1 45-60 lbs 175.00-187.50, few 192.50-202.50; 60- 70 lbs 165.00-185.00. Selection 2 43-60 lbs 150.00-177.50. Selection 3 43-75 lbs 108.00-130.00.

Sheep Sale:

Slaughter Lambs: Choice, few Prime 2-3 90-125 lbs 90.00-111.00; pkg 140 lbs 90.00. Non-Traditional pkg 80 lbs 125.00; 85-90 lbs 90.00-113.00.