



# THE SHOWBARN

*"Representing the Club Calf Industry in Georgia"*

October 2005

produced by: Holly Afford

**Hello GCCPA members,**

Fall is a super time to be in the club calf business. Those show calves from the previous calving season are now being shown and those new baby calves are hitting the ground. Guess our cows have their priorities straight and no one has forced me to miss a Georgia game yet.

Wow! What a start for the new show season for GCCPA. GCCPA had a great show at the July Junior Beef Futurity. We had numerous steers and heifers make the "Top Five" in their respected divisions. The Grand Champion steer was a Checks in the Mail sired calf raised by Paul Crump. I told Paul I was going to take some credit on the steer because I helped pick the momma cow a few years back. Congrats to all of our members. The Georgia National Fair looks to be another competitive event with many awesome calves. We are also lucky in Georgia to have such a great place to show calves like the Georgia National Fairgrounds. I hope the exhibitors know how lucky they are to have a place like Perry.

Since I brought up facilities, some of my favorite memories as a kid was going to Athens each year for the Georgia State Steer Show and showing in the basketball coliseum. The old barn is now gone, but I remember the friendships and memories made and also fitting those steers in the ring as part of showmanship competition. I also still have the picture of Hershel Walker and myself when I meet him on his way to track practice. Finally, thanks to all the directors plus Holly and Billy for all the great work they are doing with GCCPA. Again, we are one of the best youth livestock organizations in America. As members we should all be proud of that. On the home front like most of us, life is hectic. I am preparing my judging team for the American Royal in Kansas City and calving season is still going strong. We had rain earlier this week which was such a blessing. Good luck to everyone and hope you have your own success stories at the Georgia National.

**Greg Bowman**  
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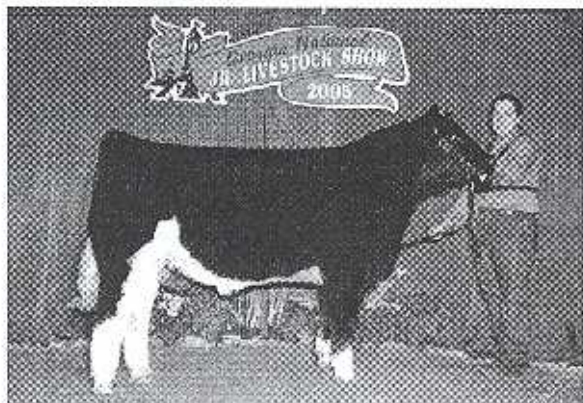
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## GCCPA Calf wins Tennessee State Fair

A light weight steer, 1075 lbs steer, when shown in our State Show in February, was later sold to a Tennessee family, was recently named Overall Champion at the Tennessee Beef Expo on July 12th, 2005. The steer was bred by GCCPA member Jody Smith (Smith Bros. Farm from Favo, Ga). The steer was sired by a Flush son and was out of a Meyer/ Maine/Angus cow.

The calf was undefeated in class in Georgia, finished with 85 points and placed 4th in the GCCPA steer division. The steer was shown in Georgia by LaAnn Johnson from Cass High 4H.



**Congratulations  
Smith Bros.**



## **"Should You Creep Feed?"**

**Weight added cost against added gain and other benefits.**

**by Brooke Byrd**

Producers often debate the value of creep-feeding calves prior to weaning. As university specialists point out, there are several factors that determine whether creep-feeding, when carefully considered and tailored to the specifics of an operation, can translate extra pounds into profit.

"The marketing scenario of the calves will have an effect on whether you should creep-feed," says Twig Marston, Kansas State University Extension beef specialist. Factors to consider include whether producers retain ownership, sell at weaning, background calves or precondition calves. Regional, environmental and current weather conditions can also factor into the decision-making process.

"Weight gain is usually the number one reason that we creep-feed," Marston says. By supplementing the milk and forage, creep-feeding can fulfill nutrient requirements and help the calf reach its genetic potential. This is most beneficial when feed is cheap and calves are high-priced, Marston says. Both commercial and seedstock producers can reap that benefit.

However, he adds, "Cost effectiveness is something to be concerned about." While creep can add pounds, it's crucial to compare the cost of the supplement to the added profit from the extra pounds gained.

If it takes 10 pounds (lb.) of creep feed to make 1 lb. of added gain, Marston explains, that means the feed conversion ratio is 10-to-1. If creep feed costs \$0.15 per pound, and calves eat 10 lb. to gain 1 lb., it costs \$1.50 for that pound of gain.

"That pound of added weight has to be worth \$1.50, or we've lost money," he says. "Now, if we improve feed efficiency to where it takes only 5 pounds to put 1 pound of gain on, then it's \$0.15  $\times$  5, which is \$0.75. As long as the value of the gain is more than \$0.75 a pound, we're making money."

### **Uniformity to profitability**

John Paterson, Montana State University Extension beef specialist, notes creep-feeding also helps create a uniform calf crop. "Buyers love those uniform calves," he says.

"Wouldn't it be nice if I had 250 steers in a pen, and all 250 got sold after a hundred days on feed?"

Instead, Paterson says, some are usually ready to be harvested after 140 days on feed, some at 150 days and the rest at 170 days. Having a uniform calf crop from the beginning prevents the need for excessive sorting, thus putting more dollars back in the seller's pocket.

Creep-feeding, Marston says, can lessen the weight gap between the normally lighter calves from younger females and those from more mature cows. "We know the calf has the genetics to grow, so if we creep-feed that calf, he'll weigh closer to what calves out of older cows would weigh," Marston explains.

This may cause some problems in separating poorer-producing cows from their better-milking counterparts. Marston encourages producers to pay close attention to the differences between calves and to carefully note calves that are below-average gainers.

"If you creep-feed, it's going to be harder to find those cows that milk less, and it's going to make those cows that are average look more like high-milking cows," he explains.

"When it comes to culling time or selecting replacement heifers, creep-feeding could make it tougher for you to make selection decisions."

However, Marston says, differences between good cows and bad cows will still show up. "If calf A is going to weigh the most not being creep-fed, he's still going to weigh the most on creep feed, but he might not weigh the most by 40 pounds like he did before. Now, he may only weigh the most by 20 pounds," he says. "Calf Z may be the lightest one without creep feed, and he's still going to be the lightest one with creep feed. However, he'll be closer in weight to the average than he would have been without the creep feed."

**"Should you Creep Feed" cont.**

**Preventive treatment**

Marston says creep-feeding can provide an added bonus for herd health, both by including medication to prevent disease and by preventing or lessening stress later in life. "We can medicate a creep feed to reduce the incidence of foot rot or pinkeye or respiratory troubles," he says. "We'd use the creep feed as a carrier for medication or a feed additive." Such additives would usually take the form of antibiotics or ionophores, Marston says. "Trace minerals and vitamins can also be used to fortify feed to improve immune response and aid healing."

Creep-feeding can get calves used to eating feed, thus reducing the time it takes to get them started. "You can reduce morbidity and mortality around high-stress periods like weaning. It'll reduce shrink from stress, so you'll gain pounds that way," Marston notes.

**Supplementing groceries**

One of the most common reasons to creep-feed is to prepare for early weaning. "In the environment we're in right now, I want these calves off the cows," Paterson emphasizes. In times of drought or other harsh conditions, "we have got to save the grass for these cows." If possible, he recommends beginning to creep at around 120 days of age and weaning at 180 days. Normally, calves would be weaned at 200-210 days and creep-fed 60-90 days prior to weaning.

While creep may supplement for low quantity, Paterson also explains that producers often face problems of poor quality. "When forage digestibility is less than 50% and protein is less than 7%, I really want to start thinking about creep," he says. "If I'm dropping under 7% protein, I think I'm starting to hurt ruminal fiber digestion."

"I'm just not getting enough groceries in these calves from the forage," Paterson notes. However, in regions where protein may be high and forage lush, he advises against creep-feeding. "When that cow has great intake, great quantity and beautiful quality, why would I want to creep?" Paterson suggests taking a forage sample when deciding whether to creep.

A common misconception about creep-feeding, Paterson says, is that it takes pressure off cows. What does help cows, he notes, is early weaning.

**Fighting flab**

One of the biggest downsides to creep-feeding is the possibility of animals getting too fat. Paterson says he likes the effects of creep-fed performance-tested bulls, but is concerned with overconditioning. "The bulls don't have their working clothes on when they've got that kind of weight gain," he says. "What I'm hoping to do is put frame on these cattle and not put a lot of fat on them."

Marston echoes his concerns about reproductive ability. "In replacement heifers, creep-feeding that is done at too high of an energy level for too long could cause some fat deposition around and within the udder tissue, and we could have some effect on future milking potential of those females," he says.

He also acknowledges that creep feed can cause calves to be too fleshy, but says, "creep-feeding will not be detrimental to your marketing of fat cattle as long as you market them when they're ready." Creep-fed cattle could receive discounts due to Yield Grade (YG) 4s if fed too long, but, Marston says, "If you feed the cattle to the proper end point, you might actually save money buying creep-fed calves because they were in the feedyard fewer days."

To prevent fleshiness problems and maximize effectiveness of creep feeds, Marston says there are three factors that can be controlled: nutrient density of the creep feed, the length of time it's fed and daily intake.

Diluting the energy in creep feed, or reducing the calories per pound fed, will make the creep feed safer to feed, and you'll still get a weight response, Marston notes. However, reducing the nutrient density can also negatively affect feed efficiency, thus making the creep less cost-effective.

Intake can be adjusted similarly. Producers could decide to only creep-feed calves 30-60 days before weaning or to start them on creep feed when only 30-60 days old, giving them access to creep for 150-180 days.



**"Should you Creep Feed" cont.**

Some producers use salt to limit intake without decreasing nutrient density, Marston explains. "Salt will limit intake to desired levels," he says, but advises producers that it takes constant management and can be hard on creep feeders.

**Final considerations**

Some producers may be concerned about the labor required. "Creep feed needs routine inspection to make sure you're not getting that feed wet or moldy," Paterson says. "If it gets like that, intake's going to go to zero." But, besides checking the feeders and restocking inventory, he says labor should be fairly minimal.

"Know your operation and know the benefits; know the pros and cons of a management practice," Marston says. "Then you can make an educated decision on whether creep-feeding is a practical management style for your ranch."

A creep-feeding calculator is available at [www.agric.gov.ab.ca/app19/calc/livestock/creepsheet.jsp](http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/app19/calc/livestock/creepsheet.jsp) to help producers decide if creep-feeding is the right decision for their operations.

**Genetic effects**

Worries about creep-feeding masking or unfairly enhancing genetics are not a concern when talking about expected progeny differences (EPDs), says Sally Northcutt, American Angus Association director of genetic research. "When we calculate EPDs, we account for that management difference in the contemporary group definition," she says.

"In order to sort out genetic differences, we must account for nuisance variations, such as creep-feeding," Northcutt adds. Producers who submit production data to the Association Performance Programs Department must separate calves that receive creep from those that don't into distinct contemporary groups. These groups are defined in terms of their management practices, which means all animals in the group have had the same experiences and environmental conditions.

The EPDs of the group that receives creep are generated based on the average of that group, while the same is done to the group not receiving creep. Therefore, Northcutt says, "you know you're looking at genetic differences."

**Proven profitability**

Creep-feeding has been a beneficial tool to many producers, says Kim Hager, a beef nutritionist with CHS Nutrition. Selling approximately 50,000 tons of creep feed annually through dealers in the Northwest, Hager says, "It's economical. Cattle put gain on, and the gain cost from the creep feed is probably half of what producers sell that gain for." He tells of a producer whose cost per calf for creep-feeding was \$25 per head, and his calves were 50 pounds (lb.) heavier. "He made at least \$2 for every \$1 invested," he says. When asked about creep-feeding, Roland Starnes, manager of Southern Cattle Co., Campbellton, Fla., says, "We can't afford not to." With a 95% purebred Angus herd producing about 900 calves a year, Starnes says, "It falls into our total program."

Currently selling 20- to 24-month-old bulls, Starnes says he hopes to sell 15- to 18-month-old bulls. "To do that, we need that extra size from Day 1," he emphasizes.

"We get bigger, healthier calves at weaning time," he notes. "Right now, with the price of corn versus the price of calves, it's a no-brainer."

He also says creep-feeding is an important tool when dealing with an inhospitable climate. "We fight the climate and the humidity and the heat down here in the South," he notes. He uses creep-feeding to provide calves an environment conducive to growing. Scott Cymbaluk, Belfield, N.D., calves out 115 cows and puts creep feed in front of their calves when they're just a few weeks old. He feeds creep partly to start the calves and partly to help out the cows by saving forage. "We've been so dry up here that it's important to save on grass," he says.

"I think for every dollar you put in creep feed you're probably getting two back in just what you save in cows and grass and less headaches," Cymbaluk says. "Bottom line, what you're doing is for the dollar. If you put 80 extra pounds on them, when they're bringing \$1 a pound, that's \$80 extra you have in your pocket."

## Beef Futurity 2005 Top 5 Heifers



Supreme Champion Heifer  
Champion Low% Maine  
Austin Parker  
Brewer FFA, ALA

Reserve Supreme Heifer  
Reserve Low% Maine  
Lea Crump  
Gordon Co 4-H



Third Overall Heifer  
Champion Angus  
Sara Waters  
Bulloch Co 4-H

Fourth Overall Heifer  
Champion Commercial Heifer  
Matthew Shirley  
Jackson Co 4-H



Fifth Overall Heifer  
Champion %Simmental  
Will Bius  
West Bainbridge FFA



## Beef Futurity 2005 Top 5 Steers

Supreme Champion Steer  
Champion Crossbred Steer  
Matthew Shirley  
Jackson Co 4-H



Reserve Supreme Steer  
Champion Simmental Steer  
Matt Blackburn  
Chambers Co 4-H, ALA



Third Overall Steer  
Champion Maine  
Austin Parker  
Brewer FFA, ALA



Fourth Overall Steer  
Champion Chi-Influence  
Ethan Armour  
Wilkes Co FFA



Fifth Overall Steer  
Res. Champion Crossbred  
Skylar Gray  
Colquitt Co FFA



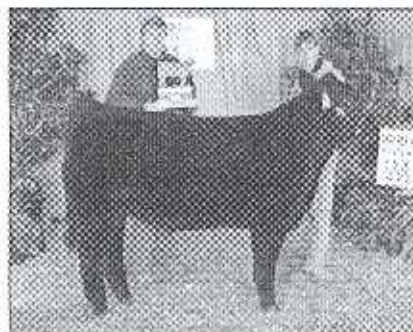
The SHOWBARN - October 2005

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## Steer Show 2004 Winners:

### Supreme Champion

Jordy Taylor - Lowndes Co. FFA

### Reserve Supreme Champion

Robby Avery - Colquitt Co. FFA

### Third Overall

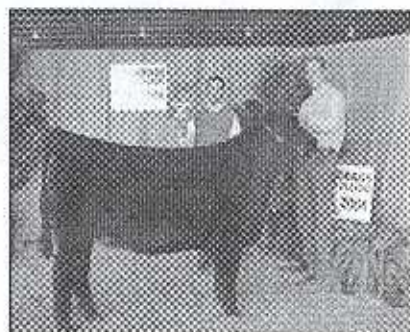
Ben Scott - Coffee Co. FFA

### Fourth Overall

Anna Taylor - Cook Co. FFA

### Fifth Overall

Anna Taylor - Cook Co. FFA



## Heifer Show 2004 Winners:

### Supreme Champion

Ward Black - Jackson Co. FFA

### Reserve Supreme Champion

Duke Berry - West Coffee FFA

### Third Overall

Justin Rehberg - Thomas Co. 4-H

### Fourth Overall

Jared Scott - West Coffee FFA

### Fifth Overall

Ward Black - Jackson Co. FFA

Mark you calendars and be sure to come and participate in one of the up and coming cattle shows in Georgia. The show is open to all 4-H and FFA members currently in school. Registration information will be available on the Georgia Club Calf Producers Association website ([www.georgiacclubcalves.org](http://www.georgiacclubcalves.org)) beginning October 1<sup>st</sup>. If you want additional information please call Jimmy Scott at 912-389-6014 or email [jimmyscott@charter.net](mailto:jimmyscott@charter.net).



Well September has been hot and dry and a pretty miserable month for calving out cows . Hopefully we'll have cooler and wetter conditions in October and November . Late calving cows may be a blessing this year . On a personal note thanks to those of you who contributed to the GCCPA gift on my behalf . I've ordered those hand-made Ostrich boots from the Mercedes Boot Company in Fort Worth , Texas . I know my feet don't deserve such a pair of boots and I know my deeds don't but thanks a bunch . I'll always remember where these boots came from .

The Futurity was really great this year from all the comments and hopefully will be even bigger and better next year . All the Futurity exhibitors will be receiving a real nice Sweat Shirt with the Futurity logo at the Georgia National Fair on Saturday Exhibitors can pick them up in the Beef/Dairy Arena . If everything works out , next year I hope to use the two ring/two judge format at the Futurity . Exhibitors will show their steer or heifer in Ring 1 under one judge and then go into Ring 2 and show under a different judge . Everyone liked this concept at the GCCPA Field Day this Spring and hopefully if the facilities will allow it at the Fairgrounds we will put that concept in place at the 2006 Futurity . Mark your calendar for July 6 thru 8 !

The recent issue of THE SHOWBOX magazine gave the Futurity some great coverage as it did with GCCPA . All of the GCCPA award winners , including pictures of the Top Ten winners in each of the four divisions were pictured along with the complete Point Winners . All of the Champions at the Futurity were also featured . THE SHOWBOX is the official publication of GCCPA and if you want to subscribe you can send \$35 to : THE SHOWBOX , P.O. Box 1088 , Crockett , Texas 75835 . It's one of the nation's largest junior livestock publications and it's definitely a way to keep up with the show calf , pig , meat goat and sheep industries . The September issue includes a club calf Sire Summary which is useful for the up-coming breeding season . I find that it's just a good all-around junior livestock publication .

I want to also welcome all our new GCCPA members and also our new GCCPA Officers and Directors , including Holly Alford , our new Executive Secretary , that came on board this spring . It keeps lots of people involved to keep GCCPA rolling . Holly has done a superb job with THE SHOWBARN so give her a thank you when you see her . Also Joy Carter is the new GCCPA webmaster , recently approved by your Officers and Directors , so check out our new , attractive , web site at : [www.georgiacalves.org](http://www.georgiacalves.org) when it's completed in a few days . This web site will become your official up-to-date source of information and will include several new features , including a Livestock Show Calendar , which will include information and contacts for as many shows as we can get information on across Georgia . This alone will be useful to exhibitors , county agents and ag teachers . The number one question I get every Fall from ag teachers and families is what shows am I eligible for and where can I get information about them .

In closing , let me encourage you to become involved on a local and area level in your junior livestock program . Find those bright spots and make them better . Forget the negatives as they don't contribute to growth but quickly create a demise for all involved . Promote your farm and program by hosting a cook-out for 4H and FFA exhibitors , put up a nice farm sign , allow your cattle to be used in judging workouts and offer support where you can . You'll be surprised how people will notice what you do and how you do it ! Looking forward to seeing you at the Georgia National .

- Billy Moss-

## Creep and carcass quality

Another item to take into consideration when weighing the pros and cons of creep-feeding is its effects on carcass quality. Research done at the University of Illinois (UI) by Dan Faulkner and others indicates that creep-feeding can influence final quality grade. Based on the research data, Faulkner has recommended that calves be creep-fed for at least 80 days to obtain results.

Data from the UI study also suggest that the type of creep feed used has an effect on carcass quality. Calves fed a high-energy diet, based on corn, had a greater chance of having improved carcass quality than those fed a high-fiber diet, based on soybean hulls.

For producers aiming for a target of increased Certified Angus Beef® (CAB®) acceptance, improving carcass quality is an important step.

For more information about Faulkner's research, visit his faculty Web site at [www.ansci.uiuc.edu/aboutus/faculty/details.cfm?ID=29](http://www.ansci.uiuc.edu/aboutus/faculty/details.cfm?ID=29).

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## **Requirements for Calves to be GCCPA Tagged**

**It's important that all members know  
the requirements for a calf to be  
tagged with the official GCCPA  
ear tag. The rules are listed below:**

1. Calves must be bred and born on a member's farm, or
2. Owned and born on other premises (example - you own a cow that is at an ET center in Georgia or another state), or
3. Calves are eligible from the purchase of bred cows or frozen embryos only if bred cows or embryos are purchased from another GCCPA member, and the new owner shall be listed as Breeder on the GCCPA point sheet.
4. Only dues paying members are eligible to purchase tags. (Exhibitors can not pay dues and buy tags for an individual they purchase the calf from.)





## The Showbarn

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• 1/2 Page	70.00
• 1/4 Page	45.00
• Column Inch	20.00
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Back cover	275.00

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For more info and contract advertising contact Holly Alford at (706) 270-3994 or [holly\\_gccpa@bellsouth.net](mailto:holly_gccpa@bellsouth.net)

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