

September 30, 2010

**A LITTLE BIT COUNTRY
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NDSU EXTENSION SERVICE
WILLIAMS COUNTY**

Women in Ag

Mary asked me to put a plug in for the Women in Ag Conference scheduled October 29-30 at Dickinson, North Dakota. I realize the event is being held a far distance from here, but the agenda looks to be well worth the special effort.

The theme of the conference is Strengthening Our Way of Life. It has been tailored to farm and ranch women of all ages who wish to improve their agricultural knowledge in marketing, record keeping and communications and to discover their influential power as an advocate for agriculture.

The conference is offering several breakout sessions which target special needs of attendees. These include land leases, livestock nutrition, farm transitional strategies, environmental issues, and keeping the family farm in the family.

Keynote speakers for the conference are Troy and Stacy Hadrick who are strong advocates for agriculture. They believe it is up to producers of food and fiber to tell the positive story of production agriculture. They intend to share what it means to be an influential person and give those in attendance the tools to effectively tell their story. During a special interactive session they will give participants a chance to practice educating consumers. This will be accomplished through the skills of writing and delivering thirty second elevator speeches, working on a message map and discussing ways to advocate for agriculture.

The men (spouses) are invited to attend the opening sessions on Friday, October 29. More details can be obtained by calling this office (701-577-4595) or by going to our website: www.ag.ndsu.edu/williamscountyextension.

Selling vs. Retaining

The majority of U.S. 2010 calf crop will be weaned over the next 60 days. Many cattlemen in this region have made it a practice to retain ownership for another 30 to 90 days. This allows producers to add more weight to the calves and take advantage of premiums frequently offered for weaned calves.

A recent surge in corn prices will no doubt be reflected in the cost of other feeds thus increasing this year's cost of backgrounding. The question then becomes "Will the market remain strong enough to make backgrounding calves profitable?"

I am not capable of making any guarantees, but demand for beef and supplies certainly point to a favorable market going into next spring. The demand for beef has stabilized through the economic down-turn and this year's calf crop is estimated to be the smallest since 1950. Early prospects for calves to be turned out on wheat pastures or other forms of winter grazing appear excellent at this time.