



SOUTHERN
EXTENSION
RISK MANAGEMENT
EDUCATION

Final Report

2010 Competitive Grant Program

SOUTHEASTERN BEEF CATTLE RISK MANAGEMENT EDUCATION PROJECT

Project Number: 10879

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Project Overview

This integrated educational program leveraged distance technology and regional experts with regional/local meetings to help beef cattle producers more effectively manage risk.

Regional workshops were developed and presented in March-May of 2010 to teach participants how to calculate breakeven prices, provide market outlook, assess market price potential, and provide practical management information on how small and medium-sized cattle producers can profitably diversify their beef production system. A web conferencing system allowed the program to be offered live, at six satellite locations, or as single person viewers in multiple states.

A regional beef cattle risk management website and newsletter were developed (SECattleAdvisor.com) to distributed information and decision aides. The website featured market information/analysis; presentations, educational modules, and printed materials from regional workshops; the newsletter; and links to university websites. From December 2010 through December 2011, the website averaged 251 visits per day and 58,635 total unique viewers.

The newsletter was written by extension specialists and county agents within the project area and included a blend of current economic and production information. The newsletter was print for distribution at meetings and made available on the website.

Follow-up meetings were held in each state to continue the educational program and promote the use of the website.

(204 words / 200 word maximum)

Number of Participants

Number of Participants:

58,635

Results

	Proposed Result	Topic	Producer action	When measured	Estimated number	Actual number	How verified
1	Participants will understand the importance of and how to calculate breakeven prices to cover variable and total costs.	Marketing plans and strategies	Implement	At the end of workshops and after completing online module	500	171	Pre/Post Assessment
2	Participants will identify ways to reduce costs, increase production and/or increase the price received to increase profits.	Business and strategic planning	Analyze	At the end of workshops and after completing online module	500	171	Pre/Post Assessment
3	Participants will understand current and projected beef cattle supply and demand issues. Included will be a discussion on emerging local, natural and other alternative markets and what producers should know about trying to participate in these markets.	Analysis of market fundamentals	Understand	At the end of workshop and after completing on-line module	500	171	Pre/Post Assessment
4	Participants will understand cattle cycles and how prices of various sectors in the beef industry fluctuate during the cycle.	Analysis of market fundamentals	Understand	At the end of workshops and after completing online module	500	160	Pre/Post Assessment
5	Participants will understand how to use futures market prices to predict cash market prices.	Cash and futures pricing tools	Understand	End of workshops and after completing on-line modules	500	160	Pre/Post Assessment
6	Producers will understand how	Marketing plans and strategies	Understand	At the end of	500	160	Pre/Post Assessment

	Proposed Result	Topic	Producer action	When measured	Estimated number	Actual number	How verified
	management decisions (i.e. breeding, health, nutrition, etc.) impact animal quality, weight and value.			workshops and after completing online module			
7	Participants will understand how futures market options can provide price risk protection.	Cash and futures pricing tools	Understand	After completing on-line module	500	160	Online Evaluation
8	Participants will learn the importance of basing animal culling decisions on sound management and economic practices.	Marketing plans and strategies	Understand	End of workshops and after completing on-line modules	500	160	Pre/Post Assessment
9	Participants will learn the economic and marketing considerations and risks in evaluating various retained ownership alternatives.	Marketing plans and strategies	Implement	End of workshops and after completing on-line modules	500	160	Pre/Post Assessment
10	Participants will access the Southeast Cattle Advisor website to obtain and use current cattle marketing, risk management, and production management information.	Marketing plans and strategies	Analyze	monthly	5000	58635	Website Counter
11	Participants will receive the bi-monthly Southeast Livestock Advisor newsletter for timely information regarding marketing, risk management, and production management.	Marketing plans and strategies	Analyze	bi-monthly	5000	58635	Website Counter and Distribution List
12	Producers will incorporate what they have learned from workshops, meetings, newsletter and website into their operations.	Economics of input decisions	Implement	01/01/2012	5000	9420	Online Evaluation

	Proposed Result	Topic	Producer action	When measured	Estimated number	Actual number	How verified
	The implementation of this knowledge will be based on updated marketing information provided via the website, meetings and newsletter.						
13	Producers will continue to use the website as a source of marketing, risk management, and production management information.	Marketing plans and strategies	Analyze	monthly	5000	58635	Website Counter

Project Steps

	What project team does	What participants do	Done?	Actual number of participants	When Completed
1	<p>Conducts a 2-day planning session in central location (Atlanta, Macon or similar) to discuss:</p> <p>a. Preliminary plans for state workshops will be developed.</p> <p>b. Develops distance based meeting network.</p> <p>c. Coordinates new web page content, newsletter content, and workshop content and delivery method</p>		√	10	10/15/2010
2	Provides website content to website designer including publications, decision-aides, links, etc		√	8	11/01/2010
3	Publishes newsletter (and every two months thereafter)	Read, evaluate, adopt	√	300	01/01/2011
4	Goes online with new content of website	Visit, learn, forward to others interested in beef cattle production	√	0	12/01/2011
5	Conducts first of state risk-management meetings	Attend and learn. In each state: 50(local) + 75(distance broadcast) = 500	√	180	3/8/2011
6	Conducts first of local meetings for marketing, risk management, and production updates	Attend and learn	√	1121	4/01/2011
7	Promotes website and available learning tools through newsletters, national beef media, and local, regional and national meetings.	Visit the website for more information	√	58635	12/31/2011

Promotional Materials

[Newsletter](#)

[Southeast Cattle Advisor website.](#)

[Alternative Marketing Options for Your Calf Crop:Managing the financial and production risks](#)

[Alternative Marketing Options for Your Calf Crop:Managing the financial and production risks](#)

[University of Georgia's 'in the Field' episode eight](#)

Educational Materials

[Southeast Cattle Advisor Newsletter](#)

[Southeast Cattle Advisor Newsletter - June 2011](#)

[Southeast Beef Cattle Website](#)

[Southeast Beef Cattle Website](#)

Evaluations and Reports

Alternative Marketing Options for Your Calf Crop: Managing the financial and production risks

<http://rvs.umn.edu/Uploads/EvaluationsReports/869b928b-d241-4a39-819b-163b8b8a06cc.pdf>

Comment: This marketing school was offered in person, through satellite locations via webinar, and as individual on the internet, from home. Over 98% found the school useful to their operations and indicated they intended to make changes to their production system. Please see the attached evaluation summary or additional feedback.

Date of Evaluation/Report:

This Evaluation/Report is not viewable to the public.

Florida: Southeast Cattle Advisor presents: Managing Risk for Beef Cattle Producers

<http://rvs.umn.edu/Uploads/EvaluationsReports/50a66c0c-3c48-4480-8a0a-26ab9a8d9dd2.pdf>

Comment: This marketing school was hosted by the University of Florida Extension via Polycom internet video. The school was offered in 20 Florida counties, and was attended by 87 participants. Please see the attached evaluation summary for participant feedback.

Date of Evaluation/Report:

This Evaluation/Report is not viewable to the public.

Project Comments

Describe any unexpected results of the project:

The collaborators of this project expected more participation in the regional workshops. Possibly due to the lack of recognition in the early stages of the project. However, the acceptance and utilization of the website exceeded our expectations. As part of the project we developed the name "Southeast Cattle Advisor" for group/website/educational effort. In addition, a logo was developed for the Southeast Cattle Advisor. Through promotion of the program, the utilization of the name and logo resulted in higher recognition. This is illustrated by the increasing number of hits and visits to the website.

How would you improve this project if you were to do it again?

The newsletter was an excellent form of information distribution, but with the technology available, a printed newsletter is almost obsolete. For future efforts, it would work better to utilize an online distribution, such as a blog, to deliver the information.

For webinars, a program is needed that lets the remote participants see the presenter. This could be accomplished through a video/webinar program.

What were the keys to success for your participants?

The key to the success of producers participating in the Southeast Cattle Advisor is the ease of access to information. The utilization of the website allowed producers to access a considerable amount of information and decision aids through one central location.

Individual stories / Examples of success / Quotes

From the post-assessment, producers listed several things they were doing different in their operation as a result of this program. Some of these included:

- Analyze budgets and herd health
- Investigate marketing in a group with similar producers
- Pursue branded beef marketing
- Watch input cost
- Better finance plan/track input cost
- Research market options and improve forage quality

In regards to the online webinar workshop, one participant said "It was amazing that I could sit in my La-Z-Boy at home and interact with specialist in another state! I would definitely participate again!"

Also, multiple County Extension Agents commented that this tremendously helps there ability to provide programs to clientele with decreasing travel budgets available for specialist.

Leveraged Resources

ERME grant funds allocated:	49,960
ERME grant funds expended:	49,960
Other funds used for the project:	8,000
Non cash resources:	1,500

Delivery Area

This project was delivered in 4 states: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina