

AG NOTES
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FARMERS MARKET

We have been in contact with many of our vendors to determine how much product they have available for the market. The sad thing is that the weather has been really devastating for our farmers here as well as in most of the country.

We will not be able to open the market until there is sufficient stuff to sell. Every vendor I've talked to has supply issues and a late planting that is dying for water. The heat has interfered with pollination and blooms. Some vendors have replanted in hopes of better weather to come.

We will continue to monitor the supply and we hope that we can open at a later time. It's the best that we can do.

HEAT STRESS

It's bothering me. When I go to the barn to feed in the evenings, I can tell that it's hurting the animals.

With the continued high temperatures in Middle Tennessee, and the increased cattle losses to heat in the feedlot areas, heat stress is a great concern. Nighttime temperatures remain high, and the animals do not have the chance to cool down. Additionally, pond water is quickly becoming stale and cattle may consume less or be introduced to disease from stagnant water.

We cannot control the temperature; however, the addition of a fresh water supply and shade will help. Again, the availability of fresh water and the mineral feeders in a shaded area may increase consumption of both and aid your herd in this high heat period.

Here are some tips compiled by my friend Jason Garret in Overton County. Mostly common sense, and applies to all species.

Water consumption is driven by environmental temperatures. Make sure animals have plenty of cool, fresh water. Animals must have shaded areas they can access to reduce heat loads. Work them early in the morning, not during the day or evening when heat loads are at peak.

Transport animals early in the morning. Cull unruly or high headed animals. They generally are the first to show signs of heat stress, especially if having to pen or work them in hot weather.

Control flies. Animals fighting aggravating flies in extremely hot conditions don't help with heat stress.

Try not to wean young stock in hot weather. This will add more stress to the mother, not to mention the young.

Watch animals closely with past health problems. Dark colored and heavier animals are more susceptible for heat stress. If confined, make sure the structure is well ventilated.

INSECTS

I saw some Japanese beetles the other day. They are here, and they'll be attacking a lot of plants, both ornamentals and vegetables, as well as shrubs and trees. They are voracious feeders, and they come in large groups. Here are some tips in dealing with them.

Don't use the traps. These things are baited with sex pheromones, and this stuff attracts them to the trap location from a good distance. So, avoid having them near your home.

Do use sevin to control them. This insecticide comes in a liquid form and a dust form. Both are very effective. This is one of the best products to use, and it is very safe. As in using any pesticide, read and follow the label. It's the law.

This product is effective on other insects on other plants, but the label will have them in a list as a resource. If the insect that you want to control is not on the label, be sure to identify it and look for the recommendation on control. Remember, this is a case where one product does not fit all.

SAFETY

Some activity requires us to be out in the heat. If that's the case, follow some recommendations.

Stay hydrated. Wear clothing to protect from the sun's rays. Take breaks. Avoid strenuous activity during the hottest time if possible. Avoid direct sun exposure as much as possible.

Use common sense and keep track of yourself and your thoughts. If heat stroke signs set in, get out of the heat and get help. Pay attention to those with you and help each other to observe heat stress safety.

These same principles apply to animals. Check water temperatures in water troughs, buckets, etc. Move them to the shade if possible. Provide shelter from the sun. Avoid concrete or paved areas in the sun for animals. Again, use common sense.

PLANTS

It is best to water in the mornings so the plants can take up water then, as opposed to watering in the evenings after plants have wilted. Also, this allows the plants to dry off quicker and helps to prevent molds and mildews. Increase the frequency to make sure the planter medium is moist.

Avoid using an exposed hose immediately because the water in it will likely be extremely hot, causing damage with hot water. Check drain pans for mosquito larvae. Avoid placing potted plants directly on concrete or paved structures and away from brick walls that receive sun.

We hope that we see some moderation in the weather and some rain, but it appears that we have more hot dry sunny days ahead.