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Keep Your Cool this Summer!



If you made the South your home for the summer, it is unavoidable ...the HEAT. Whether you find respite in the shade of a large oak tree or seek refuge in a barn or shop, the higher temperatures will find you. Be sure you know the difference between being a little overheated, heat exhaustion, heat stroke, & other risks from the heat. This could save you or someone you love from dire consequences of too much exposure to the sun.

Some signs of heat exhaustion include: headache, nausea, dizziness, sweat, cold & clammy skin, and a fast, weak pulse. Try to find shade or a cool place; drink plenty of liquids; & use a cold compress if necessary. Continued symptoms could lead to heat stroke. Several signs of heat stroke are: mental confusion, loss of consciousness, possible seizures, elevated body temperature, hot & dry skin, and a fast, strong pulse. You should apply ice packs and seek medical attention when these symptoms are present.

Two other afflictions that can be attributed to summer heat are heat cramps & sunburn. These are often overlooked and can lead to severe consequences. When experiencing heat cramps, be sure to hydrate & rest for at least an hour. If symptoms persist, seek immediate medical attention. Sunburns, especially severe, have been known to lead to sun poisoning & increased cancer risks. Use a sunscreen of 30 SPF or higher, applying generously & regularly to lower risks.

Take other preventive measures such as stay hydrated; wear loose, breathable clothing; schedule outdoor activities in a cooler part of the day; eat light, cool foods; & know side effects of any medications you are currently taking. These measures and more can help you keep your cool & "stay cool as a cucumber" these summer months!

You can find information about this subject & more by visiting our Mississippi State Extension website at :

<https://extension.msstate.edu/blog/how-recognize-heat-related-illness>

This article is not meant to replace medical advice from a physician.

5338 CLIFF GOOKIN BLVD., TUPELO, MS 38801

CATTLE MARKET NEWS

Beef Cow Slaughter on Pace for Ten Year Low

By: Kenny Burdine, University of Kentucky



Changes in beef cow inventory are driven by two factors – how many new bred heifers enter the herd each year and how many cows exit the herd through culling and death loss. As is always the case when calf prices are high, a lot of discussion has been focused on heifer retention thus far in 2025. Heifers as a percentage of on-feed inventory has been decreasing, but not at a rate that suggests widespread retention. I would expect heifer retention to increase for the rest of 2025 if calf prices stay high and weather cooperates. However, it is important to remember that there is a time lag between heifer retention and the associated impact on the size of the cow herd. A heifer calf born in the spring of 2025 would likely not have her first calf until spring of 2027 and would not wean that first calf until that fall. The point here being that heifer retention in the second half of 2025 most likely impacts the size of the cow herd in 2027, not 2026.

While there is some delay between heifer retention and cow herd expansion, the impact of cow culling patterns is seen much faster. This is an important point right now because cow slaughter was down by more than 17% through mid-May. If that trend continues through the rest of the year, beef cow slaughter would be at the lowest levels we have seen since 2015. Despite very strong cull cow prices, cattle producers appear to be keeping cows a bit longer in hopes of getting another high-value calf.

For additional perspective, I like to consider beef cow slaughter as a percentage of January 1, beef cow inventory. This is tracked in the figure below from 1986 to 2024 and estimates the percentage of the beef cowherd that was culled each year. During this time, the beef cow slaughter rate averaged just under 10%, but ranged from 7.6% in 2015 to 13.2% in 2022. The high cull rates from 2021 to 2023 also partially explain the lower rates today as the cowherd likely got younger during that time.

If the current pace continued for the remainder of 2025, beef cow slaughter would come in at about 8.5% of January 1 beef cow inventory. Holding everything else constant, this is a number that would tend to suggest the cow herd would grow.

Beef Cow Slaughter as a Percent of Jan 1 Beef Cow Inventory
1986 to 2024, USDA-NASS and author calculations



This will be somewhat offset by limited heifer inventory coming into 2025 and it was because of that limited heifer inventory that I had been expecting beef cow numbers to remain steady or slightly decrease this year. There is still potential for the pattern to change, but the pace of beef cow slaughter through mid-May does suggest that a slight increase in beef cow inventory is possible for 2026.



There will be no meetings the months of July & August.

FORESTRY NOTES

Pine needle blight appearing across Mississippi, Southeast

Ms. Susan M. Collins-Smith, MSU Extension Service

Brown spot needle blight, which is caused by the native fungus *Lecanosticta acicola*, commonly affects young longleaf pine trees but is now affecting mature loblolly pine trees across Mississippi and the Southeast. (Photo by MSU Extension Service/Brady Self)



RAYMOND, Miss. -- Concern has spread among Mississippi landowners who have recently noticed extensive pine needle browning and loss among their mature loblolly pine trees recently.

Kristy McAndrew, a forestry health specialist with the Mississippi State University Extension Service, said brown spot needle blight, or BSNB, is widespread in Mississippi right now and may be the culprit.

BSNB, which is caused by the native fungus *Lecanosticta acicola*, commonly affects young longleaf pine trees but is now affecting mature loblolly pine trees across the Southeast.

"This disease wasn't really a concern with loblolly in the past, but now we are seeing it in mature trees pretty frequently," said McAndrew, who is also a professor in the MSU Department of Forestry. "Early reports in the region started around the mid-2010s, and we've been seeing it in loblolly since then at varying rates."

As a researcher with the MSU Forest and Wildlife Research Center, McAndrew is also part of a team of scientists studying the fungus' jump to mature loblolly pines.

"The good news is we're not seeing much tree death. The most common thing we are finding is reduced growth rate," she said.

Symptoms of BSNB include brownish-red needles in late winter and spring, small brown spots with yellow halos on needles, premature needle drop and thinning canopy. Trees will green back up through the summer as dead needles are shed. Emerging green needles that appear as early as early April are a sign that the tree will survive.

The fungus is present year-round, but trees don't show symptoms until very late winter or early spring. In northeast Mississippi, McAndrew said needle loss and discoloration was observed from February to March in previous years. But this year, symptoms were not seen until the last few weeks of April.

The timing of observable symptoms could vary in different areas of the state.

"I would shift that time frame just a little bit over here in the northwest part of the state," said Brady Self, MSU Extension forestry specialist based in Grenada County. "Symptoms really start being noticeable in March and are in full swing in April. The needles have replaced themselves for the most part by the end of May."

Loblolly pines have shown the most susceptibility to the fungus. However, other pines can be affected by the fungus but to a much lesser degree.

The reason people are seeing extensive needle browning and loss is the life cycle of the fungus, McAndrew said.

"The infection stage that causes these intense needle die-offs is really active in the late winter through spring," she said.

"For the past couple of years, we have been seeing it all over the state. It can be patchy in areas, but when it is established in a stand, it can take off and quickly affect the entire stand if they are all or a majority mature loblolly pine."

Mid-rotation trees can also be affected, Self said.

"You don't see entire stands of brown in very young plantations, but you can definitely see that happen in pulpwood-sized stands and older," he said.

McAndrew pointed out that trees killed by bark beetles will also have red needles. However, the needles of these trees will stay red.

"As we move into summer, if the trees green back up, that's a good indication that it is BSNB," she said.

While the research team investigates the best management plan for mature loblolly pines, landowners should monitor their trees for signs of infection.

"Since this is so new in loblolly, we are still researching the best ways to manage the infection. Some fungicide options exist that work for longleaf pine, but those have not been tested on loblolly," McAndrew said.

"Similarly, one of the most effective management techniques in longleaf was conducting controlled burns in late winter, but we're not sure how effective the transfer to loblolly is yet. But this research will provide answers soon."

This article & more information is on the extension website at:

<https://extension.msstate.edu/news/feature-story/2025/pine-needle-blight-appearing-across-mississippi-southeast>

Join us for the next Forestry meeting, Monday, August 4th, at 6 PM.

Call 662-841-9000 by Friday, August 1st, to reserve your seat.

What's NEWS?



Want to learn more about gardening & help beautify Lee County?
Become a Lee County Master Gardener!



Master Gardener Course Registration opens August 13th & closes September 10th. The self-paced course is online and conducted from October 1st through December 3rd. The Lee County Master Gardener Program offers the opportunity to help extend the educational arm of the university to the public by providing horticultural information based on university research publications.

Please feel free to share this information with a horticulture enthusiast you may know! **For more information contact Susan McGukin at 662-841-9000.**

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC! Houseplant Care by Susan Worthey, Thursday, July 17th, 9 AM, North MS Research & Extension Center in Verona, MS. No registration required!



EXHIBIT DAYS COMING SOON!

Mark your calendars for Monday, August 25th through Wednesday, August 27th. We look forward to all the Adult & Youth Exhibits! You may register by picking up your Exhibitor Pack at the Lee County Extension Office, 5338 Cliff Cookin Blvd., Tupelo, before Wednesday, August 20th. Please feel free to call 662-841-9000 with any questions.



Don't Forget High 5 for 4-H!

Have you taken opportunity to help the Lee County 4-Hers by giving your highest \$5, be it \$5, \$10, \$20, or as high as you choose? All funds raised will help supply scholarships, registration fees, & other costs incurred by 4-Hers competing on district, state, & national levels.

Either scan the QR code, or follow this link:

<https://www.zeffy.com/EN-us/donation-form/high-five-for-4-h> Continue to check our Facebook page for more information on how to make a difference in a 4-Her's path to success.

<https://www.facebook.com/leecountyextensionms>



Programs hosted by the Lee County Extension Office:

Bloom at Noon will host Margaret Gratz, the Earth Lady, on Tuesday, **August 12th**. She will be introducing us to birds through her program, "Birds, There's No Place Like Home". Follow the Lee County Extension Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/leecountyextensionms> for more information. Call ahead to reserve your seat at 662-841-9000!



Lee County Cattlemen Association connects local cattlemen and provides access to learning & knowledge for the betterment of their cattle herds, from farm to plate. The next meeting is **Thursday, September 18th, at 6 PM**. Call by the Tuesday, September 16th, before the meeting to reserve your seat.



Lee County Forestry Association brings together local land owners interested in proper land & timber management. The next meeting will be **Monday, August 4th at 6 PM**. You will need to call by Friday, August 1st, to reserve your seat.



We also offer many opportunities for youth ages 5-18 through our 4-H programs.  Please call us at 662-841-9000 for more information or to reserve your seat at our next program!

07



JULY



2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
29	30	01	02	03 Paint Pottery Class Ages 5 - 18 11 AM Midnite Pottery	04 OFFICE CLOSED HAPPY FOURTH OF JULY	05
06	07	08 AgriVenture Camp Ages 8-13 10 AM - 2 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	09 AgriVenture Camp Ages 8-13 10 AM - 2 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	10 AgriVenture Camp Ages 8-13 10 AM - 2 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	11	12
13	14 Rabbit Club 6 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	15 Sewing Club 10-18 2 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	16	17 Houseplant Care 9 AM NMREC Verona, MS	18 State 4-H Shooting Sports Contest Jackson, MS	19 State 4-H Shooting Sports Contest Jackson, MS
20	21	22 Kids in the Kitchen Ages 6-9 9 AM - 12 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	23 Vegetable Field Day 8:30 - 11 AM NMREC, Verona, MS	24	25	26
27	28	29 Youth Soil Science Field Day Ages 8-12 9 - 11:30 AM NMREC, Verona, MS	30 Southern Regional 4-H Horse Show Begins Perry, GA	31 Southern Regional 4-H Horse Show Perry, GA	01 Southern Regional 4-H Horse Show Perry, GA	02 Southern Regional 4-H Horse Show Ends Perry, GA

08



AUGUST



2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
27	28	29	30	31	01	02
03	04 Forestry 6 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	05 Foodie 4-H 10-18 5 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office - Back Kitchen	06 Crochet Club 10-18 4:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	07	08	09
10	11 Cloverbuds 5-7 & Jr Leaf 8-13 4:30 PM Rabbit Club 6 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	12 Bloom at Noon Clodhoppers 14-18 4 PM Aggies 8-18 6 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	13 Master Gardener Online Course Registration Opens through Sept. 13	14 Expressive Arts 8-18 3:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	15	16
17	18 Ropes & Reins 8-18 6:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	19 Sewing 10-18 3:30 PM Lee Co. Ext. Office	20	21	22	23
24	25 Lee Co Exhibit Days Check In 3-6 PM	26 Lee Co Exhibit Days Open House 4-6 PM	27 Lee Co Exhibit Days Check Out 2-5:30 PM	28 Junior Master Gardener 8-13 4 PM Agronomy Field Day 8 AM - 3 PM NMREC, Verona, MS	29	30
31	01 HAPPY Labor Day <small>CLOSED TODAY</small>	02	03	04	05	06

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