

Health is an important aspect of everyday life in any living thing. Your health, whether good or bad, can greatly influence the trajectory of your life. Many people regularly have their health checked by a physician and find out which areas they are weak or strong in. In the same way, good cattle producers should monitor the health of different areas of their operations. This week we will discuss the importance of analyzing soil health, and how it affects your whole operation.

You may be familiar with the common saying “It is impossible to properly manage that which is not measured.” This is especially true for soil quality. Too often, producers aim to produce good cattle and high quality forage without taking into account the health of the soil. Producers may use fertilizers or other methods in hopes of increasing soil quality, yet fail to recognize the importance in first testing the soil to ensure they are not over or under-treating it. This can not only waste money, but can waste a producer’s time as well.

A soil test will reveal the quality of the soil and highlight any areas where certain nutrients are present or lacking. Soil samples may be tested at any time of year, but are most beneficial when taken before each growing season. This will allow ample time for the producer to evaluate the results and make any necessary changes to improve soil quality. In the coming weeks we will discuss soil quality in more depth, explain how to interpret the soil test results, and introduce some methods for improving the quality of your soil. In the meantime, we encourage you to have your soil tested so that you know what you are working with. The grazing season is quickly approaching; are you and your pastures ready? For more information on submitting soil samples to be tested, visit <http://soiltesting.tamu.edu/>, or contact our local AgriLife Extension office at (903)675-6130.

The annual Cattleman’s Cow-Calf Clinic is scheduled for Thursday, March 31 at the Henderson County Fair Park Complex in Athens. Registration begins at 3pm, and is \$15 per person. If you have any questions, or would like to pre-register for the event, contact the Henderson County Extension office at (903)675-6130, or Laura at (903)675-5613.

Thanks,
Jesse Richardson, DVM

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