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Transcription of Handling heat stress, episode 30

Item Metadata

Collection: Pasture to Profit Podcast
Creator: Scott Stinnett, speaker; Travis Taylor, speaker
Title: Handling heat stress, episode 30
Date: 2025 July 17
File Name: AEXT_P2P_Ep_30_Handling_Heat.mp3
Transcript Provided By: Adobe Premiere Pro 2026

BEGIN TRANSCRIPTION

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Welcome to Pasture to Profit. My name is Scott Stinnett, CSU extension specialist in the Golden Plains area for livestock and 4-H. And with me today is my colleague Travis Taylor from the Wray office in Golden Plains area extension specialist and livestock. And, well, it's midsummer. It's almost fair time, Travis. It's gotten hot. So let's talk about heat stress today.

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Yeah, the temperatures turned up here in the Golden Plains area and on our whole part of the United States, it's just been a little hotter than normal temperatures pushing up towards 100 this week. Scott. And, heat stress is something that we really need to think about with our livestock and our animals. So I think probably the biggest thing is what do we see when an animal is in heat stress?

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And we know those basic signs, they're anting they're got an increased rate of respiration, they're drinking more water. Some of the things that we don't notice as much, but we can if we pay attention is maybe they're not hungry, that dog or that horse or that steers not coming to your bowl or feed trough to eat what they were wanting to.

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Maybe they're just a little and listless. Maybe in extreme cases we've got some salivation, and in really severe cases you may get that calf that maybe is starting to lose some consciousness when they're out there laying out in the hot sun in the middle of the pasture. So we need to definitely pay attention to those signs of heat stress.

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You know, the biggest thing I think it's hard to watch the pasture animals. You know, we can check on the horses and the dogs around the house and the barn cat and all those other animals. And even this time of

year, we've got a lot of families that have the four H projects, and it's easy to check on those.

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But those pasture animals, you know, noticing a change, maybe not in how much they eat, but they're eating patterns. You know, for me, normal eating patterns, we see cattle up and grazing first thing in the morning. They tend to ruminate midday. Then they tend to go back as the day starts to cool, back off, and then we see right around dusk, we kind of see them start, maybe to settle in for rumination for the night, or they may change that pattern and ruminate longer during the middle of the day and do more grazing late in the evening and early in the morning.

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Yeah, I think there are some significant things happening this time of the year, and sometimes we hit into that perfect storm that causes some production losses. We've got increased heat temperatures. We've got longer days, of course, causing part of that. We have flies driving them into bunches and gathering up, which they try to protect themselves. But at the same time, when we're in those bunched groups, our temperatures rising, we're not getting as much airflow, particularly on those very hot, very still days.

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And we do have still days in eastern Colorado, believe it or not, where that heat temperature is rising in, those cattle are packed up. We are just losing some production efficiency in terms of what those cattle are gaining. And like you said, we're seeing some changes in patterns. They're not going back out. Cows are hot. They're not grazing.

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We're getting decreased milk production for the nursing calves. There's a lot of things that play into this heat element when it gets this time of year, and I think there are some things we can really start to think about. If we have the opportunity and we want to do better with this, I think there's things we can look at as where we place our water systems.

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And you and I talked a lot about the amount of water needed and water requirements in a previous Pasture to Profit podcast. And if our listeners want to see that they need to go to the Golden Plains area, Colorado Extension website, go under agriculture and livestock production and look that one up. But I also think that our producers need to consider possibility of let's plant some trees.

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We're not going to have shade this year, but in the next few years we're going to have shade. And if we can plant those trees in the right

location to shade our water, keep it cooler to shade our cattle, we can also maybe if we're building a new windbreak, let's think about making that possibly pivot. So in the summertime, that can act as a shade as well as just a windbreak for the winter time.

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So I think there's things that are producers as they maybe in this cattle market, have some leftover capital that they can reinvest in the operation. They could utilize that money to take a look at what they're doing in terms of heat stress during the summer. Yes. And some other places, we sometimes don't think about shade we because we see the cattle out on pasture every day, but around a working facilities, when you've got cattle that have been gathered up, put in the pens to maybe you're doing your checks this summer, maybe it's earlier in the summer, we get a quick hot spelled and we're doing some AI work or some breeding, you know, having some

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cattle pens, having some shade there for the cattle, working those cattle in the cooler parts of the morning, or even if you know you're not a morning person, maybe later in the evening. I think there's also some other considerations we need to just make sure of. You know, the heat's going to be harder on younger animals than it is those animals that are older and more established.

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It's going to be harder on lactating animals than it is on, say, dry cows or yearlings. It's also going to be harder on those animals that maybe in the dust, have a little bit of a respiratory issue. If it's been dry and dusty and hot, you want to make sure, like you said, we're handling those animals. And it may be we find that one when we go check the water at 10:00, maybe we need to delay messing with that calf or something.

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If it's not absolutely urgent, until it cools off a little bit in the evening, or maybe get out very early the next morning and get that calf in and get him treated so that he's not. We're not increasing the stress level by trying to come back at noon on a very hot day and try to doctor that animal here in our part of the world, we do have the luxury of some lower humidity, so we do tend to tend to cool off quite a bit overnight.

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You know, dropping from being in the upper 90s maybe to the upper 60s, you know, first thing you know, 6:00, 5:00, 6:00 in the morning when sun is coming up versus places farther to the east, where it's higher humidity, where maybe 95 for the daytime high, but it may only drop down to 75, 78 for the for the night.

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So being able to work in late in the evening, even maybe overnight first thing in the morning, planning those things to match the coolest parts of the day. If we've got to handle an animal that's already stressed out from illness or injury. So let's talk just a little bit about and use your for hers for an example, because they're going to be hauling livestock to county fairs here in Colorado.

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So when we're transporting them we want to make sure that we do it. Early and as efficient as we can. You know, when you get to county fair, you may have to be in line to get your trailer unloaded. So you want to make sure that you're handling those animals as efficiently as possible. Turn that trailer 90 degrees so that the air is blowing into the trailer, and going across those animals and trying to keep them a little bit cooler as we can.

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And again, if you have an opportunity to come in to your county fair when it cools off a little bit in the evening, or I want to get them there first thing in the morning and get them unloaded, and then we'll worry about getting the weight on them. They'll probably weigh up better than if they're sitting in line at a hot trailer, or don't think you're going to stop at the local farm store and buy your supplies where you got your livestock in the trailer going to the county fair.

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So plan accordingly. Make sure you know what's going on there. And then the other thing if you do have an animal, let's get it treated. I mean, the first thing we're going to talk about is trying to find that animal that's been hot, some shade and get those animal shade, because you and I have had the discussion, how much shade can help?

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Absolutely. I did a little article for four acres talking about shade for four projects, and I took one of those thermometer guns out here. Our local fairgrounds, and it was a 96 degree day and the general parking lot. So we're talking about transporting the parking lot here. That's just kind of sand and gravel. It was 139 degrees on the parking lot surface.

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So just think about that radiating up into a trailer. Then I went out to a lean two that just had a dirt floor underneath it, and it cooled it off from 96 degrees down to 90 degrees, which is a pretty significant change. Plus you're out of that direct sunlight. And lastly, I went out to our little shaded park area where we had some big mature trees on some well-groomed grass, and the grass temperature was a nice little 83 degrees.

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So if you ever wondered why grandpa or the other old men like to take their little naps in the afternoon down under the shade trees by the creek, you're significantly going from 95 degrees to laying on grass. That's in the 80s. That's a big difference. It probably feels absolutely spectacular on a hot day. Just make sure you know if you do find those animals, get them some shade.

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You can wet some towels and cool them down. Just remember that darker animals get more effective than lighter colored animals. But lighter colored animals can tend to sunburn. And once you sunburn, you know what it's like trying to get that heat out of them. So just be careful. And with some of our other since you mentioned forage projects, we're going to clip off a goat or clip a pig or shear a sheep.

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They're losing some protection from the sun there and some protection from the heat. So as well as parasites and flies and those kind of things. So let's pay close attention, particularly you fair people that are headed off to county fair in the next week. And again, keep a good eye on those other animals around the farm or the ranch, the the dogs, the barn cats, the horses that may be kept up.

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Do they need to have those preventions for some heat stress as well? But another thing I'll bring up though I've seen these, I haven't necessarily tried them, but there are some mineral and other supplements that can be fed to help with heat stress. Can you talk a bit about that? Well, in terms of some of the minerals and stuff that we have, I think everybody's got something that's there.

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There's other things. But just like in human diet, if you would work with your nutrition and consultant, there's certain types of minerals that will function in terms of cooling and regulating the body. So those deals usually have some kind of proprietary deal along with them. So I would encourage anybody to visit with their nutritionist. If it's something that you're really looking at in terms of trying to keep that rumen down, particularly in cattle, and keep it in a temperature where we're ruminating correctly, I think we want to make sure that we can get that supplement into them in an economic lill and efficient manner, get that through their system and help with some of this,

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relieve some of this heat from the inside out, particularly in our ruminant animals, where we have so much heat built up from rumination. But as always, the number one most important nutrient of all is water

fresh, clean, abundant water for our livestock. And so for some of those pastures, we may see cattle that are getting a little lazy.

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They're not maybe going as far from water when it's really hot, but that's probably as much as we'd like to see them maybe utilizing more of the pasture, they're doing the right thing for themselves. Some self-preservation when they hang around that water tank. Absolutely. Anything else you want to bring up there, Travis before we go, Scott I think that about covers our topic today.

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And if anybody out there has questions, comments, concerns, wants to visit with us, I can be reached at the Yuma County Extension Office at (970)332-4151, and I'm at the Kit Carson County Extension office here in Burlington, Colorado. And you can reach me at (719)346-5571. So again, thanks for listening to the Pasture to Profit podcast. We hope you'll tune in next time.

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