

# Ag and Natural Resources News

January 2024

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## Mark your calendars now!

► **Office Closed**

January 15, 2024

► **Strategies to Reduce Fertilizer Use on Cattle Farms**

January 24, 2024

10990 Marshall Rd

Covington Ky

► **Webinar:**

**Management decisions that impact reproductive efficiency in beef herds**

January 9, 2024

**What's the cost of a Cheap Mineral**

February 13, 2024



## Breed of the Month

The Allure of Simmental Cattle: A Wise Investment in Livestock Farming

In the world of cattle farming, choosing the right breed is a crucial decision that can significantly impact the success and profitability of your operation. One breed that has gained widespread popularity

among farmers and ranchers is the Simmental cattle. Known for their versatility, adaptability, and excellent meat quality, Simmental cattle have become a preferred choice for many in the agricultural community. In this article,



we will explore the reasons why raising Simmental cattle might be a wise and lucrative choice for farmers.

Simmental cattle are renowned for their adaptability to various climates and environments. Originally bred in the Simme Valley of Switzerland, these cattle have demonstrated their ability to thrive in diverse conditions, from the harsh Alpine climate to more temperate regions. This adaptability is a significant advantage for farmers who may encounter fluctuating weather patterns or have farms situated in different geographical locations.

Moreover, Simmental cattle are known for their versatility in terms of purpose. While they are primarily beef cattle, they are also prized for their milk production. This dual-purpose nature allows farmers to diversify their operations, catering to both the beef and dairy markets.

*(Continued on next page)*



## CREAMED CABBAGE SOUP



**Servings:** 8

**Serving Size:** 1 1/2 cup

This cabbage soup is hearty and filling. It's the perfect choice for an easy dinner option when the snow is blowing.

### Ingredients:

- 2 (14½ ounce) cans low sodium chicken broth
- 2 celery ribs, chopped
- 1 medium head cabbage, shredded (about 6 cups)
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 cup chopped carrot
- 3 medium potatoes, peeled and cubed
- ¼ cup butter or margarine
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- ½ teaspoon thyme
- 1 (12 ounce) can non-fat evaporated milk
- 1½ cups skim milk
- 2 cups cubed fully cooked ham
- Chopped fresh parsley (optional)

### Directions:

1. In a large soup kettle or Dutch oven, combine broth, celery, cabbage, onion, carrot and potatoes; bring to a boil.
2. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes or until vegetables are tender.
3. Meanwhile, melt butter in a medium saucepan.
4. Add flour, salt, pepper and thyme; stir to form a smooth paste.
5. Combine milks; gradually add to flour mixture, stirring constantly.
6. Cook and stir until thickened; continue cooking 2 minutes longer.
7. Gradually stir into vegetable mixture.
8. Add ham and heat through.

Garnish with parsley.

Make it a Meal

- Creamed Cabbage Soup
- Toasted French bread
- Tangerines

Low-fat milk

Source: Sarah Brandl, Extension Specialist University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service

Nutrition facts per serving: 230 calories; 8 g total fat; 1.5 g saturated fat; 0 g trans fat; 15 mg cholesterol; 720 mg sodium; 28 g carbohydrate; 4 g fiber; 12 g sugar; 16 g protein

One of the key considerations for any cattle farmer is the efficiency of growth and feed conversion in their herd. Simmental cattle excel in this regard. They have a remarkable growth rate, reaching market weight relatively quickly compared to some other breeds. This efficiency not only translates into reduced feed costs but also allows farmers to bring their product to market sooner, potentially increasing overall profitability.

Simmental cattle are renowned for producing high-quality meat. Their carcasses typically exhibit desirable traits such as well-marbled meat, tenderness, and a lean-to-fat ratio that appeals to modern consumers. The superior meat quality of Simmental cattle makes them a valuable asset for farmers looking to meet the growing demand for premium beef in the market.

Handling and managing cattle can be a challenging aspect of livestock farming. Simmental cattle, however, are known for their docile temperament, making them easier to handle and work with. A calm and cooperative demeanor not only reduces stress for both the animals and the farmers but also enhances overall safety on the farm.

Advancements in genetic selection have further improved the breed characteristics of Simmental cattle. Modern breeding programs focus on enhancing traits such as growth rate, feed efficiency, and meat quality. By incorporating the latest genetic technologies, farmers can access superior genetics to improve the overall performance of their herd.

In conclusion, the decision to raise Simmental cattle is a strategic and potentially rewarding choice for livestock farmers. Their adaptability, efficiency in growth, high-quality meat production, docile temperament, and ongoing genetic advancements make Simmental cattle a valuable asset in the agricultural industry. Whether you are a seasoned farmer or a newcomer to the world of cattle farming, considering Simmental cattle for your operation may prove to be a wise investment with long-term benefits.



## KENTUCKY SMALL RUMINANT QUALITY ASSURANCE



Starting in 2023, SRQA will be required for CAIP applications!

Quality Assurance is knowing that as a small ruminant producer, you have used the best management practices possible in your operation. This includes using proper medications and anthelmintics to assure safe, wholesome products for public consumption, as well as providing your animals with the healthiest and safest environment in which to thrive.

Kentucky small ruminant meat producers are part of a national growing lamb and goat meat industry. Therefore, our products must **not** be considered poor quality in comparison to other red meats in the marketplace.

A quality assurance statement lets consumers know the product was grown to conform to laws governing domestic meat production and therefore provide assurance of quality to consumers. It also tells consumer that you have the welfare of your livestock at a top priority.

Ultimately, by providing quality assurance in your operation, you can guarantee increased profits because you will be raising animals that are at the peak of health, ready to produce products that are abundant and consistent.

### What is the Kentucky SRQA Program?

The KY SRQA Program (Small Ruminant Quality Assurance) is a 1.5 hour certification program that helps producers understand:

The goals of Quality Assurance

1. Proper equipment needed
2. How to read a medicine label
3. How to read medicated feed tags
4. Veterinary Feed Directives
5. Prescription use of injectable, oral and water soluble antibiotics
6. Antibiotic stewardship
7. Record keeping
8. Biosecurity issues
9. Scrapie tag information
10. Animal welfare issues

To become certified go to <https://www.kysheepandgoat.org/srqa> and register for a class.

## Putting together an email list for the newsletter

It seems that I hear from people each month that don't get this newsletter until the first week of the month and in some cases that causes some things not to be advertised that we are doing.

I thought I would give you an option of also receiving the newsletter by email if you would like. All you need to do is email me at [gary.stockton@uky.edu](mailto:gary.stockton@uky.edu) and tell me that you would like to be added to the email list and I will make sure that as soon as the newsletter is completed that you will get a copy.

## COUNTY NEWSLETTERS ANNUAL INCLUSION CIVIL RIGHTS ACT-COMPLIANT STATEMENT

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## Winter Care Tips for Happy and Healthy Chickens

As winter sets in, it's crucial for poultry owners to pay extra attention to the well-being of their feathered friends. Chickens, like any other living creatures, require special care during the colder months to ensure they remain healthy, happy, and productive. By implementing a few key strategies, you can help your chickens weather the winter season with ease. Here are some essential tips for caring for your chickens during winter:

Begin by preparing the chicken coop for the winter chill. Ensure that the coop is well-insulated to retain heat and protect your chickens from freezing temperatures. However, it's equally important to maintain proper ventilation to prevent moisture buildup, which can lead to respiratory issues. Consider adding weather stripping to seal any drafts while still allowing for adequate airflow.

Provide your chickens with a thick layer of dry bedding to keep them warm. Straw or hay works well for this purpose, as it provides insulation and helps absorb moisture. Regularly check and replace the bedding if it becomes damp to prevent respiratory problems and frostbite.

Access to fresh water is crucial for your chickens' health, even in winter. Invest in heated waterers to prevent water from freezing, ensuring that your chickens stay well-hydrated. Dehydration can lead to various health issues, so regularly check the water supply to ensure it remains liquid.

Winter days are shorter, which can affect egg production in hens. Consider installing artificial lighting in the coop to simulate longer daylight hours. This encourages consistent egg-laying and helps maintain your flock's productivity during the darker months.

Adjust your chickens' diet to meet their increased energy needs during colder weather. Provide a well-balanced feed that includes extra nutrients to support their overall health. Supplement their diet with scratch grains, sunflower seeds, or cracked corn to provide extra energy and warmth.

While chickens may be more reluctant to venture outside during winter, it's essential to provide them with a secure outdoor space if they choose to brave the cold. Ensure the area is free from snow buildup, and consider spreading straw or hay to provide a dry surface for them to scratch and peck.

Chickens are susceptible to frostbite, particularly on their combs and wattles. Inspect your flock regularly, especially during extremely cold weather, for signs of frostbite such as discoloration and swelling. If you notice any issues, apply petroleum jelly to the affected areas and consider using chicken-friendly frostbite prevention strategies.

Pay close attention to your chickens' behavior and health during winter. Any signs of lethargy, respiratory distress, or reduced egg production should be promptly addressed. Consider consulting with a veterinarian experienced in poultry care if you have concerns about your flock's well-being.

Caring for chickens during winter requires a proactive approach to ensure their comfort and well-being. By providing a well-insulated coop, maintaining proper ventilation, adjusting their diet, and monitoring their health, you can help your flock thrive even in the coldest months. Remember, a little extra effort during winter can go a long way in ensuring your chickens stay happy, healthy, and productive throughout the season.

