

UGA ANR Extension Agent Training and Scholarships for Beef Cattle Education

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Purpose: Due to the large number of new beef cattle producers in Georgia and a good number of new UGA Agriculture and Natural Resource (ANR) Agents within the state, an extensive educational training course, UGA Beef School, was offered in the spring of 2017. The two-day school consisted of hands-on and informational sessions focused toward nutrition, herd health, animal handling, reproduction, and selection. Scholarships were also made available for a trip to the Deep South Stocker Conference in Starkville, MS along with a tour of beef operations in Alabama. The ultimate goal of these trainings and travel scholarships is to better equip UGA Extension to better meet the needs of Georgia's beef producers.

Need: UGA Agents are very much interested in serving their clientele, but they are often asked to wear a lot of hats. ANR Agents, specifically, are asked to understand dozens of agricultural, natural resources, and home owner type issues within their counties. This makes training essential. These scholarships open the doors by providing additional travel funding for agents to participate when they might not otherwise be able.

Benefit: UGA ANR Agents were trained and offered experiential learning opportunities. Agents received training or hands-on experience in key beef cattle management strategies. We are fortunate to have a strong county delivery system in Georgia. Agents that have more exposure and training will be better able to offer their own beef cattle programming and serve producers within their counties. On average, UGA ANR Extension Agents are estimated to have 100 beef operations of various sizes within their counties. If these farms have an average herd size of 25 head, each agent's county would have an estimated 2,500 head, conservatively. Using these estimations, 50 UGA Agents attending Beef School or other conferences could represent an estimated 125,000 head of mature beef cows producing 50 million lbs. of beef annually. For reference, the 2015 Georgia County Guide reported 412 million lbs. of beef produced across all Georgia counties.