

Weekend Celebration Of Flint Hills Cattle Grazing, And Competition Set For Emporia

The Flint Hills Beef Fest was founded as an annual celebration of the grass cattle industry offering cattlemen the opportunity to enter stocker cattle in a summer grazing competition as well as feedlot and carcass shows.

"That meager beginning was 31 years ago recognizing the Kansas cattle industry has grown and thrived with events for everyone in the family to enjoy," according to Shelly Wiggins, energetic organization committee member.



The Flint Hills Beef Fest is August 18-20, at Emporia, with main events at the Lyon County Fairgrounds, with the entire community planning related activities.

"This is a non-profit group led by volunteers who care deeply about the beef industry and promoted the grass cattle industry for which the Flint Hills is known," Wiggins emphasized.

"As one of the last remaining native tall grass prairies in American, the Flint Hills is operated by cattlemen who have preserved and continue to preserve this beautiful country through cattle grazing management," Wiggins recognized.

Friday, Aug. 18, kicks off with a Beef Producers Information Seminar coordinated by WIBW radio and hosted by longtime farm director Kelly Lenz.

In the Anderson Building A complimentary breakfast is to be served courtesy of the more than two dozen sponsors who will have displays of their products and visit with the more than 200 ranchers in attendance.

Lenz' Morning Agriculture Roundup broadcast will be live at 6 o'clock, with attendees welcome to come on it. The beef breakfast serving starts at 7:30, and the seminar begins at 8:15.

It'll feature First District Congressman Roger Marshall, The Washington Perspective; Kanas Livestock Association President David Clawson, Five Months After The State's Worst Wildfire; and Glynn Tensor, Kansas State University Extension livestock economist, The Cattle & Beef Outlook."

A hay clinic is planned at 10 o'clock.

"New this year we have moved the Friday evening ranch feed to the grandstand area," Wiggins said. "Come out and picnic with us prior to the popular ranch rodeo at 7 o'clock in the fairgrounds arena.

"The top teams that have placed in ranch rodeos from surrounding counties will compete for regional ranch rodeo honors," Wiggins said. A calf scramble open for children ages four to 13 will also be a rodeo attraction.

Registration for the 5K Ranch Land Trust run and walk is at 7 o'clock, Saturday morning, when starting gun goes off at The Orchard at 8 o'clock.

"The ranch horse competition is back again this year also beginning at 8 o'clock in the arena," Wiggins said. "This year's competition is sanctioned by the Midwest Ranch Horse Association (MRHA) with top entries eligible for the MRHA Finals.



"Local cowboys are encouraged to enter horses to compete with awarded in several divisions," Wiggins encouraged. Information is available from Justin Keith at 620-343-4361.

At the nearby Emporia Livestock Sales, at 9:30, owner-manager Brodie Peak will host the live stocker cattle show of entries ranchers have been grazing on Flint Hills pastures.

"The Flint Hills Beef Fest is adding fun for the whole family with an Ag Olympics will also begin at 10 o'clock," Wiggins said.

"In partnership with the three Lyon County FFA chapters, the community is encouraged to form teams of five members with the desire to claim the championship title and prize money," Wiggins said.

Teams will rotate through nine events that take regular-on-the-farm and ranch chores to a new competitive level. These include cow chip toss, hay stacking, wheelbarrow race, water bucket challenge, milking competition, round bale hay rolling, dummy roping, feed sack tackle and an obstacle course.

Free hamburgers and soda pop will be offered for everyone at 11 o'clock, for as long as the lunch treats last, according to Wiggins. A junior ranch rodeo will be Saturday afternoon at 1 o'clock, with entries to be made with Amy Potter at 918-213-5341.

The Saturday evening banquet begins at 5:30 with the award's ceremony followed by a complete steak dinner. Entertainment is to feature comedian William Lee Martin.

A dance with Lucas Maddy and the Kansas Cartel is set for the Bowyer Building beginning at 9 o'clock.

The golf tournament gets underway 8:30, at the Emporia Municipal Golf Course, with Scott Jones, 620-341-0240, in charge.



Kelly Lenz