

JOPLIN REGIONAL STOCKYARDS
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VIEW FROM THE BLOCK

The market has been under quite a bit of pressure in recent weeks. Fed cattle have come down \$10 to \$15/cwt. Beef imports are up 30 percent over last year. The scenario we were looking at isn't quite as good as it once was. All commodities seem to be losing a little ground in light of a tough world economy right now.

July's Cattle on Feed Report noted we had harvested 6 to 7 percent less cattle than we did a year ago. While that looks great for prices, we're still having some trouble marketing meat. It's not uncommon for that to happen during the dog days of summer, but it does put a little concern in the back of one's mind.

Corn was trading around \$4.30 to \$4.40/bu. before falling to the upper \$3 mark. The warm weather seems to have the corn crop in better shape than was originally thought. With ample available feed, buyers will



still be looking to pay a good price for feeder cattle even though I don't expect prices to return to year ago levels.

The bulk of the replacement cows are selling around \$2,500. The market is still good on those replacement quality cattle. If you are in the cow-calf business, the calves are worth about \$1,400 to \$1,500 and are still profitable at that level. I think buyers will be looking for cows as well with ample feed available this year. Cows are still a good investment, even if we have to take a little bit less for the calves.

As weaning time nears, weigh your options. If you have available feed and can get \$2/lb. for the gain, then preconditioning is the way to go. If you can put some gain on your cattle, I think there will be some money to be made with preconditioning.

It's been a heck of a summer so far. Good luck and God bless.

Jackie



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Find out how crabgrass fills the void for summer pasture.
—Cover photo by Joann Pipkin

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BEEF IN BRIEF

Urban, Non-Traditional Ag Matching Grants Available

The Missouri Department of Agriculture announced a total of \$50,000 for the Urban & Non-Traditional Agriculture Matching Grant Program. The department will award grants of up to \$5,000 to assist the development of production infrastructure, direct distribution venues, education programs, workforce development and an increased understanding of the importance of agriculture.

Examples of projects include assisting farmer's markets, developing small agribusinesses, implementing or coordinating youth initiatives related to promoting agriculture, and providing training and developing skills for the next generation of agricultural producers.

Applications must be received by Sept. 1, 2015, and the award date is anticipated for Oct. 1, 2015, with project completion by June 1, 2016.

For a grant application or more information about this and other grant opportunities available through the Missouri Department of Agriculture, visit the Department online at agriculture.mo.gov.

—Source: Missouri Department of Agriculture release.

Supreme Curt Upholds Farming Rights Amendment

The Supreme Court of Missouri has held the election results on the 2014 "Farming Rights Amendment" as valid, calling the ballot title "sufficient and fair, and so there was no election irregularity." Missouri Cattlemen's Association President (MCA) Janet Akers commended the decision.

"This decision was no surprise to me or to this association," said Akers. "The Farming Rights Amendment (Amendment 1) passed, and the language was concise and very clear. It is disappointing that some individuals and organizations waited until the amendment passed to call the ballot language into question."

SC94516, Wes Shoemyer, Darvin Bentlage and Richard Oswald versus Missouri Secretary of State Jason Kander, was argued Feb. 25, 2015. The opinion was handed down June 30, 2015. In an election irregularity proceeding, individuals challenge the summary statement of the title of a ballot issue that voters passed during the August 2014 election.

—Source: Missouri Cattlemen's Association Prime Cuts.

Hay testing will be Important in 2015

Wet weather conditions during hay season this summer will likely result in lower forage quality. Because of this, it is important to test hay to determine forage quality. Hay should be tested before winter-feeding to ensure that the nutrient requirements of the livestock are being met.

Studies have shown that rainfall itself has little impact on hay quality. When hay gets wet there is some nutrient leaching and is dependent on the timing and intensity of the rainfall. If rain occurs soon after the hay is cut, very little loss is experienced. If rain occurs when the hay is dry and brittle more nutrient leaching is possible. Hard, intense rains will result in more leaf loss than slow, steady rains.

The number one factor that impacts forage quality is the stage of maturity during harvest. Frequent rainfall can delay cutting resulting in increased forage maturity, ultimately reduced forage quality. High-quality grass hay should be harvested during the boot stage before seed development.

A wet condition during hay harvest has delayed hay production, resulting in more mature forage. Have hay tested to determine what production stage the forage can be fed to or to determine if additional supplementation is needed to meet the animal's nutrient requirements. Remember, the goal in growing forages is to produce feed that will meet the nutritional requirements of the animals.

—Source: Sarah Kenyon, University of Missouri Extension.

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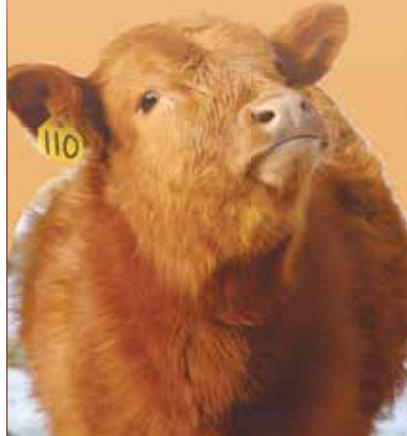
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Planning Autumn Pasture

Take advantage of flexible options by planning ahead

Story By Justin Sexten for Cattlemen's News

As state fair season begins, so should autumn pasture planning. Successful autumn forage programs are often dependent on being prepared for late August, early September "state fair" rains. Most fall forage is grown between Sept. 1 and Oct. 15 so August is the best time to prepare pastures to take advantage of this timely moisture.

For those looking for fall and winter grazing options with permanent pastures, consider stockpiling tall fescue. For best results, choose pastures with solid fescue stands, better-than-average water holding capacity, winter water sources and electric fencing capability. These are not requirements but will help maximize return on investment.

Plan to graze or clip these

selected pastures by mid-August. Ideally graze the pastures, then clip to a uniform height if the pastures were not mowed earlier this summer. The goal is to "reset" the pasture by removing stems and stalks. When considering mowing height prior to stockpiling, consider how stockpiling should occur.

Stockpiled cool-season grass growth occurs during the fall growing period, not the spring or summer. Some prefer to mow grazed pastures high, greater than 8 inches, to minimize the forage "wasted" by mowing. At this point in the season, cattle are not going to voluntarily graze these tall residues. They were not grazed the first time, and with lush fall growth as an option, the residues will be rejected again. Removing residues

minimizes leaf shading and removes long stems causing late-season eye irritation.

Once pastures are "reset," plan to apply 40 to 60 units of nitrogen as close to a rain shower as possible. With ammonium nitrate or stabilized urea application, windows are 7 to 14 days. Visit with your regional agronomist or co-op manager when evaluating fertilization products and rates. As a rule of thumb, within the 40 to 60 units of nitrogen per acre range, each unit of N results in 20 lbs of additional stockpiled forage produced.

A common response to the stockpiling concept is, "If I had that many acres to set aside for 60 to 70 days, I would have more cows." This challenge

can be addressed in several ways.

Consider stockpiling on limited acres by using stockpiled forage as a protein and energy supplement rather than forage replacement. Feeding cows hay and allowing them to strip graze stockpiled supplement minimizes the need for concentrate feeding and storage equipment while reducing stockpile acres. Cows can recycle forage protein for several days, so strip grazing the stockpiled forage using 2-to-3 day allocations saves labor by reducing temporary fence movement.

For those who want to reduce winter hay feeding using stockpiled forage, consider hay feeding in August, September and October while pastures are growing. During late summer and early fall, hay feeding conditions are typically better with drier soil conditions, and hay storage waste should decline due to reduced weather exposure.

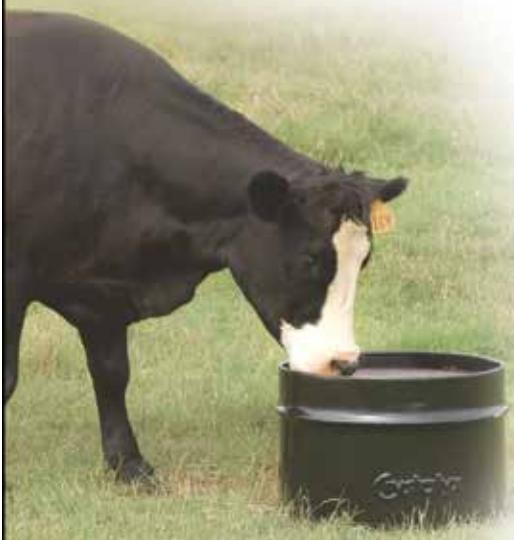


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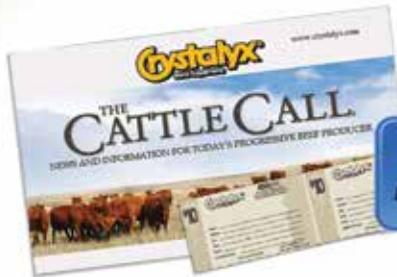
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PLANNING AUTUMN PASTURE FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

For spring calving herds, using stockpiled forage during the winter can increase the cow's nutritional plane prior to calving compared to most hay feeding systems. Getting gestating cows to a body condition score 5 or 6 pre-calving will improve reproductive success the following year. Hay feeding during late summer, early fall might also improve late summer shade management by allowing extended shaded pasture use once pastures are grazed out.

For those producers with summer annual crops such as sorghum-sudangrass or pearl millet or on acres where corn silage is harvested, autumn forage options include winter annuals or conversion to perennial pasture. When considering winter annuals, oats are more suited to fall grazing while cereal rye, wheat, annual ryegrass and turnips are better spring options. Wheat gives producers the grain harvest flexibility while cere-

al rye should produce sufficient forage to consider baling and wrapping early next spring.

For those inclined to convert these acres back to permanent pasture, consider replacement with novel-endophyte tall fescue. The negative effects of endophyte-infected tall fescue are apparent in pasture now as cattle are challenged with heat stress, rough hair, reduced growth and reproductive performance. Novel-endophyte tall fescue gives the benefits of tall fescue persistence without negative animal performance effects.

Many autumn and winter forage options exist; the key to taking advantage of this flexibility is planning ahead.

—Justin Sexten is state extension specialist, beef nutrition, University of Missouri. Contact him at sextenj@missouri.edu.

HELPING HANDS

Beef Genomics Now on Extension Website

Beef herd owners facing genetic data overload at breeding time can find help. A new website, eBEEF.org, is live, says Jared Decker, University of Missouri Extension beef geneticist.

Useful information is put in terms farmers understand, Decker says. All will be in one easy-to-use spot on the Internet, Decker says.

Six land-grant university specialists work together sorting out the most helpful items.

"If you run a Web search for EPDs (expected progeny differences), you get thousands of hits," Decker says. "Most people can't tell what is good, or not. We sort articles and post only the most helpful for cattle breeders."

On the team with Decker are Megan Rolf, Oklahoma State University; Matt Spangler, University of Nebraska; Bob Weber, Kansas State University; Darrh Bullcock, University of Kentucky; and Alison Van Eenennaam, University of California, Davis.

The group showed the one-stop site at the Beef Improvement Federation meeting in Biloxi, Miss. A FAQ (frequently asked questions) page with video and text answers provides a starting point. It describes genomics, EPDs, indexes and crossbreeding.

An interactive "Ask an Expert" section gives answers about production not given in the fact sheets or FAQs.

The website, at eBEEF.org, is part of the national eXtension network.

—Source: University of Missouri Cooperative Media Group.



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Doing the Right Thing

Preconditioning is good for cattle well-being

Story By Dr. David Rethorst for Cattleman's News

One of the basic concepts that our team at the Beef Cattle Institute talks about when conducting Beef Quality Assurance producer training is “doing the right thing.” We do this when talking about injection sites, cattle handling and many other topics. Weaning in general is another cattle area in which “doing the right thing can be applied.” Over the past 20-30 years, the beef industry has gotten away from many of the basic animal husbandry practices that are “tried and true.” Despite new, improved vaccines and new, more powerful antibiotics, the incidence of respiratory disease in weaned calves has continued to slowly rise. Accordingly, so has feeder calf death loss. Mismanagement that leads to increased calf death loss is a waste of resources that have been en-

trusted to our care. Given the concerns about antibiotic use and animal welfare that exist today, we need to do the right thing for calves at weaning.

The right thing in this case is to precondition calves in preparation for marketing. The preconditioned calf is one that is castrated, dehorned, dewormed, vaccinated, bunk-broke, tank-broke and weaned on the farm or ranch of origin for 45 days prior to marketing. Done properly, this reduces the stacking of stressors such as transportation and new surroundings. Reducing stress lowers the incidence of respiratory disease and its associated losses. Weaning, by itself, is one of the major stressors in a calf's life. Castration is another major stressor. Combining the two procedures creates problems. If transportation is added to the stack of stressors,

the problems escalate, especially in a calf whose immune system is not adequately prepared.

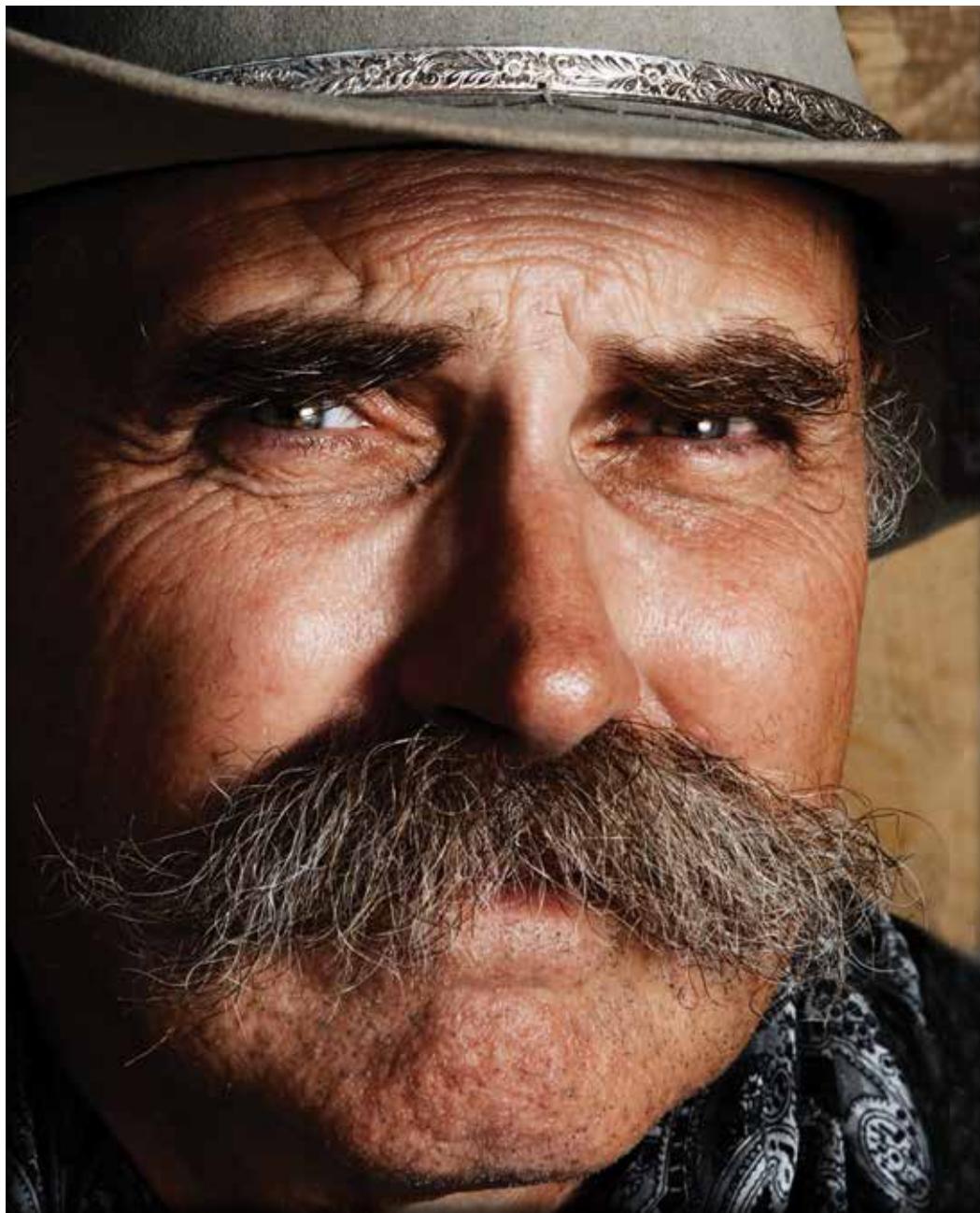
These stressors can easily be spread out over a calf's life in order to minimize their effects. Castration should be done before a calf is two and a half to three months old. This greatly reduces the stress of castration and allows more than adequate time for healing prior to weaning. Disbudding at the same time will take care of any horns on the calves. Vaccination against respiratory disease also can begin at this early age. Modified live viral vaccines have been shown to prime the immune system at this age even though antibodies from colostrum are still present in these calves. This early-in-life vaccination should be boosted

just prior to weaning, or at least at the time of weaning. There are several low-stress weaning methods to choose from including the two-stage (nose flap) method, fenceline weaning, the Hawaiian training method and the Australian yard-weaning method. These methods, combined with proper handling while gathering and sorting, greatly reduce the stress of the weaning process.

Not only is preconditioning the right thing to do for several reasons, it is also profitable in most instances. The profit comes from the weight gain that occurs during the 45-day preconditioning period. These calves can easily gain 100-150 pounds in the preconditioning period. While they will bring fewer dollars per hundred pounds, they will bring more net dollars compared to marketing at the time of weaning.

A good number of calves are sold each year as preconditioned calves that have not been weaned prior to being sold. These calves have been

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



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HELPING HANDS

New Tool To Monitor Dams, Keep Communities Safe

USDA's DamWatch helps manage watershed projects

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the availability of DamWatch, a new web-based application that provides real-time monitoring of rainfall, snowmelt, stream flow and seismic events that could pose potential threats to dam safety.

Through a secure interactive web interface, DamWatch will help watershed project sponsors monitor and manage dams that were built with assistance from USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). By monitoring these structures, project sponsors can better prevent and protect against hazardous, costly and potentially catastrophic events. For example, during recent rainfall events in Oklahoma, NRCS worked with project sponsors to prioritize field reconnaissance of structure sites.

DamWatch offers project sponsors an effective way to manage watershed projects. It alerts personnel via email, fax or text message when dams experience one or more potentially hazardous conditions, resulting in the coordinated deployment of personnel and resources at the right time and place. Although NRCS personnel may elect to receive DamWatch alerts, the project sponsor is responsible for monitoring the dams and notifying authorities during an emergency. NRCS might be available to assist the project sponsor at the sponsor's request.

During record rainfalls last month in Oklahoma, Texas, Kansas, Missouri and other parts of the central plains, nearly 1,000 DamWatch alerts helped NRCS personnel focus their response efforts. NRCS

DOING THE RIGHT THING FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

castrated, dehorned, vaccinated, and some of them dewormed. Calves in this category should be considered a pre-vaccinated calf, rather than a preconditioned calf. While these calves are less risk than uncastrated, unvaccinated calves, they present more risk than preconditioned calves.

From injectable to feed-grade, we are facing many changes in the availability of antibiotics in this country. The Food and Drug Administration and the Center for Disease Control are driving these changes as

personnel assisted project sponsors in reviewing the condition of hundreds of dams throughout the region.

NRCS watershed projects provide an estimated \$2.2 billion each year to local communities. Nearly 12,000 dams in 47 states and Puerto Rico help to prevent flooding and erosion damage, provide recreational opportunities, improve water supply and create habitat for wildlife.

they strive for more veterinary oversight of the antibiotics used in animal agriculture. Prevention is the key to judicious antibiotic use. This prevention starts with getting back to the basics. Optimal protein, energy and trace mineral nutrition for the cow while she is pregnant, early-in-life castration and disbudding, adequate vaccination, low-stress handling and low-stress weaning are practices that should be used. Preconditioning is good animal welfare. It is good animal stewardship. It is the right thing to do!

—Dr. David Rethorst is director of outreach for the Beef Cattle Institute at Kansas State University.

DamWatch, which was developed for NRCS by USEngineering Solutions Corporation, is currently monitoring nearly 12,000 dams across the country. For more information visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/Get-Started or a local USDA service center.

—Source: Natural Resources Conservation Service.

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NEXT GENERATION

A Question for the Next Generation: Why Farm?

Discover the passion level of the your farm's next leader

Story By Darren Frye for Cattlemen's News

As farms encounter different economic cycles in agriculture, a farm leader's passion for the industry helps him or her persist in both good and tough times. When it comes to the next generation on the farm, having a true passion for farming will take them far.

Those who decided to get into agriculture because they believed it would be easy might not stick it out. If you don't have a passion for what you're doing and clarity around why you're doing it, you might not stay with it long-term.

On the other hand, strong passion for what you do might make you more willing to go through a tough time while doing everything you can to make things work. That drive can often mean the difference between giving up when the going gets tough versus digging in and working harder and smarter toward success.

Questions to ask

Is the next generation on your farm truly passionate about farming or ranching? Do they love the day-to-day produc-

tion work? Or maybe they love the business side of the operation and are passionate about the management work it takes to run a great farm.

I think passion is an important factor as the older generation considers how to determine who the farm's next leader will be. Look for someone who is invested long-term in agriculture and isn't intimidated by economic cycling in ag. They should be able to look beyond today and envision the future – and be excited about that future and how to make it a reality.

Consider when and how they became interested in farming as a career. They might have started working on your farm in recent years. Maybe your farm was particularly successful at that time. Why did they originally get interested in your farm? Knowing this can tell you a lot about someone's motivations around wanting to get involved in the leadership of your farm.

Also take into account what they've done in your operation so far. What skills did they originally bring to the

farm? What skills do they provide now? Do they continually work to develop themselves and pursue learning opportunities – so they're constantly giving the farm a better and better employee? Do they intend to use their skills to improve the operation – or just to improve their own standing?

These questions might be difficult to ask, but they're the right questions when you're thinking deeply about your farm's future – and who you want to lead your farm into that future.

Move the farm forward

As you work to build your farm business, you'll find areas of your operation where you're doing really well. That's always exciting to see. It's easy to get excited about what we're good at and what we love to do.

Then, you'll find areas that might not be quite as exciting. These are the tasks that tend to pile up on to-do lists. We might know that we're not doing as good of a job in a particular area. It might even be something that's really important to the success of the farm. But we might just ignore it rather than figure out a way to work on it.

Becoming aware that this is happening is the first step. But, then we have to decide if we truly want to get better – if we want to learn and grow

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USDA Accepting More Farmland for Wildlife Habitat in Missouri

2015 marks 30 years for Conservation Reserve Program

An additional 7,500 acres of Agricultural land in Missouri is eligible for funding for wildlife habitat restoration, according to the Missouri Farm Service Agency.

The initiative, known as State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE), is part of the USDA Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), a federally funded voluntary program that for 30 years has assisted agricultural producers with the cost of restoring, enhancing and protecting certain grasses, shrubs and trees to improve water quality, prevent soil erosion and reduce loss of wildlife habitat. In return, USDA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. CRP has helped farmers and ranchers prevent more than 8 billion tons of soil from eroding, reduce nitrogen and phosphorous runoff relative to cropland by 95 and 85 percent respectively, and even sequester 43 million tons of greenhouse gases annually, equal to taking 8 million cars off the road.

In total, up to 400,000 acres of additional agricultural land will be eligible for wildlife habitat restoration funding through this SAFE announcement. The additional acres are part of an earlier CRP wildlife habitat announcement made by U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack. Currently, more than 1 million acres, representing 98 projects, are enrolled in SAFE nationwide.

“This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Conservation Reserve Program, which has not only resulted in significant soil and water improvements, but also greater populations of waterfowl, gamebirds and other wildlife native to the rural countryside,” said Mark Cadle, Missouri FSA executive director. “Here in Missouri, we have four separate project areas, totally 30,289 acres, which are designed to increase habitat for bobwhite quail, prairie chickens, pollinators and numerous other species native to Missouri. We hope to continue this progress by offering inter-

ested farmers and ranchers the opportunity to enroll another 7,500 acres in these project areas.”

Interested producers can offer land for enrollment in SAFE and other CRP initiatives by contacting their local FSA county office at <http://offices.usda.gov>.

—Source: Missouri Farm Service Agency

WHY FARM? FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

and advance in our knowledge and understanding, so our farm can improve.

Learning and seeing what we need to do leads us to a fork in the road. Do we decide to choose the side that leads to everything we’ve always done in the past, or are we ready to make a change and move forward – toward something better?

One family's story

To read more about how to get family members started talk-

ing about the farm’s future and transition, get ideas in our new issue of the Smart Series publication. Also, you’ll hear the story of how one family is transitioning the farm to the next generation. You can read the Smart Series online at waterstreet.org/smartseries.

—Source: Darren Frye is President and CEO of Water Street Solutions, a farm consulting firm that helps farmers with the challenges they face in growing and improving their farms – including the challenge of transitioning the farming operation to the next generation. Contact Darren at waterstreet@waterstreet.org or call (866) 249-2528.



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What to do with Profitability

OSU ag economist urges producers to use current profitability to improve genetics, infrastructure

Story By Raney Lovorn, *Angus Journal*® intern

High market prices are providing an incentive for producers to grow their herds and increase their profitability, said John Michael Riley, Oklahoma State University (OSU). During the 2015 Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Annual Convention, Riley addressed factors in the current market that will increase future herd profitability.

Identifying and utilizing a break-even point can help produc-

ers evaluate their profitability, said Riley, who recently took a position as assistant professor of ag economics at OSU. Although producers with high variable costs are able to make money with current market prices, historically they would be eliminated. In order to be a low-cost operation and receive the highest incentives on a dollar value basis, producers should aim well below their break-even point.

“Reducing non-feed costs is paramount,” Riley said. “Being a jack of all trades can almost get you in trouble. Trying to do many things gets you doing many things somewhat poorly, instead of doing one thing extremely well.”

Ranchers are at risk when they do not include their time and effort in their cost analysis, Riley said. For example, raising replacement females could be more expensive for producers in terms of time, labor and feed than they realize. In order to evaluate a true break-even point, ranchers should include all expenses associated with their cattle, not just hard monetary data.

Riley reassured producers there is no magic number for herd size to be profitable. Managing costs is most important to maintaining profitability, regardless of herd size.

“Higher-cost producers are lower-profit producers,” Riley said. “Lower-cost producers are higher-profit producers.”

Riley warned against minimizing costs without thought and consideration. He said making quick decisions could expose producers to unnecessary legal, political, human, price and production risks.

In contrast to cow-calf operations, feedlot profits specifically are influenced by a number of different inputs and outputs, Riley said. Feeder-steer prices, fed-steer prices and feed costs collectively impact 70 percent to 90 percent of feedlot profits.

Whether in a commercial, stocker or seedstock operation, Riley said all producers are equal in that they cannot change cattle prices. While the market is high, Riley said smart business decisions can contribute to future profitability.

“We need to make more and more of those smart business decisions because right now the market is paying us, paying you to make those improvements to your farm’s infrastructure,” Riley said.

Costly improvements like new genetics, enhanced herd nutrition and ranch infrastructure like new equipment or extra hired help, could greatly impact a ranch’s potential for profitability, he noted.

“Right now the market is putting a little extra cash in your pocket,” Riley said. “Take that cash and do something with it. Improve your infrastructure, improve your genetics as much as possible, and that’s going to increase the productivity of your herd.”

—Editor’s Note: This article is reprinted with permission from www.BIFconference.com, the *Angus Journal*’s online coverage site of the 2015 Beef Improvement Federation Research Symposium and Annual Meeting.

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Bank on Bermudagrass

Stockpiling bermudagrass saves on feed costs

Story By Mary Hightower

August is the time to begin stockpiling bermudagrass for fall-to-early-winter grazing, said Dirk Philipp, associate professor of Animal Science for the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture.

Stockpiling bermudagrass can offer ranchers a significant savings.

“Demonstrations in Arkansas under the project ‘Reducing Winter Feeding Costs,’ showed that the savings in winter feeding costs were about \$20 per head of grazing stockpiled warm-season forages,” Philipp said.

Bermudagrass is a solid choice for stockpiling, because it is the most common forage in the state besides tall fescue and is adapted to a wide range of conditions.

“Since bermudagrass is a warm-season grass, it does not stay green as long in the fall as fescue, so preparations for stockpiling this forage have to be initiated much earlier,” he said. “Bermudagrass stockpiling should start early to mid-August in northern Arkansas and late August in southern Arkansas to allow for enough time to accumulate enough growth.”

Bermudagrass does its best growing between 85 and 95 degrees Fahrenheit and declines sharply if temperatures drop below 60 degrees at night.

To get the process started, Philipp said ranchers should:

Remove existing forage residue in late July to early August to leave a stubble of 2-3 inches.

Fertilize with 50-60 pounds of nitrogen per acre in early to mid-August.

If using ammonium nitrate is used as fertilizer, no volatilization will occur.

If urea is applied, some volatilization might occur, but this

might be limited to a maximum of 20 percent and lower if rainfall occurs within a week after application.

Apply other minerals such as phosphorus and potassium according to soil test results.

Strip grazing works best

Philipp said growers should defer grazing until late October. When that time comes,

ranchers should “strip-graze or rotationally graze livestock,” he said. “Strip grazing works best because animals won’t trample ungrazed forage.”

In Arkansas demonstrations, strip grazing doubled the number of grazing days compared with a continuously stocked pasture of stockpiled forage.

Strip width can be calculated from three factors: the daily forage dry matter required for the class and number of animals; the forage dry matter; and the width of the pasture to be grazed for a three-day grazing period.

Because stockpiled bermudagrass can be grazed into December, Philipp said it’s important to keep in mind the effects of cold on this forage.

“Forage quality declines after a killing frost,” he said, “and if the bermudagrass has been repeatedly snowed on or subjected to freezing temperatures, the plants lose leaves and digestibility declines.”

Learn more about the 300 Days Grazing project at <http://www.uaex.edu/publications/pdf/FSA-3139.pdf>.

—Source: University of Arkansas Extension

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Get Your Motor Running

What energy means in weaned calf management

Story By Elizabeth Walker for *Cattlemen's News*

Livestock producers rarely complain about too much rain, but this spring and summer has provided us with a whole new set of challenges, especially when it comes to putting up hay.

Energy, after water, is the most limiting nutrient, and after land costs, feeding can be the most costly input for cattle producers. For this reason, producers need to determine what percent energy is in their feedstuff, whether it be forage or concentrate. Since we live in grass country, let's focus on forage feeding of weaned calves and the importance of knowing a few key pieces of information in your feeding management strategy.

Testing pasture forages or hay and properly interpreting the results is crucial in weaned calf management. While most of the forage tests must be

done in a laboratory, some testing can be done with the naked eye. As plants mature, they lose quality. Plants that are headed out or flowering will be of lesser quality than a plant that is in its vegetative state. A high leaf to stem ratio is also desirable, and the finer the leaves and the softer the stems, the more palatable and nutritive the forage will be.

The rest of the tests are a bit more confusing and a bit more expensive, but well worth the money if properly done and interpreted. I know those tests can be overwhelming, but two that you should pay particular attention to when providing weaned calves with a forage-based diet are Total Digestible Energy (TDN) and Neutral De-



tergent Fiber (NDF). Both TDN and NDF are reported as percentages.

TDN is the sum of the digestible fiber, protein, lipid and carbohydrate of the feedstuff and most reliable when cattle are fed a forage-based diet. For weaned calves, TDN needs to be greater than 65 percent. I asked if TDN could be too high, and my husband texted me back like I was nuts. So, I will take it to mean that he has never seen TDN too high in any of our forages. If your forages are between 65 and 75 percent, then you have an indicator that your forage is sufficient for the nutrient needs of your weaned calves (minus vitamins or minerals).

The second most important number that perhaps is often overlooked is NDF, which indicates the components of a cell wall of the plant. The plant cell wall is made up of hemicellulose, cellulose and lignin (think bark). As the plant matures, the percent NDF will also increase, hence a low NDF value indicates a younger, more pal-

atable and nutritious plant. As a plant matures and NDF values increase, dry matter intake decreases. As NDF increases, dry matter intake decreases. That is not what is wanted for our weaned calves. The last thing we want to do is limit intake in weaned animals. For legumes, NDF values should be below 40 percent. Above 50 percent is poor quality. Values for grasses can jump up a bit, and less than 50 percent is considered good quality; above 60 percent is poor-quality grass.

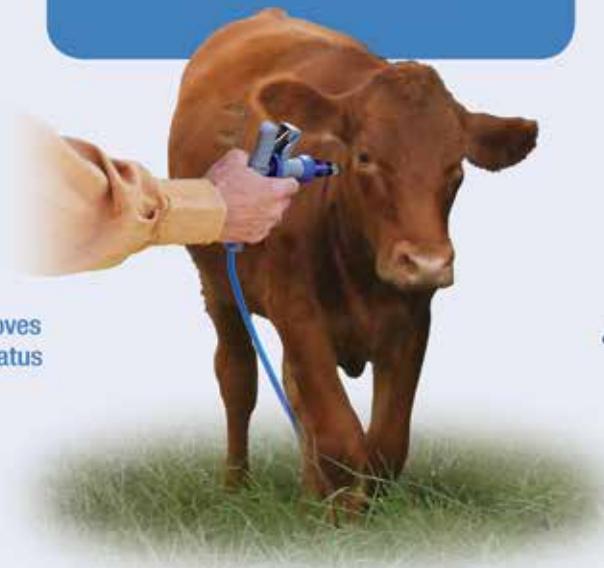
By decreasing NDF about 10 percentage points, you can see reciprocal increases in gain by about half a pound per head per day. Monoculture KY 31 pastures are not ideal for weaned calves, but gains can be increased through the use of about a 25-to-35 percent legume forage in the field or as a supplement in the form of a legume hay. I am not a fan of monoculture fescue pastures, and am a believer in pasture and animal management that includes legumes.

—Source: Elizabeth Walker is associate professor of animal science at Missouri State University.

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Setting the Stage

Increasing average incomes and demand for high-quality beef paint a bright future for cattlemen

Story By Troy Smith, *Angus Journal*® field editor

John Paterson sees tremendous opportunity for U.S. beef producers. The National Cattlemen's Beef Association executive director of education and former Montana State University professor was the lead-off speaker for the Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Annual Convention June 9-13, in Biloxi, Mississippi. Paterson's comments set the stage for the opening general session's discussion of rebuilding the nation's cow herd.

Paterson recounted the reasons why, during recent years, U.S. cow numbers declined from 40 million head to around 28 million. He called drought a major factor, but also listed high feed costs, high operating costs, increasing age of producers and a shift in land usage from forage to row-crop production. Additionally, record cull-cow prices contributed to the decline in the inventory of brood cows.

However, herd expansion is now occurring more rapidly than expected. Paterson said 72 percent of that growth is occurring in the Southern Plains via increased heifer retention. Citing reasons for producer optimism, Paterson said drought conditions have improved in most of the United States, feed and forage supplies have improved and input costs have become less volatile. Supply and demand fundamentals also encourage herd rebuilding.

Responding to the question of how much rebuilding might occur, Paterson said the cow tally is likely to return to a pre-drought level of 28 million head by 2017. The number could reach 30 million head by 2020. He expects expansion to occur primarily among mid-size and

large operations with 200 cows or more.

Paterson said the future looks bright for U.S. beef producers because of the still strong demand for high-quality U.S. beef, both domestically and internationally. He said steadily improving standards of living in many developing nations, and particularly in China, bode well for increased exports of beef.

"When people make more money, the more beef they want to eat," stated Paterson. "And consumers are willing to pay a premium for what they want."

— This article is reprinted with permission from www.BIFconference.com, the *Angus Journal's* online coverage site of the 2015 Beef Improvement Federation Research Symposium and Annual Meeting.



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Before using Baytril® 100, please consult the product insert, a summary of which follows:

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Each mL of Baytril® 100 contains 100 mg of enrofloxacin. Excipients are L-arginine base 200 mg, n-butyl alcohol 30 mg, benzyl alcohol (as a preservative) 20 mg and water for injection q.s.

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The effects of enrofloxacin on cattle or swine reproductive performance, pregnancy and lactation have not been adequately determined.

The long-term effects on articular joint cartilage have not been determined in pigs above market weight. Subcutaneous injection can cause a transient local tissue reaction that may result in trim loss of edible tissue at slaughter. Baytril® 100 contains different excipients than other Baytril® products. The safety and efficacy of this formulation in species other than cattle and swine have not been determined.

Quinolone-class drugs should be used with caution in animals with known or suspected Central Nervous System (CNS) disorders. In such animals, quinolones have, in rare instances, been associated with CNS stimulation which may lead to convulsive seizures. Quinolone-class drugs have been shown to produce erosions of cartilage of weight-bearing joints and other signs of arthropathy in immature animals of various species. See Animal Safety section for additional information.

ADVERSE REACTIONS:

No adverse reactions were observed during clinical trials.

ANIMAL SAFETY:

In cattle safety studies, clinical signs of depression, incoordination and muscle fasciculation were observed in calves when doses of 15 or 25 mg/kg were administered for 10 to 15 days. Clinical signs of depression, inappetance and incoordination were observed when a dose of 50 mg/kg was administered for 3 days. An injection site study conducted in feeder calves demonstrated that the formulation may induce a transient reaction in the subcutaneous tissue and underlying muscle. In swine safety studies, incidental lameness of short duration was observed in all groups, including the saline-treated controls. Musculoskeletal stiffness was observed following the 15 and 25 mg/kg treatments with clinical signs appearing during the second week of treatment. Clinical signs of lameness improved after treatment ceased and most animals were clinically normal at necropsy. An injection site study conducted in pigs demonstrated that the formulation may induce a transient reaction in the subcutaneous tissue.

U.S. Patent No. 5,756,506

GHG121814

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When to Wean?

Considerations for an early weaning program

Story By Rebecca Mettler for *Cattlemen's News*

To evaluate the pros and cons of early weaning, it's important to understand what the process implies and why you might want to give it consideration. Management practices that have worked well in previous situations might deserve a second glance this go-round.

"Early weaning can vary depending upon the objective with the process," said Shane Gadberry, extension beef specialist with the University of Arkansas. "For a typical cow-calf operation, (you) might associate normal weaning with six to seven months of age. With early weaning, it's no later than four months of age."

Although cattle producers don't like to think back on the drought of 2011 and 2012 that covered much of cattle country, early weaning was advantageous for many cattlemen and women. Still, where does it fit into a production environment

experiencing ample amounts of moisture through the spring and early summer?

Dale Blasi, professor and extension beef specialist with Kansas State University said, in general, early weaning is not high on producers' priority list now.

"With early weaning, it's mostly about allowing cows to gain condition in low forage production periods for the upcoming winter," Blasi said.

An abundance of grass in most areas means that, as a general rule of thumb, cows are fleshy enough as it is and don't need the half to one full body condition score that can be gained by early weaning.

Gadberry sees the necessity of early weaning to fall into two categories. Most often he sees producers choose early weaning when wanting to minimize the energy demand of the cow during mid-to-late lactation.



Reducing the energy demand becomes the most valuable during a drought-stricken year.

"Previous Nebraska research (2009) has shown that removal of the calf can result in an approximately 28 percent reduction in grass needs for the cow," Blasi said.

Secondly, when early weaning occurs prior to or at the start of the breeding season, a jump in number of earlier cycling females can be seen.

"Researchers have observed a 60 percent increase in pregnancy rates in first calf heifers and about a 20-day shorter postpartum interval, or the time span between two calving dates," according to Gadberry.

Younger cows receive a nice response to early weaning. Time and time again, first calf heifers and second pregnancy cows are the most difficult to get bred back, stated Blasi.

From a preconditioning and marketing perspective, Blasi sees true benefits for early weaning. Preparing those calves to qualify to a VAC-45 program and hitting the calf market in late August or early September before the traditional fall run, typically from Labor Day through November, can result in added value for the seller.

"The only reason for early weaning I would see today is because of the market conditions," Blasi said.

Before diving into the task of early weaning, put a pencil to the numbers and analyze the factors associated with the practice.

"You have to look at the markets and available forage," Gadberry said. "From my perspec-

tive, if there's plenty of forage and the cows are in good condition holding on to those calves even beyond weaning will make you more money."

However, Gadberry knows of one producer that started utilizing early weaning with his first-calf heifers and now continues to early wean, even in good years. His reason is understandable; he has been able to increase his herd size by managing the nutritional needs of the cattle

through lowering the maintenance energy requirements.

Early weaning is not without its challenges and risks. Blasi reminds producers of the added labor, facilities and equipment associated with early weaning. Across Kansas, weaning is often dictated by lease agreements on pastures where cattle are grazed. Pulling cows out of the pasture to work and wean early, before the lease is up adds more labor to the scenario.

Ranchers must also consider dust conditions when drylotting the calves. It's not uncommon for calves to get a condition called summer pneumonia.

"If you lose one out of 100 head, that's a \$15 loss you have to spread over the other 99 head," Blasi said. "There are a lot of things that could happen, and you must be well set up to do it. This management tool requires a lot of planning." One must work with his or her local veterinarian to ensure all potential health issue events are addressed in a timely manner.

From a nutritional standpoint the requirements of younger calves are going to center around fairly high protein needs even for modest rates of gain. Special consideration must also be given to the development stage of the rumen. When weaned very early, a calf's rumen is not developed enough to gain on high amounts of forage, according to Gadberry.

"I would suggest that anybody that is early weaning work with a nutritionist or an area (extension) agent that has a good beef cattle nutrition background," Gadberry said. "Plan a program and get the calves off to a good start."

Consider Early Weaning – Early

Get cows in shape for winter by giving them a break

Story By Chris Reinhardt

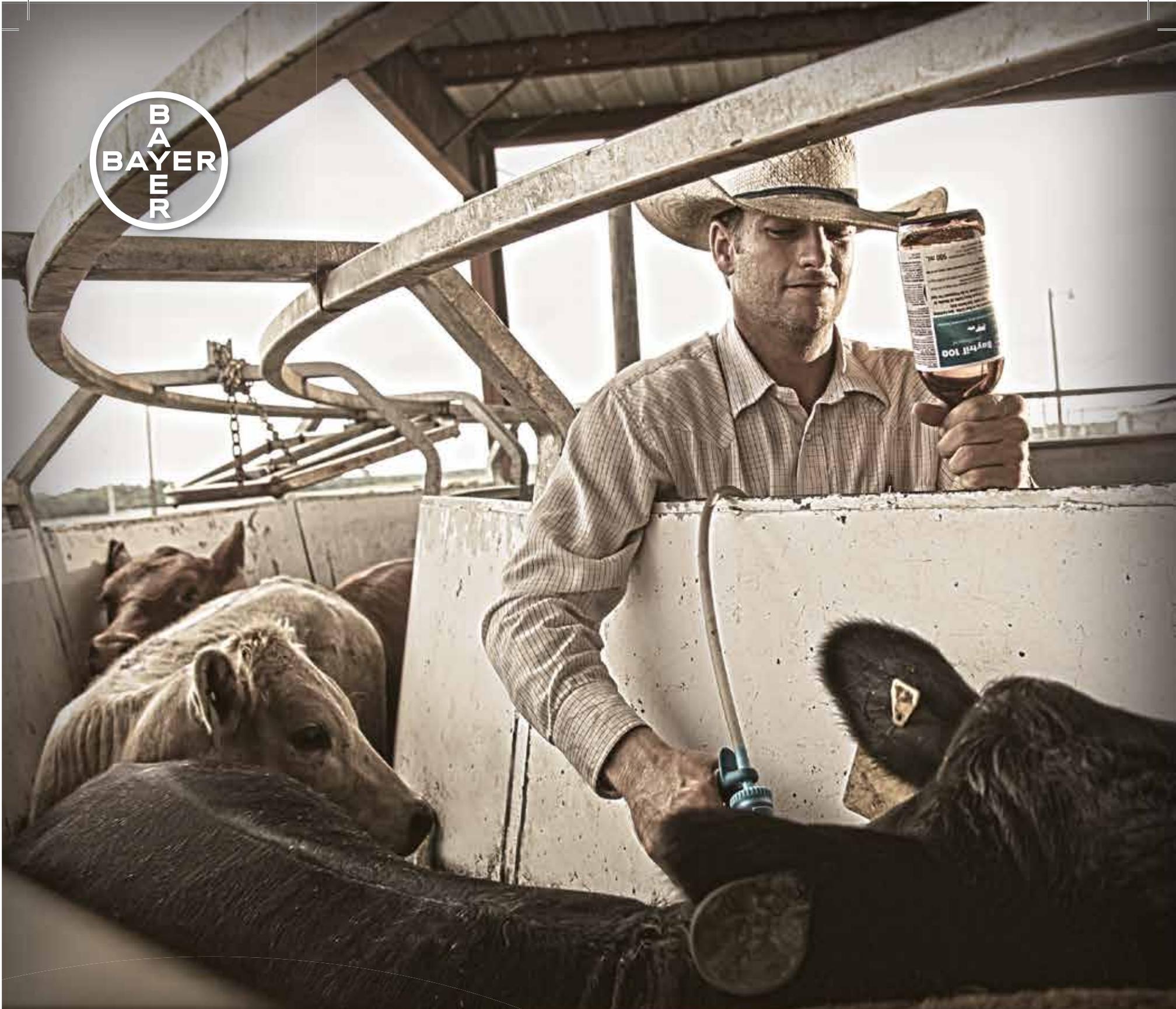
Normally, we only consider early weaning when we are in the throes of a nasty drought. However, given what we now know about calf and cow nutrition, we might want to expand our thinking.

Late summer forage quality in pastures declines, even in good rainfall years. The decreased energy and protein content of late summer grass does not support a great deal of calf gain. Doubly challenging is that this late-season forage also does not support a great level of lactation by the calf's dam, so calf average daily gain (ADG) declines considerably late in the grazing season. Assuming you've received adequate moisture, late season calf gain might be estimated in the range of

0.5 to 1.5 lb per day; many years on western range late season ADG might drop to near 0.

Although the actual amount of milk and grass consumed varies greatly among calves and from season to season, it can be stated broadly that the calf's first choice for a source of nutrients, as long as he can get away with it, is his mother's milk. Calves are fully functional ruminants by 60-90 days of age, and are fully capable of making use of good-quality forage. However, milk is always a calf's first choice for nutrients, rather than his last. So every day the calf will go to its mother and consume as much milk as possible. And, as the calf grows and it's ap-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18



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EARLY WEANING FROM PAGE 16

petite climbs, mother's milk decreases, effectively pushing the calf to go to grass more and more in order to supplement his nutritional needs.

This constant demand for milk by the calf places a tremendous pull on the dam's nutrient reserves. Early in the season, when grass is both lush and plentiful, the cow can often produce a greater quantity of milk than the small calf can utilize because of the lactation curve and the abundant nutrient supply available to the dam. However, as grass matures and nutrient supply declines, the cow will pull energy from her own reserves (her body fat) to sustain lactation to prepare the calf for the winter.

If we work backwards from calving, the target body condition for beef cows at the time of calving is usually a condition score 5.0, indicating muscling, and a slight cover of fat,

but no obvious fat pockets, and 2-3 ribs visible. Cows that are in a thinner condition than this target usually have a longer post-partum interval and delayed post-calving first estrus, resulting in later conception — or even an open cow come next pregnancy check.

So, if the cow goes into the winter in poor body condition, we need to feed those reserves back into the cow or risk late breeding next summer and late calving in subsequent years or even open cows next fall. It is estimated that for every 2 weeks we leave cows grazing late-season pasture with calves still suckling them after Sept. 1, cows lose about 0.25 of a condition score, which is worth about 20-25 lbs. That means if we leave the calves on cows until Nov. 1, we've milked about 100 lbs of body condition off the cows.

If calves are only gaining 0.5-1.0 lb per day on their dam late in the season, we can do better. By weaning (especially utilizing low-stress weaning methods), we can improve the nutritional supply available to the calf, meeting all the needs for energy, protein, vitamins and minerals. Weaning during favorable weather also has the advantage of reducing stress and the risk of disease brought on by inclement, cold, wet, fall weather.

In turn, the now dry cow can maintain, and oftentimes actually increase, body condition without the demands of lactation, resulting in cows going into winter in better flesh, requiring less supplemental nutrition to achieve the target body condition 5.0. That means less out of pocket cost to maintain the herd.

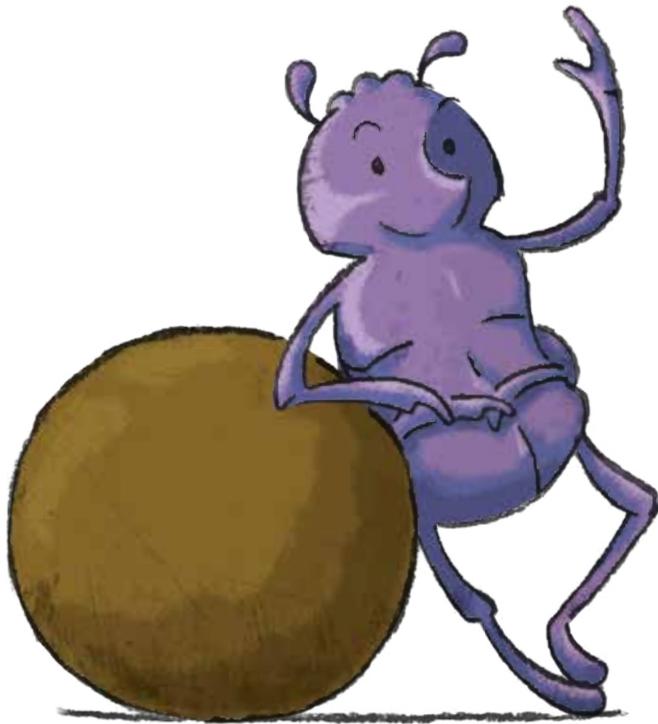
The disadvantages of early weaning are lower weaning weights, and weaning and feeding calves separate from cows requires good quality feeds, equipment, decent facilities and labor. But the advantages are reduced disease, improved daily gains late in the season and improved cow body condition going into the winter.

It's usually true that your standing forage is your cheapest feed resource. But, I'm not advocating avoidance of that precious resource, only re-directing its use to optimize its value. Allow the cows to graze themselves into good body condition rather than feeding that same condition onto them later in the winter with costly purchased feeds, and provide the calves with extra nutrition other than the relative pittance of milk momma is putting out at the end of lactation.

It's time to reconsider what we do and why we do it. "Because we've always done it this way" is the worst reason to do anything. If there are legitimate, defensible reasons for what you do on your operation, then keep on truckin'. If not, seek wise counsel to find perhaps better, more efficient, and more effective practices that might lead to better outcomes for your calves, your cows and hopefully, your bottom line.

—Chris Reinhardt is extension feedlot specialist and professor at Kansas State University. Contact him at cdr3@ksu.edu.

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¹ EPRINEX FOI summary and product label.

² Based on FOI summaries and label claims.

³ Beckett J. Efficacy of pour-on dewormers differing in active ingredient and carrier on weight gain and fecal egg count in stocker beef cattle. College of Agriculture, Cal Poly State University.

⁴ Rendell, et al. Evidence that moxidectin is a greater risk factor than ivermectin in the development of resistance to macrocyclic lactones by *Ostertagia* spp. in sheep in southeastern Australia. *NZ Vet Jour.* 2006;54(6):313-317.

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Are Your Cattle Stressed Out?

The cost of cortisol on vaccines and your bottom line

Story By Brittini Drennan for *Cattlemen's News*

Cattlemen take careful precautions to ensure optimum health of their animals. They implement health protocols, spend valuable time researching what practices work best and spend money on vaccines to protect their investments. So, why would a producer not do what it takes to make certain those precautions are going to be effective?

Every animal reacts to its environment as a survival instinct, and that reaction can have a negative effect on the body. In stressful situations, cattle release a hormone called cortisol. According to Davin Vaughn, a registered pharmacist and owner of Vaughn Family Farms, a registered and commercial Beefmaster operation in Mount Vernon, Missouri, cortisol is a glucocorticoid hormone produced by the adrenal gland in response to stress. Cortisol is commonly referred to as the stress hormone.

"Cortisol is released in response to stress," Vaughn said. "Cortisol can decrease bone formation and lengthen healing time. More importantly, elevated levels of cortisol can weaken the immune system."

Cortisol can be detrimental to a calf's health making the calf more susceptible to disease during a time that is critical for growth and development. Vaughn suggested that by suppressing the immune system due to the effects of stress, cortisol could potentially decrease the calf's ability to respond to vaccines.

"Stress is something producers need to take into consideration when vaccinating calves," Vaughn said. "Just because the calf was vaccinated doesn't always mean the calf is protected. A stressed animal's immune system may be unable to respond to the vaccine. This is why I like to get the first dose of vaccinations in calves while they are still nursing and while stress levels are at their lowest."

A number of factors cause an

animal to experience stress. Mark Spire, technical services manager for Merck Animal Health, said it is in producers' best interest to minimize stress as much as possible. A stressor is anything that changes an animal's environment and cause the animal to adapt to something new. Stressors include mixing cattle, improper handling, transportation, weaning, changing the feed ration, nutrition, weather conditions and pain



like branding and castration. Once an animal has experienced initial stress, Spire said it is important to allow the animal five to seven days to rest before adding additional stress or pressure.

"If the animal gets past the

initial stress when cortisol is released and continues to experience stress, cortisol becomes exhausted," Spire said, "and the longer cortisol exists in the animal, it increases the animal's temperature and will begin to change the chemical makeup of the blood. The animal can correct itself but needs some time to recover before experiencing added stress."

Spire said to better understand how cortisol is released, think about stress in three stages. In the initial stage, acute stress, cortisol is released. Long-term stress is the second phase in which cortisol is released over time and completely suppress-

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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Weighing In on Weaning Woes

A look at the pros and cons of fenceline weaning

Story By Brittni Drennan for *Cattlemen's News*

When it comes to management, every operation is different and unique. Environment, size, facilities, resources and personal preferences all weigh in on the management practices an operation employs. Research is conducted by industry professionals to ensure cattlemen have the latest knowledge and information to make strategic decisions affecting their bottom line.

Joe Cassady, head of the department of animal science at South Dakota State University, said research is essential for advancement in the beef cattle industry. For example, results

separated physically from the cows. This is often referred to as two-stage weaning. Research demonstrates the different effects fenceline weaning calves and traditional weaning methods have on the productivity of calves.

“Studies show fenceline weaning can help reduce the stress a calf experiences during the weaning process as compared to traditional methods of abrupt separation,” Cassady said. “Calves are physically separated in a fenceline-weaning method, but they maintain visual contact with their dams, they can smell each other and



from research performed on fenceline weaning demonstrate the benefits compared to other methods. These studies show the differences between weaning methods in regard to stress, behaviors, performance and animal well-being.

“In a traditional weaning system, you take the calves away from the cows,” Cassady explained. “It’s as simple as that. Fenceline-weaned calves are separated from their mommas, but they share a common fenceline. They maintain some interaction between them, but the calves are prevented from nursing, and physical contact is limited.”

Cassady discussed another form of weaning involving a “nose flap,” which prevents calves from nursing due to a mechanism inserted in the calves’ nostrils. With the exception of nursing, calves are allowed to fully interact with their dams. Calves are later

have some minimal physical contact.”

A study conducted at the University of California-Davis concluded fenceline weaning reduces the negative effects of stress as well as minimizes reduction in weight loss often associated with weaning. The study showed fenceline-weaned calves, compared to those completely weaned by abrupt separation, demonstrated different behaviors. The authors reported fenceline-weaned calves spent less time walking, more time lying down and more time grazing, particularly in the first three days of being weaned. Due to the close proximity of their dams, fenceline-weaned calves also exhibited fewer instances of vocalization. These are all indications of improved calf well-being. The calves that were abruptly separated at weaning spent less time eating and lying down and spent more time walking and vocalizing. These actions are all

indicative of distress associated with the weaning process.

In addition to differences in behavior, the study also identified differences in weight gain. Calves in the study were weighed weekly for 10 weeks. At each weighing, fenceline-weaned calves exceeded weight gains of the calves that were weaned by the traditional method of complete separation.

“Studies prove that calves graze more and walk the fence less in a fenceline-weaning practice, conserving energy, which can be converted into growth,” Cassady said. “This could be an economically beneficial management strategy for producers to consider, particularly those who sell calves right after weaning.”

This management technique has proven to reduce stress during weaning, minimize weight loss and also improves animal well-being. However, infrastructure must be in place to implement a fenceline weaning method, including good, sound fencing and pastures.

“The idea of this management strategy focuses on minimizing stress, increasing growth and increasing performance,” Cassady said. “It also allows for better animal well-being because you aren’t having to handle calves as much or ship them to a different location.”

Another study suggests creep feeding reduces stress when the calf is separated from its dam because it progressively reduces the calf’s nutritional and social dependence on the cow, allowing the calf to become better suited to its new environment once separated from its dam. If the facilities or infrastructure are not available to implement the fenceline weaning method, there are other practices and options available to minimize stress at weaning.

Endless possibilities and resources exist to assist cattlemen in making the best decisions possible to help increase their bottom line. Fenceline weaning is another option that has the research available to reinforce its claims to reduce stress and create a better, optimal environment for the calf to promote growth. Take advantage of the results and resources, and keep an open mind to what might help improve the bottom line.

STRESSED OUT FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

es the immune system. Stress exhaustion is the third phase. Spire suggested producers prevent short-term stressors from becoming long-term stressors by allowing cattle the proper recovery time and implementing better management practices to reduce stress. Producers can also implement premium health programs to get optimal results from vaccines.

“In a perfect world, we like to see producers take health protocols to a two- or even three-step process with premium programs like a VAC-45 program,” Spire said. “Ideally, a calf should have multiple vaccines before it’s weaned, preferably within two to three months of being born. If given prior to two months, there is a potential the vaccine could combat with the antibodies that are in the colostrum passed down from the mother. Then, a calf should get its second dose at weaning. Two doses of vaccines provide optimum protection and improve the protective opportunity and maximum duration against diseases.”

Spire said his research trials have proven that while under the influence of stress hormones, bacteria and viruses can actually grow more rapidly and change the virulence of a disease’s aggression.

“An animal is constantly exposed to pathogens, but the immune system responds and keeps those bugs in check,” Spire said. “Cortisol prevents that from happening. When a vaccine is injected, the body has to recognize that vaccine as a foreign agent, and if the body can’t recognize that, it doesn’t build a robust resistance to that bug.”

Man inflicts most cortisol releases, Spire pointed out, and producers can take precautions to avoid cattle stress and keep cortisol levels to a minimum. Education on better management practices and implementing a premium health program are the most effective ways to see improved results. Lower stress levels and healthier cattle all lead to an increased bottom line. Talk to a local veterinarian about cortisol and the steps to take to implement an effective health program.



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Stress-free Weaning

How to get the most out of your calves at weaning time

Story By Lisa Henderson for *Cattlemen's News*

You've already invested a lot of time, labor and resources in your calves. But the most critical time for the calf – and for your payday – lies just ahead. How well you manage the weaning of your calves can put dollars in your pocket and increase the performance of the calves for the next owner. The result can be a win-win, and even improve the quality of the eating experience for consumers.

Weaning will be the most stressful experience for your calves to

date. They're likely to lose weight, and the stress will increase the likelihood they'll become ill. Fortunately, you can minimize the stress and improve the calf's health.

To minimize weight loss, industry experts suggest several tips for low-stress weaning practices, and that begins with pre-weaning management. Extension professionals suggest vaccinating calves at least three weeks prior to weaning, with a booster administered at weaning. This significantly reduces sickness at weaning, and later during shipping and marketing.

"Anything to reduce stress is something to consider when weaning an animal," said Eldon Cole, southwest extension livestock specialist for the University of Missouri. "Castration, dehorning, vaccinations are all stressful events. Be proactive by doing things earlier in the calf's life."

Beth Kegley, professor of animal science at the University of Arkansas, said the more of those procedures that can occur before weaning, the better.

"The smaller the calf at the time of dehorning and castrating, the better," Kegley noted. "Research suggests that castrating bulls near birth results in less stress than castrating at weaning. We did not see a difference in weaning weights between steer and bull calves."

Two of the most common types of weaning practices include fenceline weaning and the use of nosetags (see related article on page 20 in this issue). Fenceline weaning is the practice of separating the cow-calf pair by a fence, having each in separate pastures but allowing them to maintain visual and nose-to-nose contact. When considering fenceline weaning, Cole said equal amounts of shade and water on each side are essential.

"When separating the calves from their mothers, try to have the least amount of stressors possible," he explained. "This means watering down the ground if there is dust, providing adequate shade – especially in high temperatures, adequate amounts of water and a good food ration with 14-16 percent protein."

Kegley also suggests offering high-quality hay or forage for the calves. "If you're going to feed a supplement, start 'slow' and 'work them up' to your desired rate of supplementation."

Nosetags are plastic nose flaps that prevent the calf from nursing while allowing them to graze, eat and drink without having the anxiety of being separated from their mother. Cole said this is a practice that should be monitored. "The flaps don't always stay on very well, and irritation can occur. It can also require repeated handling of the animal, which isn't a good measure of low stress."

Cole also suggests creep feeding the calf while it is still nursing. "Give a palatable, good-quality hay to break them in to this ration around 4-5 weeks pre-weaning. Then, when they are weaning and the gate is closed between them and their mother, they have something familiar to go to."

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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- Bermudagrass (Common) cost per acre = \$58 -- based on \$5.80/pound retail at 10 lbs. per acre

Stand Life Expectancy: Both Texoma MaxQ II and bermudagrass are perennial forages with similar stand life that will produce forage year after year with good management.

Agronomic Traits:

- Days of grazing - Texoma MaxQ II will provide approximately 45 more days per year than bermudagrass
- Forage quality (vegetative) - Texoma MaxQ II 12-16% protein and 61-66% TDN; bermudagrass 10-12% protein and 52-58% TDN
- Toxins - No animal toxins contained in either forage
- Forage growth distribution - Bermudagrass late spring thru early fall; Texoma MaxQ II fall and late winter thru early summer
- Uses - hay or grazing for both

Animal Performance:

- Animal gains - ADG approximately .5-.75 lb/d higher for Texoma MaxQ II versus bermudagrass at similar vegetative growth stage

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STRESS-FREE WEANING FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

While this should be a normal practice for most producers, Kegley emphasized checking calves every day for signs of sickness. "Have a plan discussed with your veterinarian before weaning on how you plan to treat any sick calves."

Additionally, Cole reminds producers to maintain parasite control practices through weaning. Late-season flies can still hinder weight gain, and they'll add to the stress of weaning. By controlling parasites, calves will better utilize feed and respond more completely to vaccinations. Cole also said adequate minerals and vita-

mins should be available during weaning.

Nutrition is critical for both the cow and the calf. Cole recommends creep feeding calves about a month prior to weaning to get them used to eating a diet other than grass and mother's milk. Cole said in spite of good intentions, something can always take you by surprise late in the season.

calves that have learned to eat from a feed bunk and drink from a water trough. Preconditioning also exposes the calves to people and machinery, often critical experiences to their success and performance for their future owners. That familiarity often improves the calves' overall disposition and relationship with people, ultimately reducing stress.

Consult your veterinarian to develop a vaccination program that can protect calves from devastating diseases. You should also consider administering a dewormer that can reduce stress at weaning and beyond. 

MANAGEMENT MATTERS

Heterosis and EPDs for Crossbreeding

Nebraska researcher looks at across-breed expected progeny differences and heterosis for calving ease

Story By Nicole Lane, *Angus Journal*® intern

Commercial producers are often encouraged to capitalize on the genetic strengths of different breeds to optimize their cow herd. This can be a difficult task when expected progeny differences (EPDs) from the different breeds don't match up, and across-breed adjustment factors aren't always available for some of the economically valued traits.

At the Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Annual Convention in Biloxi, Mississippi, June 11, Matt Spangler of the University of Nebraska shared his research on across-breed calving ease EPD adjustment factors. The goal of his work was to learn how to create an across-breed EPD for calving ease direct (CED) and calving ease maternal (CEM).

Spangler suggested that an updated delivery model be required for EBVs for calving difficulty and other traits that don't fall on a normal distribution pattern to expand the number of across-breed EPDs that can be made available to producers.

"Currently we have this information for birth weight, but birth weight is an indicator trait, not an economically relevant trait," Spangler said. "Calving ease is an economically relevant trait, so we would like to be able to develop adjustment factors to tackle that."

Spangler studied this by evaluating breed-specific heterosis for the seven commonly used beef breeds in the United States (Angus, Hereford, Red

Angus, Charolais, Gelbvieh, Simmental and Limousin) and the composite MARC III (¼ Angus, ¼ Hereford, ¼ Pinzgauer, ¼ Red Poll). By creating a population of animals that represented these breeds and frequent crosses, Spangler collected data to provide a heterosis summary.

This type of data can be used to estimate the effect a trait will have in specific crossbreeding scenarios. He concluded that heterosis still exists, use of biological type in breeding systems is warranted, and we need to revisit breed-specific heterosis again.

When attempting to compare calving ease EPDs across breeds, Spangler described it as comparing apples and oranges. This is due to the different models that breed associations use to provide birth weight EPDs. When scaling differences between breeds, the variety of models makes creating an EPD or estimated breeding value (EBV) nearly impossible.

Spangler suggested that an updated delivery model be required for EBVs for calving difficulty and other traits that don't fall on a normal distribution pattern to expand the number of across-breed EPDs that can be made available to producers.

—*Editor's Note: This article is reprinted with permission from www.BIFconference.com, the Angus Journal's online coverage site of the 2015 Beef Improvement Federation Research Symposium and Annual Meeting.* 

PRODUCT INFORMATION
NADA 141-299, Approved by FDA.



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BRIEF SUMMARY: For full prescribing information, see package insert.

INDICATION: RESFLOR GOLD® is indicated for treatment of bovine respiratory disease (BRD) associated with *Mannheimia haemolytica*, *Pasteurella multocida*, *Histophilus somni*, and *Mycoplasma bovis*, and control of BRD-associated pyrexia in beef and non-lactating dairy cattle.

CONTRAINDICATIONS: Do not use in animals that have shown hypersensitivity to florfenicol or flunixin.

WARNINGS: NOT FOR HUMAN USE. KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN. This product contains material that can be irritating to skin and eyes. Avoid direct contact with skin, eyes, and clothing. In case of accidental eye exposure, flush with water for 15 minutes. In case of accidental skin exposure, wash with soap and water. Remove contaminated clothing. Consult a physician if irritation persists. Accidental injection of this product may cause local irritation. Consult a physician immediately. The Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) contains more detailed occupational safety information.

For customer service or to obtain a copy of the MSDS, call 1-800-211-3573. For technical assistance or to report suspected adverse reactions, call 1-800-219-9286.

Not for use in animals intended for breeding purposes. The effects of florfenicol on bovine reproductive performance, pregnancy, and lactation have not been determined. Toxicity studies in dogs, rats, and mice have associated the use of florfenicol with testicular degeneration and atrophy. NSAIDs are known to have potential effects on both parturition and the estrous cycle. There may be a delay in the onset of estrus if flunixin is administered during the prostaglandin phase of the estrous cycle. The effects of flunixin on imminent parturition have not been evaluated in a controlled study. NSAIDs are known to have the potential to delay parturition through a tocolytic effect.

RESFLOR GOLD® when administered as directed, may induce a transient reaction at the site of injection and underlying tissues that may result in trim loss of edible tissue at slaughter.

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ADVERSE REACTIONS: Transient inappetence, diarrhea, decreased water consumption, and injection site swelling have been associated with the use of florfenicol in cattle. In addition, anaphylaxis and collapse have been reported post-approval with the use of another formulation of florfenicol in cattle.

In cattle, rare instances of anaphylactic-like reactions, some of which have been fatal, have been reported, primarily following intravenous use of flunixin meglumine.

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New Rules Aim to Bring Safer Food for Consumers

FDA's veterinary feed directive final rule takes effect in October

Story By Joann Pipkin, Editor

The Food and Drug Administration's goal is to make a safer food supply for consumers. But, that goal won't be accomplished without some changes in the agriculture industry.

Earlier this summer, FDA announced the Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) final rule, an important piece of the agency's overall strategy to promote the judicious use of antimicrobials in food-producing animals. This comes following FDA's December 2013 "guidance for industry" documents that outlined how the VFD will become a critical component of food animal feed-grade antibiotic use.

According to Dr. John Hallberg, director of regulatory affairs for veterinary medicine research and development at Zoetis, FDA hopes to accomplish its goal by doing two things. First, FDA will phase out the use of medically important antibacterial drugs for growth promotion and feed efficiency. And second, FDA will bring all of those compounds under the jurisdiction of the veterinarian.

"Their thought is that by doing these two things, it will help make a safer food supply for people," Hallberg said in a June 17 webinar.

A VFD is similar to a veterinary script. The VFD will be required for all medically important antibacterial drugs found in medicated feed. Implementation of the ruling begins in October, although drug manufacturers have agreed to make label changes before the full implementation date of Dec. 31, 2016.

"The concern centers around the fact that use of these compounds in food animals may generate resistant pathogens that can affect people," Hallberg noted.

According to FDA, The strategy will bring the use of these drugs under veterinary supervision so that they are used only when necessary for assuring animal health.

USDA's Guidance 152 created in the early 2000s defines the importance of antibacterial drugs. Hallberg said the importance does not pertain to veterinary medicine, but rather for use in human medicine.

Under the VFD final rule, veterinarians are required to issue all VFDs within the context of a veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR). Thus, it is key for the veterinarian and client or animal producer to assume responsibility for making clinical judgments about the health of

the animal. Bottom line, the producer and veterinarian need to have a working relationship and the veterinarian must be familiar with the animals on the operation.

Here's how the process should work. The veterinarian will fill out the form, specifying the farm and animals to be treated, the drug to be used, its feeding rate and the duration of treatment.

FDA has made allowances for a VFD to apply to groups of animals that may be moved to different locations as long as the veterinarian lists those on the VFD.

The veterinarian will consult the antibiotic label to list feeding instructions on the VFD, including inclusion rate and duration of feeding. An expiration date on the VFD is also included.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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NEW RULES FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Beginning in October, a Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) will be required for all medically important antibacterial drugs found in medicated feed. The new rule passed down from the Food and Drug Administration is part of the agency's goal to make a safer food supply for consumers.

—Photo by Joann Pipkin

The feed mill or distributor is required to have a properly completed VFD form on hand before supplying the feed to the producer. The final rule indicates that the VFD form could be sent electronically from the veterinarian



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to the feed mill via email or Internet, but it can't be simply "phoned in" by the veterinarian. The feed mill, veterinarian and producer will all need to keep a copy of the VFD on file for two years.

The VFD won't be able to be written by just any veterinarian. Only a vet licensed in the state where the animals are present with a valid veterinary-client-patient relationship with the operation and animals is allowed to write a VFD.

Some livestock medication practices won't change in light of the new regulations. An example is the use of non-"medically important" feed-grade products. Obtaining and using ionophores like Rumensin®, Bovatec®, most coccidiosis medications and certain grow-promoting medications such as bacitracin (BMD) will not change since they are not often used if at all in human medicine.

Uses of injectable antibiotics are not slated for change. However, the changes outlined in 2013 will also move over-the-counter medically important water medications to "prescription" status like many injectable antibiotics.

According to a Missouri Cattlemen's Association release, Dr. Craig Payne, director of veterinary extension and continuing education at the University of Missouri, said the biggest difference for producers is the move from over the counter availability to veterinary supervision. This means producers will need to have a prescription from their veterinarian before they can obtain these antibiotics in the future.

Even though the final VFD regulation doesn't take effect until late next year, Hallberg said livestock producers should get with their veterinarian now to outline what VFDs they will need.

"Consider how you will maintain records," he said. Records must be maintained for two years, and if a producer is inspected, records will be reviewed. 



Summer-Stocked

Crabgrass fills fescue's void during hot weather

Story By Joann Pipkin for Cattleman's News

It's suited for grazing and hay, and for most any species of livestock. And while you might typically think of crabgrass as merely a nuisance in the yard and garden during the summer, two specific varieties of the grass are paving the way as an alternative to Kentucky 31 fescue.

"My pastures around the house are home to pretty 'hot' fescue," explains Steve Owens, co-owner, Joplin Regional Stockyards. "Cattle really struggled in the summers, and that's really the time I prefer to handle cattle. I was looking for something to replace my KY31 fescue."

Owens first learned of crabgrass as a forage alternative by researching and reading articles on the grass.

In Spring 2014, Owens planted sudangrass and grazed it during the summer of that year. Then, he let his pasture sit idle until the first week of June.

He planted a mixture of two-thirds Quick-N-Big® crabgrass and one-third Red River crabgrass. "Both are high production varieties of crabgrass," he explains. "Quick-N-Big® grows three times faster than the Red River in the first three weeks after it's planted."

Owens admits he would have liked to plant the crabgrass sooner, but as it turns out, he

had the ideal establishment situation. In fact, ample rainfall left him scrambling to stay ahead of the grass growth much of July.

"The stocking rates are incredible," Owens explains. In early July, he grazed 220 head of cattle on about 40 acres of actual crabgrass.

"It's all about tonnage and trying to get production during the time of year when fescue goes dormant," he maintains.

Filling Fescue's Void

According to R.L. Dalrymple, who developed both Red River and Quick-N-Big® crabgrass while working at the Noble Foundation for Agriculture and personally in Oklahoma, the grass is high-quality summer forage. "It fills the need for stocker cattle, cows with calves and other livestock species. These grasses can also be used in numerous grass mixtures in diversified forage programs." Quick-N-Big® crabgrass is a trademark proprietary of Dalrymple Farms.

Used extensively from Missouri to Florida, Dalrymple says in double-crop programs with winter annual grasses such as wheat, rye and annual ryegrass, it's actually possible to get three groups of grasses from the forage program — crabgrass, fall and winter phase of the annual winter grass and the spring

Editor's Note: Both Red River and Quick and Big Crabgrass varieties are available at Dalrymple Farms. For additional information, visit the web at www.redrivercrabgrass.com or phone Dalrymple Farms at 580-670-0043.

phase of the annual grass.

Both Red River and Quick-N-Big® crabgrass are annuals or re-seeding annuals that have produced 5 to 6 tons per acre of dry weight forage under strict research management. Yields of 1.5 to 3 tons per acre are more usual. The grasses have excellent palatability, good protein content relative to nitrogen inputs and relatively high palatability and digestibility. They are essentially non-toxic forage.

In addition to being grown as a double crop with winter annuals like wheat and rye, both varieties are used as single-crop forage and in that mode have a green season similar to Bermudagrass if well managed. Single-crop crabgrass will usually be ready to graze 4 to 6 weeks before double-cropped crabgrass and fall grazing can be allocated into midwinter or later.

Dalrymple says if managed properly, crabgrass is cost-effective as a forage crop. Red River and Quick-N-Big® are among the easiest of the crabgrasses to establish. It sprouts and establishes rather readily in the spring and early summer, with April, May and June the primary targets for planting crabgrass varieties.

A good early stand of crabgrass is almost a self-herbicide, he notes. "The annual weeds that

cause a lot of problems sometimes can be crowded out by crabgrass, but that's not always the case."

Dalrymple recommends producers have pastures of both crabgrass varieties. "They are enough different in their growth patterns that it would be wise for a producer to have some pastures of one and some pastures of the other so that they can capitalize on the benefits of both forages."

He implemented a rotational grazing system when he planted the crabgrass with each paddock made up of about 8 to 9 acres.

"Crabgrass does take a little more management," Owens admits. "It's one of those grasses that will get away from you if conditions are good. But, if it's dry, your pastures could be overstocked."

For Owens, who worked one-on-one with Dalrymple in purchasing and establishing the crabgrass, it can be a one-time expense since the forage can be managed to re-seed itself.

"The tell-tell for me will be when I take the cattle off the pastures and measure their gain," Owens notes. "The production, the tonnage, the dry matter, it's just unbelievable what the grass can do under ideal conditions." 



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Backgrounding Basics

Grazing strategies for fall backgrounding

Story By Lisa Henderson for *Cattlemen's News*

Cattlemen throughout the four-state area utilize fall backgrounding programs to add weight and increase the total value of their calves. This year management of cattle in those programs is especially important given the high value of those calves.

University of Missouri Extension beef specialists say backgrounding of calves is suited to cattlemen who:

- Have extra time during the year to work cattle.
- Have good-quality roughage available.
- Want to have a flexible cattle business.

Whether you've purchased calves to background this fall or you plan to background your own calves after weaning, beef specialists encourage cattlemen to establish goals for your program. Specifical-

ly, backgrounding programs should add muscle gains to calves in the most economical way possible, and that should include maximum utilization of forages such as hay and silage along with pasture grazing.

You should also identify how much weight you want the cattle to gain and the date you expect to send them to market.

Stockpiling fall forage is one of the more popular management strategies where pastures are allowed to rest and grow for later grazing. James Russell, professor of animal science at Iowa State University, says stockpiling of forage should begin around the first week of August.

"If you begin stockpiling too early, then the forage will become too mature and that will lower the digestibility," he says.

Daniel Mallory, northeast regional livestock specialist for the University of Missouri, also encourages producers to consider stockpiling forages. Such a program is relatively inexpensive because you don't have to harvest the forage.

"That provides a decrease in cost of production for the animals," he says.

Nutrition is critical for successful backgrounding programs, and Mallory says the goal should be "to get the best gains as safely as possible. Depending on the size of the animals, your goals should be 1.5 to 2 pounds of gain per day."

According to research at the University of Missouri, the feed requirements of one beef cow for a year will provide the growth of about 1.4 calves grown from 425 pounds to 750 pounds. The total feed energy (TDN) required to grow a 425-pound steer calf to 750 pounds in one year is about 2,950 pounds. However, faster daily gains will shorten the growth period and reduce to-

tal feed requirements since less feed is needed for body maintenance.

University of Minnesota extension beef specialist Ryon Walker says forages must provide nutrients such as crude protein and TDN that meet the requirements of a growing calf.

"Calves entering a backgrounding program should be consuming diets that consist of 13- to 15-percent crude protein and 50- to 60-percent TDN," Walker says.

Most cool-season grasses can meet those demands, "but as forages mature, forage quality begins to decline, particularly energy," he says. "So pastures used for stockpiled grazing should be monitored for quality, particularly cool or warm-season natives, and if crude protein or TDN is deficient, then supplementation may be needed."

For producers backgrounding calves after weaning, there **CONTINUED ON PAGE 30**

Backgrounding programs should add muscle gains to calves in the most economical way possible, including maximum utilization of forages such as hay and silage along with pasture grazing. Cattle nutrition and health care are both critical for successful backgrounding programs. —Photo by Joann Pipkin.



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BACKGROUNDING BASICS • FROM PAGE 28

Successful backgrounding programs call for a strategic cattle and forage management plan that includes good preventive health care. —Photo by Joann Pipkin



are additional hurdles to overcome. Jaymelynn Farney, extension livestock specialist for Kansas State University, says calves should be prepared for the life changes that come with weaning.

“Don’t abruptly wean and commingle calves,” she says. “Producers will have greater success with backgrounding if they train their calves before weaning. Start by feeding a supplement in a bunk so calves learn that feed is located in a bunk.”

After the calves are weaned, Farney says not to “push corn silage. Get them to eat hay first then top dress that with concentrate. Slowly increase the amount of concentrate and reduce the roughage over a month.”

According to Justin Waggoner, extension livestock specialist for Kansas State University, producers should not underestimate the low feed intake of a newly weaned calf.

“The first few days from separation, calves may only be consuming 1 percent of their body weight on dry matter basis. To offset the low intake, producers should feed high-quality feedstuffs that are dense in nutrients,” Waggoner says.

Newly weaned calves require additional attention, and Waggoner suggests producers gradually increase the amount of feed for these calves to about 2 to 2.5 percent of bodyweight by day seven.

“It’s critical to manage intake problems and get calves eating,” he says.

While a successful backgrounding program requires a strategic cattle and forage management plan, experts say a good preventative health plan is also important.

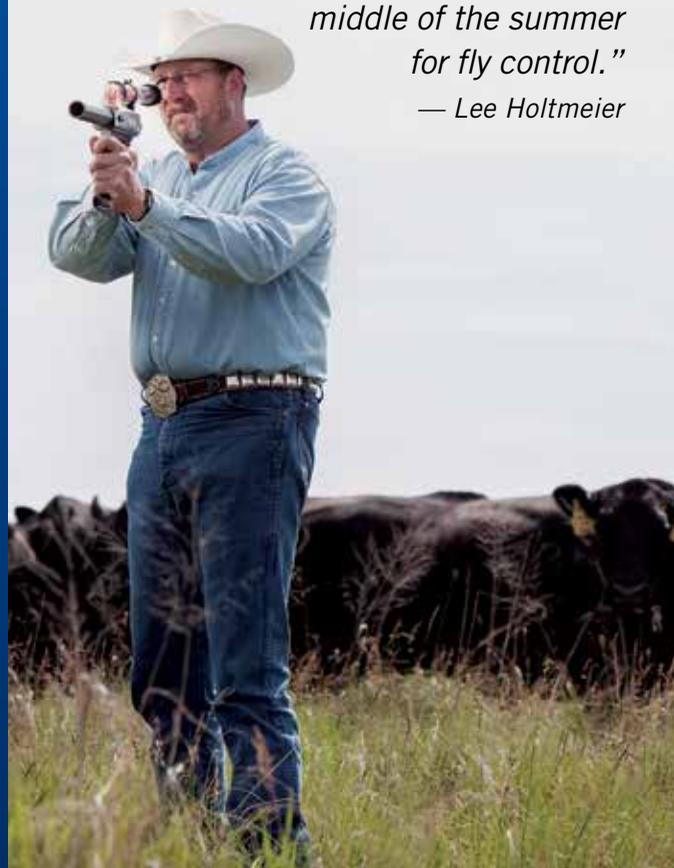
“To get the gains you are looking for in a backgrounding operation, stick with good herd health management,” says Mallory. “Make sure all vaccinations are up-to-date and take feed samples to ensure they are getting all of the nutrients they need.”

Farney says not one method is a sure-fire way to background calves.

“To achieve the most success in backgrounding, you need to eliminate stressors at weaning.”

Performing dehorning and castration well before weaning will significantly reduce those weaning stressors and improve the success of your backgrounding operation. 

“The biggest thing is that you don’t have to catch your cows out in the middle of the summer for fly control.”
— Lee Holtmeier



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MANAGEMENT MATTERS

A Quicker Way to Assess Efficiency

K-State researcher investigates better ways to select for feed efficiency

Story By Nicole Lane, Angus Journal® intern

A genetic trait that can help cattle producers increase efficiency and improve the bottom line is worth selecting for, according to Kelli Retallick of Kansas State University. Retallick presented her research on methods to better select for feed efficiency at the Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Annual Convention in Biloxi, Mississippi, June 10.

She reported that if a producer could increase feed efficiency by 10 percent, he or she could grow profits by as much as 43 percent.

Currently, BIF standards for testing for feed efficiency require 91 days to collect data. Retallick investigated a method that would cut the testing time to 56 days, increasing testing ability and cutting costs on selecting for feed efficiency.

Two parameters were used to derive genetic expression of feed efficiency — average daily gain (ADG) and average daily feed intake (ADFI). By using these two parameters as guidelines, a moderately heritable feed efficiency trait was determined.

Research supports the idea that a shorter 35-day intake test (56 days with prep time) could be more economical than the current 70-day test (91 days with prep time). However, there has been concern that it would lower the accuracy of the test. Retallick increased selection intensity to compensate for the estimated loss in accuracy. Her work showed that this shorter test could be a cost-efficient and precise way to select for feed efficiency.

Retallick evaluated 5,606 total animals, including 3,212 steers and 2,394 heifers, using data from the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center at Clay Center, Nebraska, and breed associations. Using ADG, ADFI and postweaning gain data, the calves were evaluated using the 35-day test and the traditional 70-day test.

Using ADG, ADFI and postweaning gain as parameters to create an unrestricted selection index, she found that cost was lower in the shorter test, and the index resulted in a higher heritability for both gain and intake.

“Using our unrestricted linear index with our postweaning gain also allows for maximum genetic progress to be made for feed efficiency,” Retallick said.

She concluded that a 35-day intake test is long enough to test ADFI without losing accuracy, and the test can be combined with postweaning gain data to test for feed efficiency. Also, her research showed that the shorter test can save a producer \$27 per head per week

when testing for feed efficiency. If this test became the new industry standard, it would cut the current time used to test animals for feed efficiency in half, freeing up space for more animals to be tested per year and helping producers more accurately select for feed-efficient animals.

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When to Make the Cut

Early castration means less stress at weaning

Story By Joann Pipkin for *Cattlemen's News*

With the fall calving season on the horizon, now is the time to review at least one management practice that not only impacts your bottom line, but also the overall health of your calves.

While castrating bull calves is often performed at or near weaning, multiple benefits exist when getting the job done at four months of age or younger.

According to Dr. Clyde Lane, 2014 National Cattlemen's Association Beef Quality Assurance Educator of the Year

Early castration also means greater opportunity for a healthy calf later.

"A stressed calf will not get the level of immunity that a calf will when not stressed by castration at weaning time," Lane says. "There's a health issue over and above that of castration."

Castration of bull calves is an economically important management practice for the cow-calf producer, according to Lane. Feeder-cattle buyers prefer the quieter dispositions



Beef Quality Assurance guidelines recommend bull calves be castrated between birth and four months of age.

—Photo by Joann Pipkin

The AABP guidelines call for castration to be performed by 120 days of age. However, purebred operations might delay the procedure further to allow proper time for the selection of future bulls, in which case the appropriate recommended procedures and pain mitigation practices should be used.

Use of a rubber ring or surgical removal is the preferred method of castration recommended by the AABP. Overall, AABP lists the most appropriate method of castration as the one being in the best interest of the health and well-being of the animal as determined by a veterinarian, within the environment in which it's being raised.

"As with any herd health input, careful consideration must be given to the limitations unique to each ranching operation," Davidson says. "Our goal with these guidelines is to provide the information necessary to promote the benefits of proper technique and pain mitigation. As with any proposed health practice, adoption is often hampered by limitations in labor, facility and awareness of the benefits of such a change.

As a general rule, the beef industry advocates calves are castrated as soon after birth as possible. The overall belief is that castration in young, sexually immature calves brings less of a stress response and reduces the risk of castration-associated blood loss and potential for infections.

In fact, a University of Arkansas study proved stocker calves castrated prior to arrival exhibited both improved average daily gain and reduced morbidity.

"Just after the calf is born is an excellent time for castration,"

Lane reiterates. However, he cautions producers to be wary of over-protective mothers during this time.

Hay rings and special attachments for four-wheelers can be used as protective barriers, as well as pick-up truck beds and can assist cattlemen in tagging and castrating newborn calves.

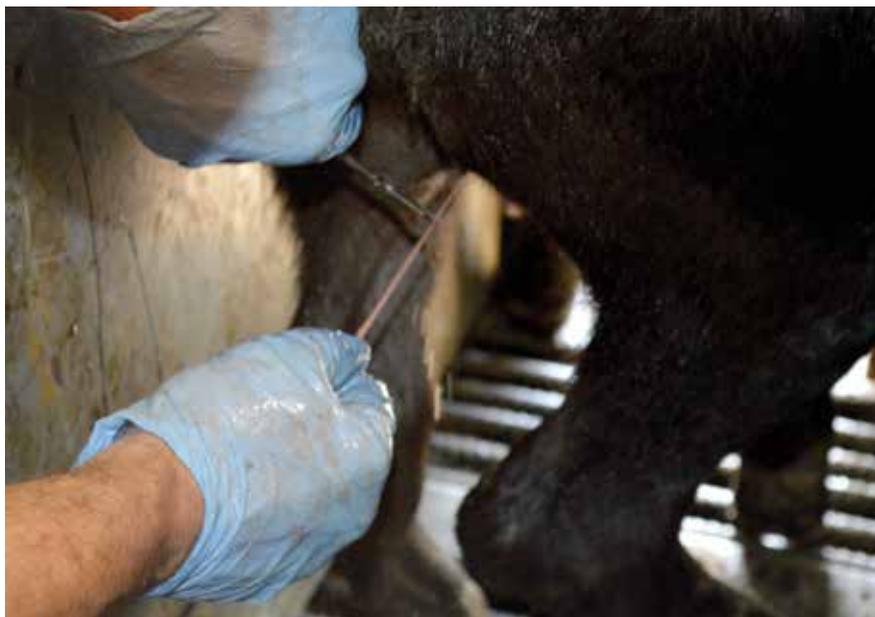
Opponents of early castration fear loss of testosterone. Lane says that can be alleviated by using a calf implant. "Research says that calf will be as heavy at weaning as if it had been left as a bull," he explains.

For purebred breeders, Lane suggests castration be completed by the time the calf is three months old. "Usually by then, the producer has a pretty good idea of which bulls will be saved and which ones won't," he explains. "Go ahead then and take that bottom cut and castrate them. Again, there's a lot less stress at three months of age than at seven or eight."

BQA guidelines call for producers to practice early castration, completing the task between birth and four months of age.

In a day and time when customer satisfaction comes from both sides of the fence, following BQA protocol goes a long way in making good business for cow-calf producers—whether for buyers or beef-eating consumers.

Editor's Note: The American Association of Bovine Practitioner's Guidelines for Castration can be found online at http://aabp.org/resources/AABP_Guidelines/Castration_and_DeHORning_Guidelines_app3.2014_03.17.2014.pdf.



Castrating bull calves prior to four months of age means a healthier, less-stressed calf at weaning time. Feeder calf buyers also prefer the quieter dispositions and ease of handling of steers in the feedlot.

—Photo by Joann Pipkin

and University of Tennessee professor emeritus, the sooner castration can be done, the better.

"One of the big things we're interested in with the BQA program is trying to reduce the amount of stress on an animal," he says.

Less stress is what early castration is all about. "By doing the castration early, that alleviates added stress on the calf as it ages," Lane says. "The larger that animal gets, the more stressful it is, the more loss of weight the calf will encounter because he will never be able to make up that amount of time it takes to get over the stress of castration."

of steers and the ease with which those animals are handled while in the feedlot.

The American Association of Bovine Practitioners (AABP) updated its castration guidelines in fall 2014. AABP President and Senior Professional Services Veterinarian Dr. John Davidson says the guidelines are put in place to assist veterinarians with enhancing the welfare of cattle for their clients by providing information on how best to approach castration of calves on beef and dairy farms.

"Generally speaking, early castration using the proper technique for the chosen method and incorporating pain mitigation when available is encouraged," Davidson explains.

VETERINARY FEED DIRECTIVE (VFD) RULES FINALIZED

The landscape for antibiotic use in livestock production continues to change, and the implementation of Veterinary Feed Directives (VFDs) is no exception. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) plans to accomplish these goals:

- Promote judicious use of antibiotics
- Protect public health
- Help curb the development of antimicrobial resistance

To help support a more streamlined approach for implementation in the industry, changes have been established to the VFD process. The final rule — published June 2015 — provides clarification on the requirements for veterinarians, feed distributors and producers.

Impact on producers

By 2017, the use of antibiotics approved for both humans and animals will no longer be permitted for growth promotion. Antibiotics approved to prevent, control or treat a disease will still be approved under the oversight of a veterinarian. The table to the right shows exactly which classes of antibiotics will be affected by these changes.

“As a producer, it will be critical to have an ongoing relationship with a veterinarian — one who knows your herd and its health needs, understands the VFD process and can help make the transition easier for you,” says Kerry Keffaber, D.V.M., Advisor for Scientific Affairs and Policy at Elanco.

Under the final rules, producers need to ensure they only provide animal feed containing a VFD drug to animals based on a VFD issued by a licensed veterinarian, and not feed a VFD feed after the expiration date on the VFD. Producers will also be required to retain VFDs records for 2 years. Working closely with a veterinarian will streamline the process.

“I think it’s a win-win. Having a veterinarian involved helps ensure you’re preventing antimicrobial resistance by implementing a protocol that is effective and provides producers the best return,” says Keffaber.

VFD Central now available

“We realize that implementing a VFD will require a coordinated effort between the veterinarian, producer and feed manufacturer,” says Keffaber. “With this in mind, we plan to provide specific tools for each of those audiences to help them understand their roles and responsibilities as they relate to the VFD implementation process.”

That’s why Elanco and *Feedstuffs* are bringing you VFD Central, the go-to resource for Veterinary Feed Directive news, insights and updates. VFD Central helps producers, veterinarians and feed manufacturers find the information most pertinent to them in a one-stop, online resource center. You can find VFD Central by going to www.feedstuffs.com/vfd.aspx. Elanco, *Feedstuffs*, FDA and AFIA also hosted two webinars to help answer questions specific to the final VFD ruling. If you missed these webinars, they are now available on VFD Central.

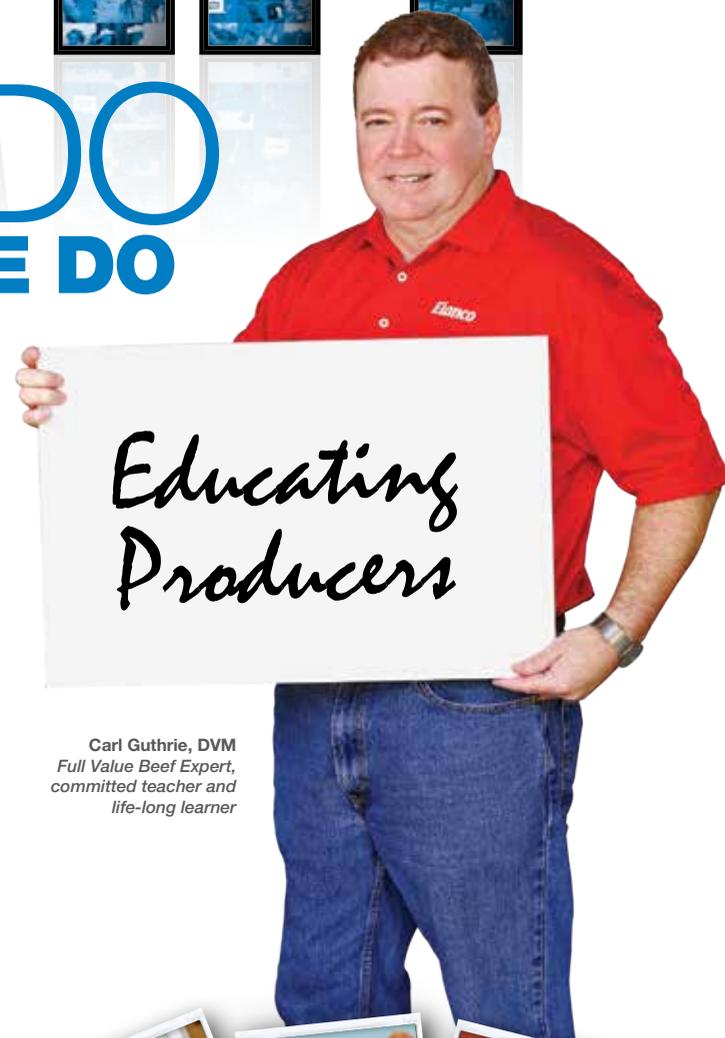
“We recognize there may be challenges, but the industry is working together to make sure it’s a practical solution going forward,” says Keffaber. “We will get there, so it’s important to be confident as we move through this time of change.”

Reach out to your veterinarian or Elanco sales representative to learn more.

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MANAGEMENT MATTERS

2015 Across-Breed EPD Table Released at Beef Industry Meeting

A table of adjustment factors used to estimate across-breed expected progeny differences (AB-EPDs) for 18 breeds was released at the Beef Improvement Federation Annual Meeting in Biloxi, Mississippi, earlier this summer (see Table 1 on next page).

Across-breed adjustment factors have been calculated for growth traits and maternal milk since 1993. Adjustment factors for carcass traits have been calculated since 2009, and this year carcass weight was added for the first time; to be included, breeds must

have carcass data in the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center (USMARC) database and report their carcass EPDs on an actual carcass basis using an age-adjusted endpoint. Bulls of different breeds can be compared on the same EPD scale by adding the appropriate adjustment factor to the EPDs produced in the most recent genetic evaluations for each of the 18 breeds. The AB-EPDs are most useful to commercial producers purchasing bulls of more than one breed to use in cross-breeding programs. For example, in terminal crossbreeding systems, AB-EPDs can be used to identify bulls in different breeds with high growth potential or favorable carcass characteristics.

As an example, suppose a Red Angus bull has a weaning weight EPD of + 68.0 lb and a Hereford bull has a weaning weight EPD of + 45.0 lb. The across-breed adjustment factors for weaning weight (see Table 1) are -25.7 lb for Red Angus and -4.4 lb for Hereford. The AB-EPD is 68.0 lb - 25.7 lb = 42.3 lb for the Red Angus bull and 45.0 - 4.4 = 40.6 lb for the Hereford bull. The expected weaning weight difference when both are mated to cows of another breed (e.g., Angus) would be 42.3 lb - 40.6 lb = 1.7 lb.

Most breed associations publish EPDs at least on an annual basis. These EPDs predict differences expected in performance of future progeny of two or more bulls within the same breed for traits including birth weight, weaning weight, yearling weight, and maternal milking ability (as reflected in progeny weaning weights). Normally, the EPDs of bulls from different breeds cannot be compared

because most breed associations compute their EPDs in separate analyses and each breed has a different base point. The across-breed adjustment factors allow producers to compare the EPDs for animals from different breeds for these traits; these factors reflect both the current breed difference (for animals born in 2013) and differences in the breed base point. They should only be used with EPDs current as of June 2015 because of potential changes in EPD calculations from year-to-year.

Note the table factors (Table 1) do not represent a direct comparison among the different breeds because of base differences between the breeds. They should only be used to compare the EPDs (AB-EPDs) of animals in different breeds. To reduce confusion, breed of sire means (i.e., when sires from two different breeds are mated to cows of a third, unrelated breed) of animals born in 2013 under conditions similar to USMARC are presented in Table 2 on the next page.

The adjustment factors in Table 1 were updated using EPDs from the most recent national cattle evaluations conducted by each of the eighteen breed associations (current as of March 2015). The breed differences used to calculate the factors are based on comparisons of progeny of sires from each of these breeds in the Germplasm Evaluation Program at USMARC in Clay Center, Nebraska.

—Source: Beef Improvement Federation release.

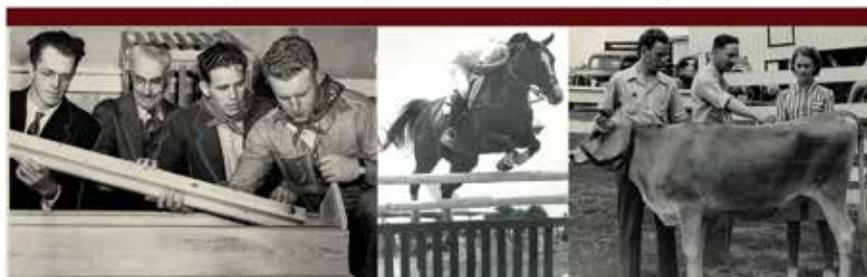


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**TABLE 1: ADJUSTMENT FACTORS TO ADD TO EPDs OF EIGHTEEN
DIFFERENT BREEDS TO ESTIMATE ACROSS BREED EPDs**

Breed	Birth Wt. (lb)	Weaning Wt. (lb)	Yearling Wt. (lb)	Maternal Milk (lb)	Marbling Score ^a	Ribeye Area (in ²)	Fat Thickness (in)	Carcass Wt.(lb)
Angus	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.00	0.00	0.000	0.0
Hereford	2.7	-4.4	-26.6	-17.8	-0.32	-0.10	-0.053	
Red Angus	3.4	-25.7	-30.9	2.4	-0.32	0.03	-0.023	-6.2
Shorthorn	5.1	-30.7	-12.3	4.6	-0.24	0.31	-0.107	-11.6
South Devon	3.6	-8.0	-25.9	2.4	-0.09	0.21	-0.129	-22.3
Beefmaster	5.7	36.1	32.3	11.9				
Brahman	10.9	47.5	9.2	23.6	-0.83	-0.11	-0.146	-28.5
Brangus	3.9	13.9	5.1	4.6				-12.5
Santa Gertrudis	6.9	41.4	42.2	14.2	-0.62	-0.06	-0.097	-5.4
Braunvieh	2.5	-22.1	-49.3	-0.4				-44.9
Charolais	8.6	39.6	40.8	7.3	-0.39	0.98	-0.207	5.4
Chiangus	3.5	-26.9	-38.8	0.2	-0.40	0.34	-0.114	-20.9
Gelbvieh	2.7	-21.5	-30.4	1.6	-0.33	0.65	-0.117	-22.6
Limousin	3.0	-17.0	-42.0	-8.8	-0.60	0.98		-13.4
Maine-Anjou	5.0	-24.5	-35.0	-3.6	-0.60	0.78	-0.192	-23.6
Salers	2.2	-4.1	-26.3	4.9	-0.14	0.85	-0.203	-29.7
Simmental	3.6	-4.8	-9.5	3.6	-0.38	0.43	-0.137	3.8
Tarentaise	3.1	28.3	9.6	23.4				

^aMarbling score units: 4.00 = SI⁰⁰; 5.00 = Sm⁰⁰

**TABLE 2: BREED OF SIRE MEANS FOR 2013 BORN ANIMALS
UNDER CONDITIONS SIMILAR TO USMARC**

Breed	Birth Wt. (lb)	Weaning Wt. (lb)	Yearling Wt. (lb)	Maternal Milk (lb)	Marbling Score ^a	Ribeye Area (in ²)	Fat Thickness (in)	Carcass Wt.(lb)
Angus	86.6	570.2	1041.9	558.2	6.14	13.24	0.668	904.9
Hereford	90.9	562.8	1004.2	536.4	5.36	12.93	0.606	
Red Angus	87.2	550.5	1009.9	557.6	5.72	12.86	0.632	886.6
Shorthorn	92.3	537.5	994.3	559.5	5.41	12.98	0.519	861.4
South Devon	91.0	555.4	1008.7	562.1	5.92	13.16	0.537	877.9
Beefmaster	90.9	566.3	1000.2	549.1				
Brahman	97.7	583.7	988.5	564.4	4.79	12.63	0.509	845.5
Brangus	89.9	558.7	1005.1	549.3				883.9
Santa Gertrudis	92.1	565.2	1001.2	549.7	4.97	12.66	0.561	870.8
Braunvieh	90.4	542.5	973.8	569.1				848.3
Charolais	94.0	585.9	1042.2	551.0	5.25	13.99	0.452	894.2
Chiangus	90.9	536.6	977.2	552.2	5.36	13.26	0.502	862.4
Gelbvieh	88.6	566.2	1020.9	565.1	5.34	13.83	0.490	879.1
Limousin	89.9	567.5	1002.5	551.8	4.94	14.21		885.4
Maine-Anjou	91.2	541.0	978.6	548.7	5.04	13.70	0.414	856.3
Salers	88.7	558.1	1007.6	559.1	5.46	13.62	0.453	865.2
Simmental	90.6	578.3	1035.3	560.7	5.35	13.93	0.469	903.4
Tarentaise	89.3	565.9	994.3	559.3				

^aMarbling score units: 4.00 = SI⁰⁰; 5.00 = Sm⁰⁰

Putting the Pieces Together

Consider buyer needs and wants in your marketing plan

Story By Rebecca Mettler for Cattleman's News

Ever wonder what goes on in a cattle buyer's head once your calves step into the sale ring? Questions might be running through your mind as well. Do my cattle look good enough? Did I market them at the right time and weight? Did I do everything I could to get the most profit out of this set?

A clearer understanding of the process in which buyers select their next purchase can be beneficial for anyone selling calves.

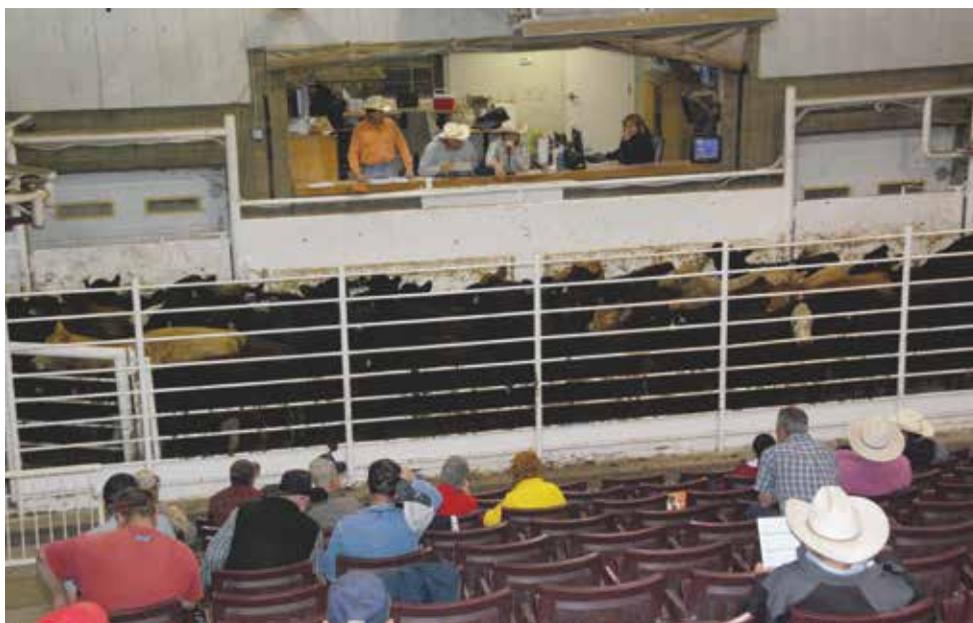
Even with all the important factors buyers have to consider during the brief amount of time calves are in the ring, one reigns supreme.

"The number one thing buyers are looking for in a set of calves is to evaluate their health," said Rick Huffman, market reporter with the Missouri Department of Agriculture. "Health is paramount."

Health goes far beyond the calf's current state of well-being. Buyers are looking to see if the cattle have the ability to stay healthy. A wean-VAC program helps answer those questions, Huffman stated.

"Preconditioning is an important factor that adds to the value of cattle," said Ron Plain, extension economist with the University of Missouri.

"The buyer would like to know as much about a set of cattle as possible," Plain noted. "If they



Health is the number one criteria buyers look for in cattle. They also watch for cattle that have profit potential. —Photo by Joann Pipkin.

can, buyers would like to buy reputation cattle from a producer they have purchased from before."

Next to health, buyers are also looking to see if the calves or

yearlings have profit potential.

"Will (the cattle) have an average or higher rate of gain on grass or on the feedstuffs that they will be fed at the feedlot?" Huffman said.

The appropriate amount of condition, or flesh, on calves that go through the sale ring depends largely on their weight class. Buyers of lighter weight stocker cattle don't want excess flesh because they want to put the weight on the cattle themselves, typically at a cheaper rate of gain.

One can also not forget about the part genetics play in the value equation of the feeder calf market in today's industry. The transition from marketing fed cattle on a live weight basis to that of a grid or formula designed to pay above average prices for cattle of value has placed more importance on genetics.

Also, with the steady increase in carcass weight of cattle harvested in recent years, buyers are looking for cattle that have enough frame to handle being pushed to heavier weight, Plain said.

"There are factors that add a premium, and there are factors that will bring discounts too," Huffman said. "Bulls that are not castrated, or cattle that haven't had shots won't bring as much."

Plain also stressed the importance of proper weaning before marketing calves.

"Calves that aren't weaned are going to take a discount," Plain said. "They are more trouble and more work."

Producers need to remember management options exist to help them in getting the most for the calves that they sell. And as a majority, most of these important decisions happen months prior to sending the cattle to auction.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



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PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

“Management beforehand will mean a greater return for you,” Huffman said.

Group uniformity is a factor that dictates how much buyers are willing to spend. Setting up the cowherd to produce a uniform group of calves starts at breeding. Targeting a tight breeding season and, thus, a tight calving window will help ensure that calves are born in the same timeframe and grow at the same rate.

“Ultimately, the buyer wants to treat the cattle the same,” Plain noted. “If they are the same size, same age, treated

the same, they are kept together and management is easier for the buyer.”

Gathering a larger group of calves can be a challenge for a smaller producer. And, it’s widely known that the buyer is looking to gather large groups to fill a pot load to keep trucking costs down. That’s where livestock auctions can step up and assist those smaller producers with commingling options.

“Commingling the cattle from different producers to get a larger lot size is a bit more valuable to the bidder,” Plain said.

Each Monday, Huffman attends the feeder calf sale at Jo-

plin Regional Stockyards and gathers the market reports. He has gained invaluable knowledge of what works for producers to gain the most on a set of calves.

“On the day of the sale, promote your product,” Huffman suggested. “Be sure to pass along any information to the stockyards.”

It’s common for Huffman to see producers miss out on opportunities to increase the value of calves.

“They will make a spur-of-the-moment decision and bring (the calves) in but nobody at the yards knows they are coming,” Huffman said.

Having a good relationship with the market manager or a field representative at the livestock market is important. If they know you are bringing calves they could alert a buyer, or two, who as been pleased with your cattle from past sales.

Preparation and planning is key. By putting all of the right pieces together on the ranch and making planned marketing decisions, a producer can provide a more attractive set of calves for the buyers. And in the end, they can gain a reputation for raising cattle that fits the needs of the buyer, feeder and packer. 

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Transient animal discomfort and mild to moderate injection site swelling may be seen in cattle treated with ZACTRAN.

EFFECTIVENESS
The effectiveness of ZACTRAN for the treatment of BRD associated with *Mannheimia haemolytica*, *Pasteurella multocida* and *Histophilus somni* was demonstrated in a field study conducted at four geographic locations in the United States. A total of 497 cattle exhibiting clinical signs of BRD were enrolled in the study. Cattle were administered ZACTRAN (6 mg/kg BW) or an equivalent volume of sterile saline as a subcutaneous injection once on Day 0. Cattle were observed daily for clinical signs of BRD and were evaluated for clinical success on Day 10. The percentage of successes in cattle treated with ZACTRAN (58%) was statistically significantly higher (p<0.05) than the percentage of successes in the cattle treated with saline (19%). The effectiveness of ZACTRAN for the treatment of BRD associated with *M. bovis* was demonstrated independently at two U.S. study sites. A total of 502 cattle exhibiting clinical signs of BRD were enrolled in the studies. Cattle were administered ZACTRAN (6 mg/kg BW) or an equivalent volume of sterile saline as a subcutaneous injection once on Day 0. At each site, the percentage of successes in cattle treated with ZACTRAN on Day 10 was statistically significantly higher than the percentage of successes in the cattle treated with saline (74.4% vs. 24% [p<0.001], and 67.4% vs. 46.2% [p=0.002]). In addition, in the group of calves treated with gamithromycin that were confirmed positive for *M. bovis* (pre-treatment nasopharyngeal swabs), there were more calves at each site (45 of 57 calves, and 5 of 6 calves) classified as successes than as failures. The effectiveness of ZACTRAN for the control of respiratory disease in cattle at high risk of developing BRD associated with *Mannheimia haemolytica* and *Pasteurella multocida* was demonstrated in two independent studies conducted in the United States. A total of 467 crossbred beef cattle at high risk of developing BRD were enrolled in the study. ZACTRAN (6 mg/kg BW) or an equivalent volume of sterile saline was administered as a single subcutaneous injection within one day after arrival. Cattle were observed daily for clinical signs of BRD and were evaluated for clinical success on Day 10 post-treatment. In each of the two studies, the percentage of successes in the cattle treated with ZACTRAN (86% and 78%) was statistically significantly higher (p = 0.0019 and p = 0.0016) than the percentage of successes in the cattle treated with saline (36% and 58%).

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Beef, Cattle Imports Attractive; Exports Discouraged

Unique U.S. beef and cattle trade situation continues

Story By Derrell S. Peel

The unique U.S. beef and cattle trade situation that developed in the last year has continued in 2015. Falling beef production is keeping beef supplies tight and prices near record levels in the U.S. This discourages beef exports and attracts more beef and cattle imports. Both imports and exports are further enhanced by the strong dollar. Though dollar appreciation has leveled off recently, continued global macroeconomic uncertainty is likely to keep the dollar strong for the time being.

In May, beef exports decreased 14.4 percent year over year with exports to all major export destinations (Japan, Canada, Mexico and Hong Kong) down except South Korea, which was unchanged from last year. Year

to date beef exports are down 9.5 percent from last year. May beef imports continued larger year over year with the monthly total up 24.8 percent from one year ago and up 37.3 percent for the year to date. Beef imports in May were up most from Australia and Mexico among major sources and were also up sharply from smaller sources including Brazil and Uruguay. Total cattle imports in May were down 10.3 percent from last year and are down 9.2 percent year over year for the year to date.

The dramatic increase in U.S. beef imports in 2014 and so far in 2015 has been led by increased imports from Australia. This is the result of unique circumstances in Australia as well as the U.S. U.S. imports of Australian beef were up 41 percent year over year in May and are up 64.8 percent for the year to date. This follows a 74 percent year over year increase in 2014. A prolonged drought in Australia has led to increased slaughter, beef production and beef exports along with decreased herd inventories. The Australian beef cowherd has declined over 1 million head since 2013.

Though the drought continues in Australia, it appears that cattle slaughter and beef production have peaked. Beef production is expected to decrease in 2015 and might lead to decreased U.S. imports of Australian beef in the second half of the year. At the current pace, Australia could hit the beef tariff rate quota by this fall. Beyond 2015, U.S. imports of Australian beef are not likely to grow and will decrease when drought conditions permit herd rebuilding in Australia.

In Canada, declining herd inventories is resulting in decreased feedlot production, beef production, and cattle exports. U.S. beef exports to Canada were down 15.6 percent in May compared to last year and are down 12.9 percent for the year to date. U.S. imports of Canadian beef were up a scant 1.2 percent year over year in May and are up 4.5 percent for the year to date. In the face of declining Canadian beef production, imports of Canadian beef may drop below year earlier levels in the last half of 2015 and may decrease year over year on an annual basis. Decreased imports of Canadian cattle are led by a 47-percent year-to-date decrease in slaughter steers and heifers and a 27 percent year decrease in slaughter cows and bulls compared to one year ago. Year to date imports of Canadian feeder cattle are unchanged from last year, but the composition of those imports is significantly different compared to last year. Af-

ter jumping sharply last year, imports of feeder heifers are down 21 percent compared to last year while steers are up 48 percent year over year. This may indicate planned heifer retention in Canada. However, severe drought conditions in the Canadian prairie this year is likely postponing herd rebuilding and might contribute to additional herd liquidation.

So far in 2015, U.S. imports of Mexican beef have continued to expand, up 26 percent in May and up 39 percent for the year to date compared to last year. Beef exports to Mexico dropped 33 percent year over year in May and are down 23 percent for the year to date. U.S. imports of Mexican cattle were up 27.6 percent in May and are up 8.1 percent year over year for the year to date. Imports of Mexican heifers for the year to date are 23 percent below year ago levels while steer imports from Mexico are up 15 percent so far this year. In 2014, imports of Mexican heifers were up 23 percent year over year. Decreased exports of heifers from Mexico might be an indication of heifer retention. Forage conditions in Mexico are generally good and supportive of herd expansion. Mexico's ability to maintain cattle exports and increased beef exports might be constrained if herd expansion accelerates.

—Source: Derrell S. Peel is livestock marketing specialist with Oklahoma State University Extension.

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MANAGEMENT MATTERS

Too Much of a Good Thing

"Positive associative effect" of high protein supplements

Story By Glenn Selk

For the first time in several years, much of the four-state region has substantial standing forage in most pastures as we go into late summer. As the day length shortens, plants become more mature and lower in protein content. However, the protein requirements for growth, milk production and body weight maintenance of beef cattle do not decrease as the "dog days of summer" arrive.

The micro-organisms in the rumen of beef cows and replacement heifers require readily available protein to multiply and exist in large enough quantities to digest the cellulose in low quality roughages. Protein supplementation of low-quality, low-protein forages results in a "positive associative effect". This "positive associative effect" occurs as supplemental protein available to the "bugs" in the rumen allows them to grow, multiply, and digest the forage more completely and more rapidly. Therefore the cow gets more out of the hay she consumes, she digests it more quickly and is ready to eat more hay in a shorter period of time. Data from Oklahoma State University illustrates this in Table 1. The prairie hay used in this study was less than 5 percent crude protein. When the ration was supplemented with 1.75 lbs of cottonseed meal, retention time of the forage was reduced 32 percent, which resulted in an increase in feed intake of 27 percent. Because hay intake was increased, the animal has a better chance of meeting both the protein and energy requirement without supplementing other feeds.

With decreased retention time, one should expect the protein supplementation in this situation also increased digestibility of the hay. This was shown clearly in another OSU trial, which indicated that low-quality roughage had an increase in estimated digestibility from 38 percent to 48 percent when the cattle were supplemented with 1.5 pounds of soybean meal daily.

As producers prepare their late-summer, fall and winter feed strategies, they can see the importance of providing enough protein in the diet of the cows to feed the "bugs" in the rumen. If the forage is low in protein (less than 8 percent crude protein), a small amount of supplemental protein such as cottonseed meal, soybean meal, or one of the higher protein by-product feeds, could increase the amount and digestibility of the forage being fed. This strategy requires that ample forage is available to take advantage of the "positive associative effect." As Table 1 illustrates, properly supplemented cows or replacement heifers will voluntarily consume about 27 percent more forage if they were provided adequate protein. As long as enough forage is available, this is a positive effect of a small amount of protein supplement. Cows that are already in excellent body condition in late summer will not benefit from the additional expense, however, young, thin cows would

be candidates for protein supplementation in late summer and fall. The increase in body condition can be achieved with minimal expense, especially if the spring-born calves are weaned in early fall.

—Glenn Selk is Oklahoma State University Emeritus Extension Animal Scientist.

Table 1. Effect of Cottonseed Meal Supplementation on Ruminal Retention Time and Intake of Low-Quality Prairie Hay

Daily Supplement of Cottonseed Meal

	None	1.75 lb	Change
Rumen Retention Time, Hr	74.9	56.5	-32%
Voluntary Daily Hay Intake, % of body wt.	1.69	2.15	+27%

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IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION: For use in cattle only. Do not treat cattle within 35 days of slaughter. Because a discard time in milk has not been established, do not use in female dairy cattle 20 months of age or older, or in calves to be processed for veal. The effects of ZACTRAN on bovine reproductive performance, pregnancy and lactation have not been determined.

¹ Lechtenberg K, Daniels CS, Royer GC, et al. Field efficacy study of gamithromycin for the control of bovine respiratory disease in cattle at high risk of developing the disease. *Intern J Appl Res Vet Med.* 2011;9(2):189-197.
² Sifferman RL, Wolff WA, Holste JE, et al. Field efficacy evaluation of gamithromycin for treatment of bovine respiratory disease in cattle at feedlots. *Intern J Appl Res Vet Med.* 2011;9(2):171-180.
³ Van Donkersgoed J, Merrill JK. A comparison of tilmicosin to gamithromycin for on-arrival treatment of bovine respiratory disease in feeder steers. *Bovine Practitioner.* 2012;46(1):46-51.

MERIAL
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Win a Cat® Skid Steer at the National Angus Convention

A lucky convention participant on Nov. 3 will take home a brand-new skid steer loader

The 2015 Angus Means Business National Convention & Trade Show promises to be an event filled with world-class education and entertainment. Activities during the three-day convention in Overland Park, Kansas, can benefit cattle operations of all types – and one lucky participant will see an immediate reward for their attendance.

On Tuesday, Nov. 3, the American Angus Association® will host a drawing for a Cat® 262D Skid Steer Loader, donated by Caterpillar Inc. Any convention attendee present that day will be eligible to take home the machine.

The Cat 262D, with rated operating capacity of 2,700 lbs, is built with high-flow XPS hydraulics, allowing a number of work tools on the machine, including attachments for brush cutting, augers, brooms, buckets and blades.

“The Cat® 262D loader is an extremely versatile machine,” says Dustin Johansen, ag market segment manager for Caterpillar. “I think the lucky winner would be very excited with how much work they can get done in a short amount of time.”

With the release of this new machine, Caterpillar is the first manufacturer to integrate a backup camera into the cab display, Johansen explains. If you are not buckled into the machine, the hydraulics are not activated – just one of many safety features on the Cat® 262D Skid Steer Loader.

“With ease of operation with our joystick controls and the quietness of our cab, it provides a very good work environment, which makes cattle producers much more efficient, allowing them to spend more time with their family or hobbies,” Johansen says.

The Cat 262D Skid Steer Load-



A Cat® 262D Skid Steer Loader, donated by Caterpillar Inc., will be given away Nov. 3 during the 2015 Angus Means Business National Convention & Trade Show in Overland Park, Kansas. The convention will be filled with world-class education and entertainment to benefit cattle operations of all types. —Photo from Angus Productions, Inc.

er will be on display in the Caterpillar booth during the National Angus Convention & Trade Show hosted Nov. 3-5 at the Overland Park Convention Center, located not far from downtown Kansas City, Missouri.

Make sure to stop by and try it on for size while attending the show. Caterpillar will also be hosting a Skid Steer Loader Operator Challenge, where participants can show off their driving skills and compete in a timed obstacle course.

The winner will be announced in the trade show at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 3, and you must be present to win.

“The American Angus Association has really started a great new relationship with Caterpillar,” says Becky Weishaar, creative media director and lead contact for the event. “We’re excited that they see the value in the qual-

ity of the beef produced in America, and look forward to having them as part of our growing trade show and convention this fall.”

A must-attend event

Thousands of cattle producers are expected to gather Nov. 3-5 for the annual meet-

per person. Registration includes three meals featuring the Certified Angus Beef® (CAB®) brand, access to all educational workshops and keynote speakers, entry into the trade show, as well as the Kershaw concert.

Participants are also advised to make hotel reservations

ing of the American Angus Association and a jam-packed schedule of keynote speakers, demonstrations and social events.

Industry experts on genomic technology will be in the spotlight during the first-ever International Angus Genomics Symposium, sponsored by Neogen’s GeneSeek Operations; and Angus University, sponsored by Merck Animal Health, presents “A Story of a Steak” and what it takes to provide a quality eating experience to beef consumers worldwide.

The Angus Media Trade Show will welcome more than 125 exhibitors representing animal health companies, publications, feed and nutrition, equipment manufacturers and more. Evening entertainment includes a concert by country singer Sammy Kershaw on Wednesday, Nov. 4.

Visit www.angusconvention.com to register today for \$75

online when they register, as rooms are expected to fill quickly. The 2015 housing block features a variety of price points and amenities.

Delegates elected to represent their state during the Association’s Annual Convention may attend the Association business meetings for free; however, participation in convention education, meals, entertainment and trade show requires a full convention registration. Any registrations made after Oct. 2 will be on-site at the Overland Park Convention Center and at an increased price.

Go online to access a convention schedule, travel information and more details for the upcoming event in Overland Park, Kansas. To learn more about the American Angus Association, visit www.angus.org.

—Source: Angus Productions, Inc.



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Looking to the Future

Cattle Industry Conference wraps up with policy priorities and sets long-range plan

More than 600 cattlemen and women gathered in Denver, Colorado, in mid-July to discuss the policy priorities for the cattle industry for the upcoming year. Throughout the meeting, the various policy committees reviewed expiring policies and discussed proposed policy brought forward from the National Cattlemen's Beef Association's state affiliates. A new beef industry long-range plan was also presented during the conference.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans process continues with Congressional oversight. NCBA members remain committed to working with the administration and Congress to ensure the final guidelines reflect the highest quality science and the role of lean beef in a healthy diet.

The EPA has finalized their

"waters of the United States" rule, and NCBA's membership stands firmly opposed to this land grab by the administration. NCBA continues to work with Congress to rein in the administration's regulatory onslaught and has joined with other land use groups in litigation against the agency.

NCBA members continue their strong support of trade, which adds value to our cattle and returns more than \$350 for each head of cattle sold. With the passage of Trade Promotion Authority, NCBA supports finalization and passage of the Trans Pacific Partnership and other pending free trade agreements. With preferential trade agreements currently in place, and other countries actively negotiating, the United States cannot afford to fall behind in this critical area. While COOL has for

many years been a cost to the industry without benefit to producers or consumers, the NCBA urges the Senate to act quickly in passing repeal language, following the strong bipartisan action in the House.

Although USDA/APHIS finalized their import rules for Northern Argentina and a region in Brazil, these rules were pushed through without the necessary risk assessments and jeopardize the health of our domestic herd. NCBA will continue to work with Congress and the administration to ensure the proper process is followed before allowing inspection and exports from these areas with a history of Foot-and-Mouth Disease.

Also during the summer conference, 16 beef industry leaders representing every link in the beef value chain presented a plan for meeting aggressive goals to strengthen the beef industry from 2016-2020. The Beef Industry Long Range Plan Task Force has been meeting since December 2014.

"While the beef industry has faced many challenges, the

future holds tremendous promise for the industry," according to Don Schiefelbein, owner/operator of Schiefelbein Farms and task force co-chair. "The task force took a research-based approach to not only determine where the industry is and how we got here, but also at the trends and issues potentially impacting the beef community so that we can be most successful moving forward."

The task force defined the mission of the U.S. beef industry as "a beef community dedicated to growing beef demand by producing and marketing the safest, healthiest, most delicious beef that satisfies the desires of an increasing global population while responsibly managing our livestock and natural resources."

In addition, the task force agreed the single most important strategic objective the industry should pursue is increasing beef demand and established a specific objective to "increase the wholesale beef demand index by 2 per-

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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LOOKING TO THE FUTURE FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

cent annually over the next five years,” which will require resources be committed in four core strategies:

- Drive growth in beef exports, a strategy that focuses on gaining access to key markets and promoting the unique attributes of U.S. beef to foreign consumers.
- Protect and enhance the business and political climate for beef, which begins with motivating stakeholders to become more engaged in policy concerns to improve the industry’s effectiveness in managing political and regulatory issues that threaten the overall business climate of beef production, including assuring beef’s inclusion in dietary recommendations, exploration of new production technologies, crisis management planning, developing the next generation of beef industry stakeholders and other initiatives.

- Grow consumer trust in beef and beef production, including a critical focus on antibiotic stewardship, the implementation of a certification/verification program and continued investment in beef safety initiatives. The task force said the entire beef community must be engaged and collaborate with a broad group of industry partners to protect beef’s image.

- Promote and strengthen beef’s value proposition, a strategy designed to revolutionize beef marketing and merchandising; invest in research that allows the industry to communicate beef’s nutritional benefits; capitalize on media technologies to communicate beef’s value proposition; and respond to consumer-based market signals with product improvements and increased production efficiencies.

“The overall vision of our Task Force has been straightforward,” said John Butler, CEO of Beef Marketing Group,

a task force co-chair. “Recognizing the growing demand among the world’s middle class for high-quality protein, we want the U.S. beef industry to responsibly produce the most trusted and preferred protein in the world. At this pivotal point in the U.S. beef industry’s history, we need to focus our energies and limited

resources on those areas that can provide our industry the best results.”

For the complete Beef Industry Long Range Plan 2016-2020 report or the summary, go to www.beefusa.org.

—Source: National Cattlemen’s Beef Association release. 

Producers Continue to Support the Checkoff

Three out of four producers (76 percent) continue to support the Beef Checkoff Program and the more they know about the program, the more supportive they are. In addition, the number of producers who say they do not support the program, at 10 percent, is the lowest ever found.

The independent firm Aspen Media & Market Research conducted the random survey of 601 beef and dairy producers nationwide in late June and early July. The survey found an overwhelming majority of beef and dairy producers continue to say their beef checkoff has value for them in many ways:

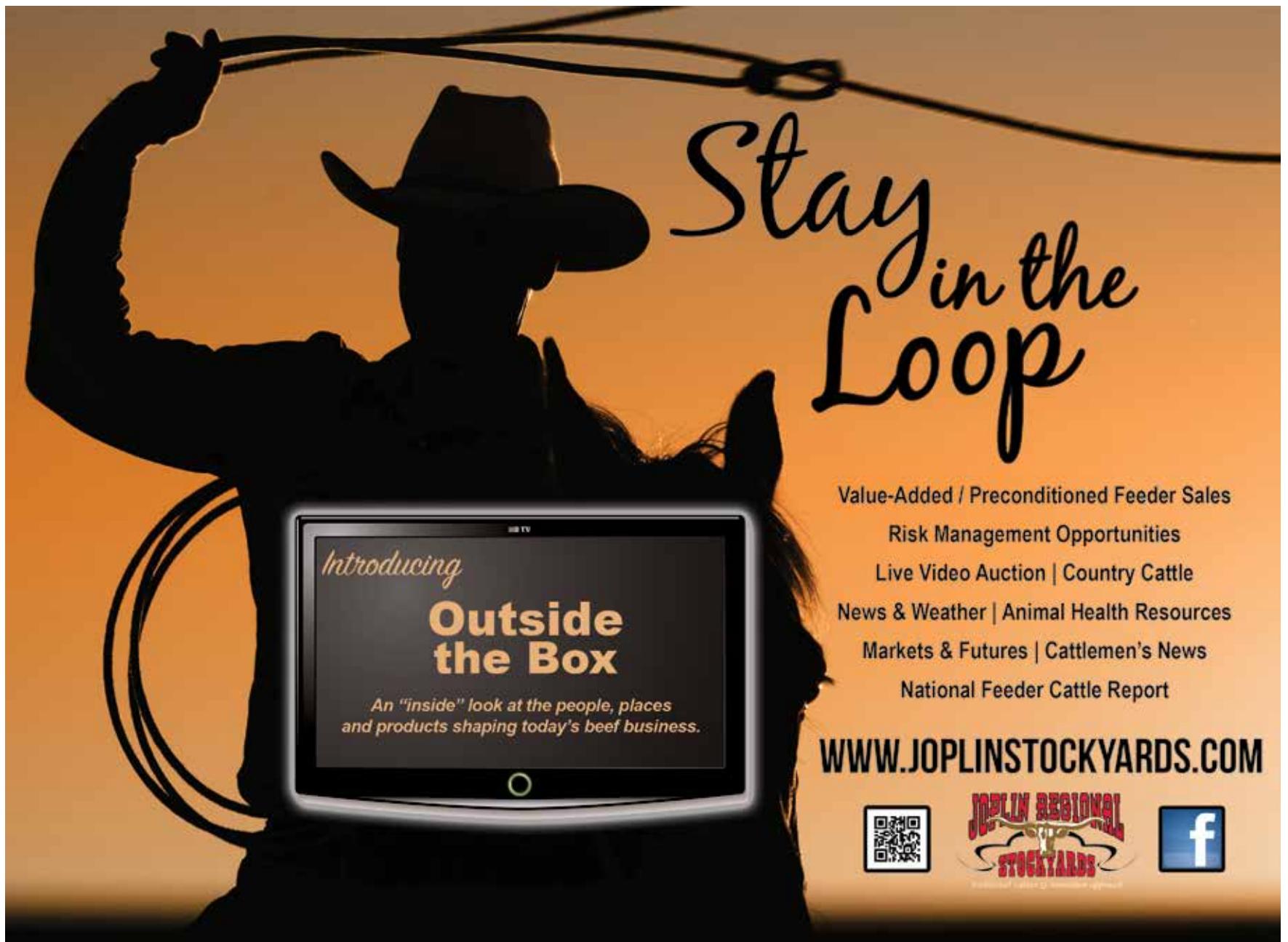
- 81 percent of producers

say the beef checkoff has helped to contribute to a positive trend in beef demand.

- 71 percent of producers say the beef checkoff contributes to the profitability of their operations.
- 71 percent say the checkoff represents their interests.
- 68 percent of producers believe the checkoff is well-managed.

For more information about your beef checkoff investment, go to MyBeefCheckoff.com.

—Source: Release from MyBeefCheckoff.com. 



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MARKET WATCH

Joplin Regional Stockyards

Market Recap | July 2015 | Feeder Cattle & Calf Auction | July Receipts 8,813 • Last Month 33,183 • Last Year 14,764

JRS Sale Day Market Phone: (417) 548-2012
 Mondays (Rick Huffman) | Wednesdays (Don Kleiboeker)
 Market Information Provided By Tony Hancock
 Mo. Department of Agriculture Market News Service
 Market News Hotline (573) 522-9244
 Sale Day Market Reporter (417) 548-2012

Date: South Central States Texas, Okla., New Mexico, Kansas, Mo. Offering: 27,130						Video Market from 7/2/15 • July Total Video Receipts 13,672					
FEEDER STEERS			MED & LG 1			FEEDER HEIFERS			MED & LG 1		
HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY	HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY
120	730	730	\$238.00	\$238.00	Current	650	710	710	\$224.25	\$224.25	Current
70	750	750	\$228.00	\$228.00	Current	160	785	785	\$208.25	\$208.25	Current
63	800	800	\$221.00	\$221.00	Current	58	835	835	\$200.50	\$200.50	Current
150	875-895	883	\$206.00-\$209.00	\$207.16	Current	280	770	770	\$216.00	\$216.00	August
60	900	900	\$209.00	\$209.00	Current	80	625	625	\$231.00	\$231.00	November
210	725	725	\$240.75	\$240.75	August - Calves	140	715	715	\$213.25	\$213.25	November
66	725	725	\$228.00	\$228.00	September	69	725	725	\$210.00	\$210.00	November / December
58	850	850	\$211.25	\$211.25	September / October	FEEDER HEIFERS			MED & LG 1-2		
58	850	850	\$209.35	\$209.35	October	HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY
62	800	800	\$213.50	\$213.50	October / November	130	710	710	\$216.50	\$216.50	Current
58	850	850	\$210.00	\$210.00	October / November	462	780-785	781	\$205.00-\$205.50	\$205.07	Current
134	750	750	\$221.00	\$221.00	November	450	865	865	\$196.25	\$196.25	Current
178	850	850	\$209.50-\$212.75	\$211.17	November	140	720	720	\$215.25	\$215.25	July / August
56	900	900	\$208.25	\$208.25	November	472	780-790	783	\$206.25-\$206.50	\$206.34	July / August
67	750	750	\$219.50	\$219.50	November / December	491	800	800	\$205.85	\$205.85	July / August
58	850	850	\$208.00	\$208.00	December	165	735	735	\$222.00	\$222.00	August
112	900	900	\$204.00	\$204.00	January / February	670	800-845	830	\$200.25-\$202.00	\$200.80	August
FEEDER STEERS			MED & LG 1-2			76	650	650	\$225.00	\$225.00	September
HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY	360	825	825	\$201.75	\$201.75	September
70	725	725	\$235.00	\$235.00	Current	66	750	750	\$203.50	\$203.50	October
2,601	755-775	770	\$221.50-\$231.75	\$222.93	Current	120	825	825	\$200.25	\$200.25	October
2,169	800-840	832	\$212.10-\$221.00	\$213.53	Current	62	800	800	\$200.25	\$200.25	October / November
1,070	850-860	857	\$208.00-\$216.10	\$213.53	Current	630	700	700	\$212.50-\$216.00	\$213.50	November
331	900	900	\$203.25-\$205.50	\$205.12	Current	322	750-775	770	\$202.50-\$202.75	\$202.70	November
1,256	950	950	\$204.25-\$206.00	\$205.85	Current	63	800	800	\$201.75	\$201.75	November
1,000	840	840	\$212.60	\$212.60	July / August	128	775	775	\$200.50	\$200.50	December
105	860	860	\$211.35	\$211.35	July / August	FEEDER HEIFERS			MED & LG 2		
70	725	725	\$228.00	\$228.00	August	HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY
435	750-775	771	\$223.50-\$224.00	\$223.57	August	375	700	700	\$210.75	\$210.75	September/October
450	800-825	813	\$219.50-\$221.10	\$220.23	August	Eastern States: All states east of the Miss., Louisiana & Arkansas					
643	850-875	864	\$206.75-\$213.25	\$210.60	August	HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY
1,044	900-925	920	\$205.35-\$211.25	\$206.55	August	58	875	875	\$208.00	\$208.00	September
63	785	785	\$215.50	\$215.50	August / September	FEEDER STEERS			MED & LG 1		
360	850	850	\$207.00	\$207.00	September	HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY
276	850	850	\$208.75	\$208.75	October	98	266	266	\$266.00	\$266.00	Current
240	900	900	\$204.60	\$204.60	October	85	615	615	\$238.00	\$238.00	Current - Calves
80	600	600	\$238.50	\$238.50	November	148	675	675	\$220.00	\$220.00	Sept / Oct - Calves
75	700	700	\$225.50	\$225.50	November	FEEDER HEIFERS			MED & LG 1		
134	750	750	\$205.50	\$205.50	November	HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY
1,470	800-835	825	\$208.50-\$214.00	\$209.81	November	60	775	775	\$208.00	\$208.00	August
698	900	900	\$202.75-\$205.00	\$204.24	November	FEEDER HEIFERS			MED & LG 1-2		
900	765	765	\$220.50	\$220.50	November / December	HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY
FEEDER STEERS			MED & LG 2			70	700	700	\$209.00	\$209.00	Current
HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY	70	700	700	\$211.50	\$211.50	August
99	875	875	\$202.50	\$202.50	Current	70	700	700	\$208.50	\$208.50	October / November
850	935	935	\$197.50	\$197.50	Current	FEEDER HEIFERS			MED & LG 2		
728	900-935	910	\$198.25-\$201.00	\$200.19	July / August	HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY
58	875	875	\$201.00	\$201.00	August	90	575	575	\$235.00	\$235.00	Current
480	860	860	\$208.00	\$208.00	August / September	FEEDER STEERS			MED 2-3		
HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY	427	885	885	\$190.75	\$190.75	August

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Bill Couser
 Couser Cattle Company, Nevada, Iowa
 2015 BQA Feedyard Award Winner

ON THE CALENDAR

Toughest Sport on Dirt Bucks Back to Springfield, Missouri

The PBR's PFIWestern.com Invitational comes to JQH Arena, Sept. 11-13

On September 11-13, the world's premiere bull riding circuit will return to Springfield, Missouri, for the PFIWestern.com Invitational presented by Bass Pro Shops one of the most popular stops on the Professional Bull Riders (PBR) Built Ford Tough Series (BFTS).

Missouri State University's JQH Arena will host the Top 35 bull riders in the world for the seventh consecutive year and experience non-stop, nail-biting, edge-of-your seat excitement when the "toughest men on dirt" battle with 2000-pound opponents through the most harrowing 8 seconds in sports.

All the bull riding action begins at 8 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 11; 7 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 12; and

4:50 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 13.

"We are very excited to return to Springfield and help PFI Western celebrate its 40th anniversary with the PBR," PBR Chairman and CEO Jim Haworth said. "The fans in this community are incredibly supportive with their gracious hospitality and their exuberant enthusiasm at each event. Our riders enjoy riding in such atmospheres and look forward to returning to Springfield."

Tickets for the three-day event are on sale now and can be purchased at JQH Arena Box Office, PFI Western Store, Missouri State Tickets or by calling (417) 836-7678, 1-888-476-7649 or PFI Western Store at (417) 889-2668. Prices range from \$15 to \$110.

New this year is the 3-day pass on select seats, providing a \$35 savings to attendees. In addition to a discount on tickets, this pass also includes a PFI Western gift card and a \$10 PBR merchandise voucher.

This year, defending PFIWestern.com Invitational champion L.J. Jenkins hopes to return to Springfield to not only attempt to win back-to-back titles, but also compete in his hometown before friends and family.

Also presently scheduled to compete are the best of the best in the world, including Holt, Missouri's Brady Sims; reigning and three-time PBR World Champion Silvano Alves; fan favorites J.B. Mauney, the 2013 World Champion; Guilherme Marchi, the 2008 World Champion; Mike Lee, the 2004 World Champion; Matt Triplett, Reese Cates, rookie sensation Kaique Pacheco and determined veterans Ben Jones, Sean Willingham and Kasey Hayes.

Fans will get to enjoy all of the Top 35 bull riders Friday, Saturday and Sunday, riding one bull each. Following Round 3 on Sunday, the riders with the

15 highest cumulative scores will advance to the Built Ford Tough Championship Round where they will attempt to ride one more bull. The overall event winner will be the rider who has acquired the most event points throughout the weekend.

More than \$140,000 will be on the line in Springfield, as well as valuable points towards the overall PBR World Championship worth \$1 million.

The PFIWestern.com Invitational is the 23rd of 27 events on the 2015 PBR Built Ford Tough Series. The season culminates with the Built Ford Tough World Finals in Las Vegas on Oct. 21-25. The finals will crown the 2015 PBR World Champion, who will receive the coveted championship buckle, a \$1 million bonus and a new pickup truck from Ford, the title sponsor of the Built Ford Tough Series. Tickets sales and additional information about the World Finals can be found at www.worldfinals.pbr.com.

—Source: PFI Western 

Replacement Cow & Bull Sale

5 p.m. | Saturday | Sept. 19, 2015

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EVENT ROUNDUP

August

- 11 4-8:30 p.m. Alfalfa Workshop
Stockton High School Ag Classroom 1, Stockton, Missouri
FMI: 417-276-3314
- 29 Missouri Cattlemen's Association Region 7 Tour
Missouri State University Darr Center, Spfd, Missouri
FMI: 417-737-2910

September

- 1 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Fall Cattlemen's Seminar
Ozark Empire Fairgrounds, E-Plex, Springfield, Missouri
FMI: 877-702-0115, ext. 7161
- 3 Southwest Missouri Cattlemen's Classic Golf Tournament
Silo Ridge Golf Course, Bolivar, Missouri
FMI: 417-316-0101
- 5 Utopia Genetics Complete Charolais Dispersal Sale
Springfield Livestock Marketing Ctr., Springfield, Missouri
FMI: 417-461-0150
- 11 University of Missouri Southwest Center Field Day
Mount Vernon, Missouri
FMI: 417-466-2148
- 15 Management Intensive Grazing School
Greenfield, Missouri
FMI: 417-276-3388, ext. 3
- 16-18 Management Intensive Grazing School
Crane, Missouri
FMI: 417-723-8389, ext. 3
- 17 Management Intensive Grazing School
Greenfield, Missouri
FMI: 417-276-3388, ext. 3
- 19 5 p.m. Replacement Cow and Bull Sale
Joplin Regional Stockyards, Carthage, Missouri
FMI: 417-548-2333
- 22 Management Intensive Grazing School
Greenfield, Missouri
FMI: 417-276-3388, ext. 3
- 24 Management Intensive Grazing School
Greenfield, Missouri
FMI: 417-276-3388, ext. 3
- 24 K-State Stocker Field Day
Manhattan, Kansas
FMI: 785-532-1267

October

- 10 Mark Yazel Cattle Co. Fall Highlight Sale
Ratcliff Ranch Sale Facility, Vinita, Oklahoma
FMI: 918-323-4108
- 17 Missouri State University Ag Celebration
Bond Learning Center, Springfield, Missouri
FMI: 417-836-5638

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But, there are entities that want to change all of that. And they aren't some "mysterious" group from a conspiracy theory. Just open your eyes and look. These entities are all around us - militant animal rights groups such as **PETA**, aggressive anti-meat organizations such as **FAO** (Food and Agricultural Organization - run by the U.N.), and worst of all, political and self-interest groups posing as animal welfare advocates - particularly **HSUS** (Humane Society of the United States).

These groups use shock, scare tactics and emotional pleas to get donations from ordinary citizens. And where does that money go? It goes to "administration fees," to fund further propoganda and to "influence" politicians in Washington.

Well-meaning people like you are persuaded on a daily basis to give up their own money to organizations that are actively involved in reducing your rights. You could eventually be forced to give up your freedom to hunt, fish, own animals or even raise a bountiful crop.

Protect The Harvest is an organization that was formed to stop the rampant twisting of truth, the misguided idealism of militant animal rights groups and to halt the flow of cash being stolen from regular American citizens in the name of a false cause. We have gathered information that will open your eyes and help you to see the misrepresentation, lies and outright theft being perpetrated on the public by these groups.

Go to **ProtectTheHarvest.com** to learn more. Open your eyes to what's really going on in the name of "animal rights." Don't let the fringe militants and con-artists decide how you should eat, work and live. Decide for yourself what's right for you and your family.



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