

Cattle Business in Mississippi – November/December 2009
“Beef Production Strategies” article

Mississippi Master Cattle Producer Online Training

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The Mississippi Master Cattle Producer Program began in 2006 as a comprehensive training offered by the Mississippi State University Extension Service in major beef cattle production topic areas. The 8-session interactive course is designed for persons interested in learning more about improving beef cattle production and marketing practices. This training complements in-depth subject matter trainings such as short courses. Training focuses on improving overall management and decision-making skills and developing a broad beef cattle production knowledge base.



The Master Cattle Producer Program was updated in 2009 with new course materials and format including Internet-based training modules to meet the needs of persons wanting to complete the training at their own pace and schedule. Training currently consists of 8 modules in beef cattle production subject areas. Producers must successfully review all course materials and complete the exams for all 8 training topics to be eligible for Master Cattle Producer certification. Beef cattle producers enrolled in the Master Cattle Producer program complete approximately 24 h of training in the following subjects: 1) beef cattle nutrition, 2) forage systems, 3) beef cattle reproduction, 4) breeding and genetics, 5) economics and marketing, 6) herd health and handling, 7) beef end product, and 8) Beef Quality Assurance (BQA).

The Mississippi Master Cattle Producer Program Internet-based training modules are online at msucares.com/livestock/beef/mcp. Course participants can view online training modules and download training materials free of charge. Alternately, participants completing the program can receive printed course materials, a metal farm sign, Master Cattle Producer cap, and certificate of completion for a course fee of \$75.

Each online module consists of a pdf file with approximately 70 to 80 slides with associated scripts. The BQA training module is additionally offered as a video-based training via MediaSite. The BQA video training consists of 5 MediaSite presentations including: Mississippi BQA Program introduction, targeted breeding, responsible culling, proper management, and Mississippi BQA Program conclusions. These video presentations include a speaker addressing Mississippi BQA Program topics utilizing the BQA program display booths. A Microsoft PowerPoint slide show runs simultaneously on the computer screen and corresponds to the video presentation. In January 2010, all 8 training modules will include the video-based training option.

The training materials cite current Mississippi State University Extension Service publications as supporting references and contain information on how to access those publications on the Internet at msucares.com/livestock/beef/beefpubs.html. These reference materials contain detailed information beyond what is covered in the Master Cattle Producer training slides. Contact information for the Extension Beef Cattle Specialists is also included in the training materials to encourage course participants to seek answers to any questions they may have when reviewing training materials.

The examination for each training topic is an interactive pdf form containing 15 multiple-choice questions derived from the training materials. The examinations can be e-mailed directly to the Extension Beef Cattle Specialist administering the program by clicking the "E-mail form" button on the form. These forms can also be saved and then e-mailed or printed and then faxed or mailed to the program administrator. Participants must answer a minimum of 12 out of 15 (80 percent) questions correctly to successfully complete a particular examination and receive credit for the associated training module. Examinations may be taken multiple times if needed to pass them.

Though the majority of past and present participants in the Mississippi Master Cattle Producer Program are Mississippi beef cattle producers, Mississippians from other segments of the beef cattle industry, such as feed retailers, as well as out-of-state beef cattle producers participate in the program. A live Internet-based Master Cattle Producer webinar training is scheduled for 4 evenings in January 2010 for anyone interested in the program. The webinar schedule is:

Tuesday, January 12, 2010

Beef Quality Assurance

6:00—7:30 p.m.

Instructors: Jane Parish, Carla Huston

Herd Health and Handling

7:30—9:00 p.m.

Instructors: Carla Huston, Rhonda Vann

Thursday, January 14, 2010

Beef Cattle Nutrition

6:00—7:30 p.m.

Instructor: Daniel Rivera

Forage Systems

7:30—9:00 p.m.

Instructor: Holly Boland

Tuesday, January 19, 2010

Breeding and Genetics

6:00—7:30 p.m.

Instructor: Trent Smith

Beef Cattle Reproduction

7:30—9:00 p.m.

Instructor: Justin Rhinehart

Thursday, January 21, 2010

Beef End Product

6:00—7:30 p.m.

Instructor: Mike Martin

Economics and Marketing

7:30—9:00 p.m.

Instructor: John Michael Riley

The Internet-based training will feature streaming video of speakers and slides. Slides, reference materials, and certification exams will be available for online viewing or download. Participants will be able to submit questions and chat online during the presentations. At the end of each presentation, presenters will address audience questions. To participate in the webinar, go to the Mississippi Master Cattle Producer website msucares.com/livestock/beef/mcp during the webinar times listed above. For more information about the Mississippi Master Cattle Producer Program, contact an office of the Mississippi State University Extension Service.