

Annual Progress Report

Rhodes Research Farm

2000 Year at Rhodes Research Farm

Ron Sealock, superintendent

Welcome to the annual progress report for the Iowa State University Rhodes Research Farm. Every year when I write these comments I think of how quickly time passes, yet I feel a sense of accomplishment when reflecting on all the things that have happened in the past year.

One year ago I expressed concern about a shortage of soil moisture. We ended 1999 four inches short on average rainfall for the growing season. Total growing season precipitation for the year 2000 was 17.42 inches, far short of the 27- inch average for this area. The crops came through in good shape with excellent yields. The forages did not fare as well. Virtually no fall forage growth occurred, which shortened our grazing season by sixty days, completely disabling our stockpiled grazing program. Costs for wintering cows increased dramatically. A short hay crop left us concerned about winter forage supplies. Fortunately, we have an inventory of hay to fall back on.

Some of the more significant accomplishments for the year included the construction of the John Airy Meeting Room and the completion of our facilities for the development, breeding, and calving of heifers. This is a real cowman's facility, not an extravagant showplace. If you would like to see some ideas for your heifer development program, we love to show it off.

We have new studies beginning every year as well as continuing studies. Please stop by and take a look. Visitors are always welcome. I look forward to meeting you.