



\*For the *Alabama Cattleman* – June 2018 Issue\*

## **The Systems 360° Working Group Program – A New, Statewide Extension Program for Cattle Producers**

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Interested in learning more about hot topics in the beef industry?

Do you like networking with other beef producers?

Then **STOP HERE** to learn more about a new program from Alabama Extension!

The Alabama Extension Animal Science and Forage Team is excited to announce a new, statewide beef cattle initiative called the Systems 360° Working Group program. This program is designed for committed, business-minded cattle producers who want to take management in their operation to the next level.

A working group is a small group of producers that meet periodically to discuss management topics related to land, animal, and marketing strategies in their operations. The name 'Systems 360°' came from the idea that a beef cattle farm is a complex operation, and producers have to know about many areas of management to be successful.

This program is designed to provide higher-level discussion on improved farm management practices, and is targeted for beef producers with more than five years of experience in the industry. Meeting locations/times will rotate among farms, industry partners, and Auburn research facilities to highlight management concepts in practice.

### **What is the Systems 360° Program?**

- **Learn From One Another** - This program is designed to facilitate conversations among producers, Extension, and industry about improving on-farm management. The structure of this program focuses on participants sharing their farm management ideas with one another through open discussion. Extension agents and specialists will facilitate each meeting and help guide discussions in each topic area. Topics to be covered includes: forages and nutrition, water,



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economics, weather, and herd health and management over a series of five programs.

- **Hands-On Education** – Producers will have the opportunity to “get their hands dirty” by participating in demonstrations related to land and animal management in beef operations.
- **On-Farm Learning** – We have all heard the saying “Seeing is believing.” In this program, we plan to visit producer farms, Auburn research units, and industry partners to view and discuss management strategies in practice.
- **Group Defines Future Times/Locations** – Groups will meet periodically over a series of five meetings at various locations to discuss the topics listed above. Future locations and times will be defined by each group at the first meeting.

### How Do I Sign Up?

Contact your Animal Science and Forage Regional Extension agent to learn how you can be a part of this new, statewide program. Producers interested in participating will fill out a short application with their respective agent, and will be notified prior to the start date of the working group in your region. Space is limited – so make sure you get your application in early!

**Systems Working Groups around the state will meet for the first time between August 20 through September 30, 2018.** Subsequent group discussion meetings will rotate time/locations based on the interests of the participants. Cost is \$10 for the first meeting, and an additional \$40 to enroll for the remaining four meetings as part of the program.

Location in Alabama	Extension Agent	Program Start Date	Contact Information
East	Alex Tigue	Sept. 4	dat0002@aces.edu; 256-309-9496
Sand Mountain	Landon Marks	Aug. 28	mlm0013@aces.edu; 256-706-0032
Central	Josh Elmore	Sept. 21	elmorjb@aces.edu; 334-850-7859
Black Belt	Brenda Glover	Sept. 12	glovebs@aces.edu; 334-321-8828
West Central	Johnny Gladney	Aug. 21	gladnjb@aces.edu; 334-341-1674



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Northwest	Paul Vining	Aug. 28	tpv0001@aces.edu; 256-214-9630
Southwest	Kelly Palmer	Sep. 18	ridleka@aces.edu; 251-654-7149
Tennessee Valley	Gerry Thompson	Sep. 18	thompgl@aces.edu; 256-508-2020
Wiregrass	Rickey Hudson	Choose one: Sep. 11 or 12	hudsorg@aces.edu; 334-726-6814

### Producer Testimonials

To date, a working group was hosted in the Tennessee Valley Region of Alabama from fall 2016 through spring 2017. More recently, a Central Alabama working group was started in spring 2018. As a result of participation in these programs, producers had the following comments about information gained and applied in their operations:

One participant indicated that he **saved more than \$3,500** in fertilizer costs from the adoption of precision soil sampling in pastures and hayfields as a result of this program.

Producers **adopted the following practices** from participating in a working group:

- 300 days of grazing
- Precision agriculture technologies for pastures and hayfields
- Bale grazing
- Improved calf marketing

### Where can I find more information?

Systems 360° Working Group dates, locations, and application can be found at [www.alabamabeefsystems.com](http://www.alabamabeefsystems.com).

Follow us on Facebook for more updates, videos, and more about





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how this program can benefit your operation.

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**Acknowledgments:** Special thanks to our project team Dr. Eve Brantley, Dr. Soren Rodning, Michelle Elmore, Ken Kelley, Josh Elmore, Gerry Thompson, Dr. Leanne Dillard and Dr. Brenda Ortiz for their work in developing content for this program.