

JOPLIN REGIONAL STOCKYARDS

# CATTLEMEN'S



# *News*

AUGUST 2021



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Setting Up Cattle For Success

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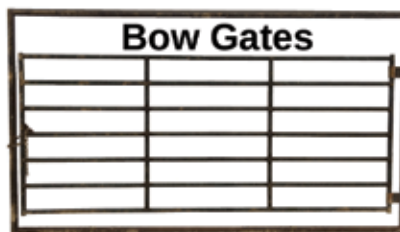
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# ON THE BLOCK

with Jackie Moore

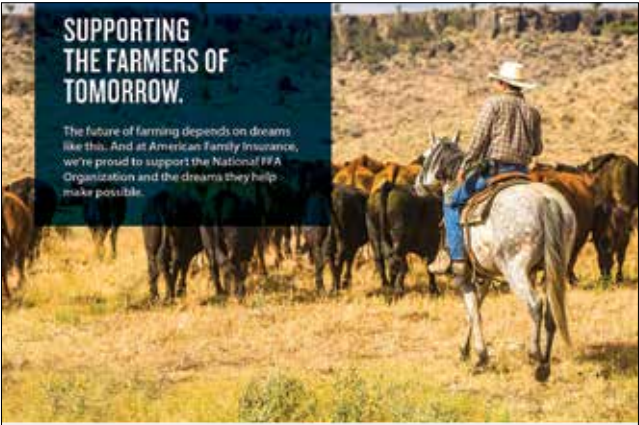
If these are the “dog days of summer” I can sure live with it because I have never seen a better July! What a day, here it is the first of August and it’s 82 degrees with a little north breeze blowin’. I’ve got more grass than I’ve ever had my entire life, and most years I don’t have any by now. I’ve got lots of feed, and I think everybody in our trade territory has a lot of feed. I think we are getting along about as good as anybody could for this time of year.

The cattle markets keep rollin’ on just like the Energizer bunny. The fat cattle trade isn’t very good, but you look out front at all of those deferred futures markets from October clear into next year and see them trade in the upper 20’s up to \$1.40 in those April contracts. It keeps a lot of optimism built into these calves and yearlings. With the feed supply we have, everyone is going to try to get possession of some of them whether they make any money or not. This grain is high and we are still in the old crop, but I think when we get into the new crop we should have some relief. There will be a little bit of grain around that we can buy so these “cost of gains” will be a little less for all these yearling cattle and these calves that are about to be weaned.

We see those little 300 lb. steers bring up there in the \$2.00 range; those four weight steers up there in the 80’s and 90’s; those five weight steers in the 70’s and 80’s; the six weight steers in the 60’s and 70’s up to \$1.80; seven weight steers \$1.60 and the eight weight steer up there somewhere from 48 to 57 or 58. It’s a pretty dang good market I’ll tell you! If you have something to sell, now would be a great time to trade them because generally as a rule the high will come sometime in August with the calves and the yearlings.

As we go into fall, we will see more of these new crop calves and it will put a little pressure on the market just as it always does that time of year. Don’t be surprised that these calves don’t come lower when we get out there into the first three weeks or so of September when some of those cattle start showing up. That’s fairly typical because regardless of what those futures do or what the fat cattle market does, these calves will get just a little bit hard to trade. If you have a way to wean them and you have some extra grass that isn’t a bad thing. If you look off out there at those November feeder cattle in that \$1.62, .63. or .64 range, it looks like you can take some of those calves that you have on those cows that weigh 500 to 600 lbs. that are worth somewhere in the \$1.60 range that aren’t weaned and get them weaned. They are still worth \$1.60 - well if you can get \$1.60 for the gain and make them weigh 700 well - 200 lbs at \$1.60 is \$320 a head. You can buy some feed that cost a little bit of something and those value-added programs and yearling specials we always have around Thanksgiving and the first week of December I think are opportunities to do some things that might make you a little bit of money. We’ve all got some hay and grass so there’s definitely some opportunity.

The cattle on feed report that came out last shows that we actually placed fewer cattle than we did a year ago. We actually placed about a 1/2 percent less cattle on feed than a year ago and our marketings were 2 or 3% higher so maybe we’ve turned the corner on this thing, and we get passed this issue with Covid if it doesn’t come back to haunt us it’s encouraging....well at least cautiously optimistic might be the best way to put it.



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These slaughter cows most generally try to get a little cheaper through here, but you know we sold those cows up in the 80’s last week and this week. The market on them is really good. The stock cow market with the way to calf market is is good as well. It’s pretty good time to be in the cattle business - I like it way better than I did a year ago I can tell you that.

Let’s all do the best we can to make a little money and be safe!

Good Luck and God Bless,

Jackie



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Cattlemen's News, published by Joplin Regional Stockyards, was established in 1998. With 12,000 customers and 450,000 plus cattle sold per year, this publication is an excellent advertising avenue for reaching customers from across the region. The publication puts today's producers in touch with the tools and information needed to be more efficient and profitable for tomorrow. Circulation 12,000.

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<b>Treatment History</b> Vaccination 05/24/2017 ..... Nasalgen, Virashield 6xL5 HB, Vision 8, Pinkeye Shield XT4 Vaccination 10/08/2017 ..... Vision 8, Virashield 6xL5 HB, Nupura PH Booster 03/14/2018 ..... Titanium 5, Pinkeye Shield XT4 Deworming 10/06/2017 ..... Ivermectin Deworming 03/14/2018 ..... Ivermectin Implant 05/24/2017 ..... Synovex C				
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## DATA DRIVEN DECISIONS

# Weaning Barometer

By Justin Sexten for Cattlemen's News

Technology offers little management improvements of the time tested practices associated with successful weaning management. A quick review of three key steps to help calves make the transition from nursing to “bunk broke” before addressing the opportunity technology offers at weaning.

Making sure water is clean and easily accessible is the first and most important step to healthy calves. Consider using an open water tank, filled several times a day, which may provide timid calves easier access and audible cues to find the water while you are checking them. For calves trained to automatic waters, now is the time to clean them out.

Weaning calves in grass traps or pasture provides dust control in addition to a familiar source of nutrition. Consider saving a small pasture to wean calves in or wean before pasture becomes scarce to take advantage of nature grazing behavior. If you are weaning the calves in a dry lot, now is the time to use high-quality (ideally mixed grass and legume) hay to maximize the nutrient intake and digestibility.

After clean water and a familiar forage are on offer now consider a palatable, nutrient dense feed. Intake the first week after weaning will range from 0.5 to 1.5% of body weight, so nutrient density is key. Mounting an effective immune response at weaning requires increased energy and protein. When intake is low, increase the energy and protein density to provide the needed nutrients for a calf to respond to vaccines. While a commodity mix may

work to supplement healthy yearlings, a calf at weaning may not be able to consume enough to meet the increased nutrient demands due to stress.

Once the nutritional foundation of weaning success is established we can consider a retrospective evaluation of the management that got us here. Weaning is a key checkpoint along the management calendar of the cow herd yet for some this barometer of success is missed due to the inability to translate data into information and ultimately decisions.

This year has been one of the most diverse weather years in memory. Many areas with excessive rainfall during a relatively mild summer made for abundant forage. Other areas are in the grip of historic drought with wildfires burning up pastures and affecting the air across the country.

While feed and forage resources are variable across the country the ability to evaluate cowherd management in the context of your environment remains. In the case of environmental extremes producers get the “opportunity” to evaluate the herd’s adaptive range.

In the case of extreme drought, who are the cows that maintained condition and successfully bred back? Were they cows that sacrificed milk production to transfer productivity from one year to the next? While these cows yield a smaller calf this year the cost of an open cow should more than offset the marginal calf revenue given up.

Alternatively in the midwest and southeast where forage is abundant cows should be able to express their full genetic potential. In a more normal year high performing cow’s milk production may be limited by forage availability. Remove the forage availability as a constraint to milk production and the below average milking cows show up with smaller calves and abundant body condition.

The previous examples use the current environmental extremes to help evaluate cow herd productivity but against what standard? In the absence of records a few conclusions may be drawn by looking at relative weaning performance. However in most herds, the between cow variation due to age and genetics makes these comparisons difficult at best, and are certainly not something to base culling decisions on.

Imagine if we could determine these adaptive qualities before investing the development cost of replacement heifers, building an adaptive herd over time. In areas where forage is limited, sorting the prospective replacements to those optimized to your system is even more important this year.

Genetic testing of your replacement heifer prospects before investing in development is a technology offering several advantages regardless of your current forage inventory. By waiting until weaning you gain the opportunity to visually sort the replacements then test those you are planning to retain. Bunk break the replacement prospects while waiting for test results, then those that don’t fit your genetic criteria are ready for marketing.

Using genetic tests to make your first sort on the replacements provides the opportunity to evaluate the genetic potential without the help of mother nature. The examples above showed how cows may respond to the extremes. In the case of the high performing cows, drought provides reproductive risk due to high milk production potential.

Rather than simply observing how the cowherd responds, the historic approach, imagine if you managed the high performing cows differently during years of drought because you have a barometer of the greater reproductive risk. That is precision livestock farming – optimizing the resources using technology to predict and manage outcomes rather than simply recording history.

Justin Sexten is the Vice President of Strategy - Performance Livestock Analytics.

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## MANAGEMENT MATTERS

# Setting Up Cattle for Success

*Bunk breaking calves for maximizing gain*

By Eric Bailey for Cattlemen's News

A beef calf is going to encounter stressful events before it becomes a steak. Several of the stressors occur around weaning. Weaning, the transition from farm/ranch of origin to a new environment, and changes in diet are some of the important ones. Let's discuss setting calves up for success as they transition from forage and milk to a new diet.

I am not aware of data about the impact of pre-weaning supplementation (creep feed or to the cows while giving calves a chance at the supplement as well) on feed intake post-weaning. However, it is intuitive that calves might learn from more experienced animals. Some folks will put older cattle

(Judas steers) in pens with new calves. One reason is to help calm the animals. Another important reason is to teach new calves where feed and water are located.

The best feed to start these calves on is what they know how to eat – forage. Abruptly switching calves to a pellet when they have never consumed pellets before will reduce intake for the first few days. In other words, that system uses hunger to get calves to try out new feeds.

My preference is to bait them with something they're familiar with. I like to give them only hay on the first day. While they may not eat much, at least it is something familiar. Calmly herd the calves toward bunks for the first few days. You can also place a portable bunk perpendicular to the main bunk line. In my experience, the portable bunk will help break the flow of calves pacing around the pens and allow them to run into the feed.

If I'm working with unfamiliar or just weaned calves, I will take a few days to adapt cattle to the new diet they're going to be fed. Feed the calves a little hay in the bunk along with the supplement for a few days. I like to tell folks to feed half a percent of their body weight in hay. On day two, feed half a percent of body weight in the new feed as well. The important part is to put the new feed at the bottom of the bunk. Then put the hay over it. Let them eat down into the new feed, rather than pick through the new feed to get to the familiar one. Each day they clean it up, increase the new feed by a pound per head while maintaining the hay offered at half a percent of body weight. Sometime after day three, put the hay on the bottom and the grain on top. Eliminate the bunk hay by day seven.

Do not fret about being precise with hay offered during adaptation. If all you have is small square bales, just estimate the weight. This is one case where my preferences differ with common practice in Missouri. Many folks will offer unrestricted access to round bale hay and feed a supplement in the bunk. Free-choice hay is the most convenient (and for many, the only option), and I acknowledge that. However, most people are going to feed 3-5 lb of supplement to the calves each day. In this system, forage quality is going to determine the weight gain of the calves. Feed the best hay you have to the calves for optimum performance if you're doing free choice hay and supplement.

My best advice to cattlemen is to spread stressful events out over time. Castrate bull calves well before weaning, if at all possible. Wean calves and keep at home for a while before selling. Give the calves a chance to adapt to new feeds and invest the time to ensure that calves learn the new feeding system. The first few days are critical, and research shows that the eager consumption of new feeds is not automatic. Your industry and your pocketbook will thank you for giving the calves a leg up as they enter the marketing and cattle feeding system. If you have any questions or follow up, send me an email at [baileyeric@missouri.edu](mailto:baileyeric@missouri.edu). 🐄

*Eric Bailey is the State Extension Beef Nutrition Specialist for University of Missouri.*



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**BRIGHTON** - Hwy 13, 15 Ac., Open & wooded mix, great visibility from both directions of Hwy 13, conveniently located between Springfield & Bolivar ..... \$97,500

**ASH GROVE** - 34 Ac., Hwy 160, located just east of Ash Grove w/frontage on 160. All open, great visibility ..... \$185,000

**CRANE** - 62 Ac., Hwy 413, north side of Crane, frontage **SOLD**, 3, bottom ground & private wooded area, city water available, nice setting ..... \$195,000

**PLEASANT HOPE** - 36 Ac., 212 Rd. Barn w/ finished living area **SOLD** & septic, corrals, cross fencing, r, springs, beautiful setting, great building site ..... \$264,000

**BILLINGS** - Silver Lake Rd., 80 Ac. Great rolling mostly open property just south of Clever, former dairy operation, currently used for intensive grazing, nice building sites ..... \$399,500

**MARIONVILLE** - 82 Ac., This great property offers park like setting **UNDER CONTRACT**, w/ septic, pipe corrals, barns, cross-fencing, offered in 2 tracts ..... \$412,000

**MT. VERNON** - 231 Ac., Lawrence 1212, great hunting property w/mature timber partially fenced **SOLD**, pond, mostly wooded, very secluded, conveniently located just off Hwy 174 ..... \$499,000

**GALENA** - 160 Ac. Hwy FF, nice open property w/open access on FF just west of 265. 3 ponds, well, corrals, good grass... \$475,000

**FLEMINGTON** - CR 143, 73.7 Ac, Beautiful, 4 BR, 3.5 BA all brick walk-out basement home, livestock **SOLD**, 40x60 iron hay barn, 24x60 workshop/equip. building, cross fencing, live water, automatic waterers, only minutes to the lake ..... \$545,000

**MARIONVILLE** - Law. 2180, 60 Ac., This purebred livestock farm offers open pastures, pond, 44x56 cattle barn, 30x60 hay barn, 30x36 heated shop, beautiful 3 BR home and so much more ..... \$552,900

**VERONA** - Law. 2220, 62 Ac., Nice open farm w/4 BR, 3 BA home, 60x42 workshop/barn, pipe corrals, equip. barns, 2nd living space, pond, good fencing ..... \$565,000

**MT. VERNON** - 80 Ac. Law. 2160 Historic "Meyer Farms Vineyard" w/32 Acres of productive grapevines w/6 varieties, 2 irrigation well, century old barn w/60x40 pole barn ..... \$575,000

**SARCOXIE** - Hwy 37, 94.6 Ac., really nice open property w/frontage on Hwy 37 & Apple Road, just west of High School, city water, automatic waterers, cross fencing, 6 Ac. pond ..\$585,000

**PIERCE CITY** - 80 Ac., FR 2000, 4 bedroom 3 bath home, pool, garage/shop, corrals, waterers, **SOLD**, equipment sheds, 4 ponds ..... \$585,000

**BRIGHTON** - Farm Road 2 Tract 2B, 129 Ac., Nice grassland between Springfield & Bolivar, fenced, ponds, mostly open in Polk County/on Greene County line ..... \$592,500

**FAIR GROVE** - 145 Ac. Hwy AA near Elkland cattle pasture w/hwy frontage, live waterers & multi ponds, great building opportunity, Marshfield school district ..... \$652,500

**REED'S SPRING** - 145 Ac. Dogwood Tree Rd. off Hwy 160 rolling nice clear Ozark pasture land w/beautiful scenic views & outstanding building site, over 1/2 mile road frontage w/ easy access points ..... \$696,000

**CRANE** - 220 Ac., Farm Road 240, mostly open, good fence **SOLD**, great grass farm. .... \$770,000

**SCOTT CITY** - 110 Ac. Hwy 97 & Law 2110, 5 BR home, 48x46 heated shop, 60x132 horse barn - new in 2010, heated iron hay barn, additional shop, **SOLD**, outdoor arena, sheds, paddock, new fence, a must see ..\$780,000

**AVA** - CR PP 524, 114 Acres, great cattle farm on Beaver Creek, nice 2 BR, 2 1/2 BA home, huge 102x80 ft. barn w/office and shop, pipe corral, creek bottom ..... \$780,000

**SENECA** - 282 Ac., Bethel Rd., nice level open ground, pasture **SOLD**, good fence & cross fence, pond, great location \$1,057,500

**POTTERSVILLE** - 504 Ac. CR 7040. Great grass farm, 9 ponds, 2 big pipe corrals, working barn **SOLD**, open, new fence w/pipe corners ..... \$1,257,480

**AURORA** - Hwy K, 313 Ac., livestock farm, large 5 BR, 3 BA **SOLD**, walkout basement, 60x120 barn, large red iron hay barns, 2nd home ..... \$1,692,500

**LEBANON** - 414 Ac. Just off Hwy 64, great grass farm, over 200 acres of bottom ground, home, equipment/hay building, fence & cross fence, NICE ..... \$1,904,400

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## TRENDING NOW

# Beef Market Premiums Driving More Use of Digital ID

By Scott Holt, Marketing Manager, Merck Animal Health Intelligence

Digital identification is a growing trend in feeder cattle in value-added, source of origin or production-verified programs at the feedlot.

By far the biggest incentive for producers is in obtaining market premiums from value-added supply chains. These programs need electronic identification (EID) and automatic tag readers to sort and verify program cattle at the speed of commerce.

Many feedlots and processors install panel readers in verification alleys and collect the digital ID of each animal. This efficiently creates fast and reliable verification that load lots and pens of cattle meet program specifications. These tools enable efficient growth in value-added markets.

Electronic ID tags, panel readers and digital data processing also make it easier to manage the complexity of a modern feedlot. EID numbers can help cow/calf producers manage records and reliably organize cattle performance and carcass data they get back from participating feedlots or processors. ID numbering and stick readers are key tools in breeding programs and marketing calves with specific quality targets. The digital tools tie together production, genetics and marketing records.

Here are some basics on gearing up for EID tags:

- The technology in EID tags uses radio signals. Automated data readers are set up at many key locations, such as feedlots, auction markets, processing facilities, border export locations and around the world. This technology helps to link supply chains.
- Each EID tag has a unique 15-digit number printed on it, and the number can also be read by scanning the tag with an EID reader. These tags are designed to last for the life of the animal.

- Common times to apply EID tags on cow-calf operations are at birth, during vaccinations or branding, or at weaning. Calf marketing benefits from having easily read identification while EID use on brood cows makes it easier to manage herd records.

- For the best retention, EID tags should be placed properly in the center rib of the ear, with the numbered side forward. (Just inside a traditional ear tag, closer to the skull for best retention. Never place in the top of the ear as this is worst orientation for automated readers and poorer retention.)

- EID and visual tags can be obtained with matching numbers. This makes it simple to use ID numbers in herd software or spreadsheets and is a solid base of information collection for recording weights, body condition, pregnancy status and health inputs.

- Not having to write down animal numbers makes accurate chute-side data collection much easier. Pocket readers are sufficient in small herds and larger stick readers are helpful on larger operations. In some states, reading cattle with EID tags is an additional tool used by brand inspection.

Producers are recognizing how to use digital identification to run their operations, improve decision making and find more valuable ways to connect in their market. And, as consumers grow more curious about the origins of their food, digital identification will be one of the technologies that helps our industry deliver information that is of importance in beef retail marketing.

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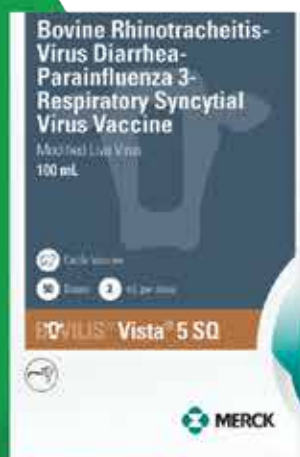


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## NETWORK KNOW-HOW

# The Past, Present and Future

By Erin Hull for Cattlemen's News

When I was in high school, there were two agriculture clubs. FFA was a club that all the boys who lived on farms joined. 4-H was a club that all the girls who were horse crazy joined. There were zero girls in FFA and zero boys in 4-H. Cows were for boys and horses were for the girls. The lines never crossed. They were not grey or blurred. I was a member of neither. Why? Because I was not horse obsessed, much against my mother's wishes.

I had not given this information much thought until a few weeks ago. While my daughter was at a youth cattle show recently my mother asked me why a certain person was at the show. I explained that their grandkids showed cows. My mother looked at me oddly and replied "but they don't own

cows or live on a farm. Why would their grandkids show cows?" That simple statement made me stop and think. As I looked around the cattle barn I realized that the majority of the kids showing cows were not only female, but they did not live on a farm either. This made me start to take notice at the next several agriculture based functions we attended. At each and every one of them, whether it be it 4-H or FFA, the vast majority of the kids neither owned livestock nor lived on a farm. In fact, in most cases, my daughter was the only one who had direct access to agriculture on a daily basis.

After spending what seems like a lifetime in a cattle show barn this summer, and looking at pictures from our state's FFA Summer camp that my daughter recently returned from, my outlook on our industry's future and how we AgVocate has changed dramatically. For years I have spent countless hours of my personal time trying to get adults to pay attention to what we do and why we do it. Some of the time I have a captive audience, but more times than not, I feel as if my message is not getting through to many. I refuse to give up the fight, but it has always seemed like an uphill battle. The message has always been the same. "We farm because we love to farm." "We do what we do because it is in the best interest of the animals we raise and the land we work." "We are sustainable." "We are responsible with our drug use." You know the drill. You know the story. Invest your time AgVocating. I've been preaching it for years to you all.

Well, I am here to tell you that I have a new message. I have been to three cattle shows in the last three weeks watching our future show cows. I have seen pictures of our current FFA members at camp. I look at the pictures and those in the show ring and have a new found passion. We need to elevate the youth who are passionate for our industry. Most of these kids do not live on a farm. Most of these youth do not have daily access to agriculture. Yet here they are, passionate for an industry that means so much to us. These are the ones we need to empower.

While I sit on the advisory board for our local FFA chapter, I do not get involved in many activities. I donate when asked, but I generally have plenty on my own plate to occupy my time. Today that changes. Today I vow to empower the FFA and 4-H members who want so badly to be part of our industry. I vow to spend time with them, helping them learn about beef cattle and crop farming. I vow to donate my time to the local agriculture classes to assist them with their educating. I vow to donate my money to causes that will help get more kids involved in these clubs. I vow to empower today's youth that sees agriculture as a viable future.

These youth are OUR future. They are the future of the industry that we love so much. They are the ones who will carry the torch when we are tired of raising it any longer. These kids are the ones who we need so desperately to educate their peers as to why we are passionate about farming.

If you look at a kid's social media page, whether it be TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, etc. and you see them proudly displaying a blue coat, a cow, a pig, a goat, a sheep or even a bale of hay... invest in THEM for they are already fully invested in what we love so dearly. 🤠

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Copper.....15 mg/mL

### OTHER SUBSTANCES:

Chlorocresol 0.1% w/v (as preservative).

### DOSAGE RECOMMENDATIONS:

CALVES: Up to 1 year ..... 1 mL/per 100 lbs. bodyweight  
CATTLE: From 1-2 years ..... 1 mL/per 150 lbs. bodyweight  
CATTLE: Over 2 years ..... 1 mL/per 200 lbs. bodyweight

### PRECAUTION:

Selenium and copper are toxic if administered in excess.

Always follow recommended label dose. Do not overdose.

It is recommended that accurate body weight is determined prior to treatment.

Do not use concurrently with other injectable selenium and copper products.

Do not use concurrently with selenium or copper boluses.

Do not use in emaciated cattle with a BCS of 1 in dairy or 1-3 in beef.

Consult your veterinarian.

### CAUTION:

Slight local reaction may occur for about 30 seconds after injection. A slight swelling may be observed at injection site for a few days after administration. Use standard aseptic procedures during administration of injections to reduce the risk of injection site abscesses or lesions.

### WITHDRAWAL PERIOD:

Meat 14 days. Milk zero withdrawal.

### DIRECTIONS:

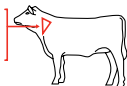
This product is only for use in cattle.

MULTIMIN® 90 is to be given subcutaneously (under the skin) ONLY.

It is recommended to administer the product in accordance with Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) guidelines. Minimum distance between injection sites for the MULTIMIN® 90 product and other injection sites should be at least 4 inches.

Inject under the loose skin of the middle of the side of the neck. Max volume per injection site is 7 mL.

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injection in middle  
of side of neck.



Store Between 15°C and 30°C  
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### SUPPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

BULLS	3 times per year
BEEF COWS	4 weeks before breeding 4 weeks before calving
DAIRY COWS	4 weeks before calving 4 weeks before insemination at dry-off
CALVES	at birth at 3 months and/or weaning
HEIFERS	every 3 months – especially 4 weeks before breeding

(program gives planned dates that can be varied to suit management programs)

### DOSAGE TABLE

ANIMAL WEIGHT (lbs)	CALVES UP TO 1 YEAR 1 mL/100 lb BW	CATTLE 1 - 2 YEARS 1 mL/150 lb BW	CATTLE > 2 YEARS 1 mL/200 lb BW
50	0.5 mL	-	-
100	1 mL	-	-
150	1.5 mL	-	-
200	2 mL	-	-
300	3 mL	-	-
400	4 mL	-	-
500	5 mL	-	-
600	6 mL	-	-
700	7 mL	-	-
800	-	5.3 mL	-
900	-	6 mL	-
1000	-	6.6 mL	5 mL
1100	-	-	5.5 mL
1200	-	-	6 mL
1300	-	-	6.5 mL
1400	-	-	7 mL

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Approximately fifteen students from the Lamar, MO R-1 Agriculture program and FFA chapter, and other participating area ag programs and FFA chapters, will be getting a unique opportunity to learn about beef production, economics, sales and marketing through the ShowMe Youth Ag Academy. This first of its kind student endeavor was initially spearheaded by ShowMe Wagyu Partners of Lamar, MO and surrounding community members in order to create a hands-on learning experience by running an actual complete beef enterprise that will include a cow/calf operation, the production and procurement of stocker animals, feedlot finishing, a wholesale and retail beef marketing program along with a fullblood seedstock program, in an effort to create intuitive leaders for today and tomorrow.

The Show Me Youth Ag Academy will operate as a non-profit 501C3 Corporation governed by its own independent board of directors, which will include local farmers, ranchers, educators, University Extension staff and area business people. Area schools, through their own agricultural departments, can participate by sending their instructors and students to the farm or participate via online classes through curriculum developed by the Academy along with area ag instructors, designed to compliment the respective school's specific course work.

The Youth Ag Academy business enterprise will include a 169-acre farm located just south of Milford, MO, being donated by Show Me Wagyu Partners, LLC a leading producer of registered fullblood Akaushi cattle, along with a 40-cow commercial herd, 12 of which are carrying full blood Akaushi (Red Wagyu) embryos, which will be the start of the Academy's fullblood Akaushi seedstock program. Show Me Wagyu Partners is also donating eight registered fullblood Akaushi bulls along with Akaushi semen for the Youth Ag Academy to use in their grower-partner program. The grower-partner program will encourage area young farmers to use Youth Ag Academy owned bulls or semen to breed to their own cows and contract the calves back to the Youth Ag Academy at a healthy premium to regional markets. To kickstart the Youth Ag Academy's feedlot and beef program, Show Me Wagyu Partners will be donating 275 F1 Akaushi/Black Angus or Red Angus calves ranging in weight from 600 – 1400 lbs. Show Me Wagyu Charities, a charitable affiliate of Show Me Wagyu Partners, will be donating a long term no-cost lease for the use of a 400 head feedlot to the Academy along with feed storage facilities, equipment and labor to service and maintain the feedlot. The Youth Ag Academy has also received pledges from other community members

of \$250,000 to help fund operating costs of the Academy during its startup phase. All proceeds from the sale of livestock & beef by the Academy will be utilized for future business operating expenses, scholarships and charitable activities on a local, regional and national level.

This pioneer program will be led by Tammy Bartholomew, a distinguished and highly respected agricultural educator in the Midwest. Bartholomew couples a wide-range of experience from the Ag Education sector with practical application in the purebred cattle business as well as previously holding leadership positions in the Missouri Vocational Agriculture Teacher's Association, the Missouri Angus Auxiliary, and presently holding a seat on the Cattlemen's Beef Board.



*Tammy Bartholomew*

The Academy, in unison with local high school agricultural programs and FFA chapters, will offer youth the opportunity to learn all the necessary skills and challenges involved in running a complete Agri-Business operation raising high-quality, locally-grown Wagyu beef. Students will be responsible for developing grower-partnerships, procurement, feedlot management, overseeing harvest and marketing of the products as well as the accounting and finances. Training in animal husbandry, sales, promotion, finance and advertising will be experienced by program participants.

Not only an experience for students, this dynamic enterprise will have access to the latest in agriculture technology, production practices and animal husbandry and provide a place for established farmers and ranchers in the region to glean information and ideas in real time through the Academy, Ag Extension events and adult education tours and seminars to raise the bar of production, efficiency and sustainability in their various operations from beef production, forage, soil and water management, marketing and business development.

With this strong financial start, along with the support of parents, students, area agricultural instructors, FFA chapters and the community as a whole, the Show Me Youth Ag Academy should be able to prosper and become self-sustaining providing many opportunities for youth scholarships and aid to charities within the state and even a national level. 🐮

## Officers & Directors of Show Me Youth Ag Academy

### Board Chairman: **Marty Bunton**

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### President: **Danny Little**

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### Executive Director: **Tammy Bartholomew**

Executive Director Show Me Youth Ag Academy  
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## MANAGEMENT MATTERS

# What is a “Good” Heifer Pregnancy Rate?

By Jordan Thomas for Cattlemen's News

What is a “good” pregnancy rate in beef heifers? I posed this question in my most recent talk for the MU Extension Forage Livestock Town Hall, titled “Building a Profitable Heifer Development Enterprise.” The full talk is available online if you want the long-winded version. This article will be a briefer synopsis of how I go about trying to answer that question. For commercial replacement heifers, the short answer is that there

really isn't such a thing as a “good” pregnancy rate. What we are really after is a profitable business model.

### Know Your Enterprises

Are you thinking about heifer development on your operation as though it is its own separate enterprise? It can sometimes

seem like an academic exercise to say this, but you need to do the math as though you have two separate businesses. Your heifer development enterprise essentially has to “purchase” weaned heifer calves at fair market value from your cow-calf enterprise, and your cow-calf enterprise has to “purchase” bred replacements back at fair market value from your heifer development enterprise. When all the costs associated with heifer development are considered, the heifer development enterprise really needs to not only break-even but actually turn a profit. Otherwise, you are better off buying replacements and investing your time and resources in cows or some other profitable enterprise.

### Know Your Costs

Do you know the total cost of your heifer development program? If you don't, you run the risk of producing replacement heifers at a greater cost than bred heifers are worth. That means you force your cow-calf operation to purchase replacement heifers essentially at a premium above market price. Doing this, you haven't just lost money on the heifer development enterprise; you have compromised the profitability of the cow-calf enterprise too. Cost-control is critical.

### Know Your Products

Of course, cow-calf operations that develop replacements are interested in producing bred heifers as the “product” of the heifer development enterprise. But bred heifers are not the only product that enterprise markets. To really understand the profitability of a heifer development enterprise, we need to think about all of the costs and the value of all of the products.

Those of you that read my articles know that I am adamant that cow-calf operations only retain early-conceiving heifers that will calve early relative to the calving season in the

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cow herd. This is one of my “Five Rules of Thumb” for commercial beef producers. If you use a longer breeding season, later-conceiving heifers need to be marketed as bred heifers and not retained.

A heifer development enterprise will also produce open and cull heifers, especially if using a very short breeding season. Is it a bad thing to produce open heifers—even a lot of open heifers? Not necessarily, especially if you do not have good opportunities for bred heifers. We often added weight to open heifers during the development program. If the value of gain exceeds the cost of gain, think of those open heifers as just profitable stockers. It should go without saying that those open heifers need to be marketed and not rolled into another breeding season: no one can afford to spend that much on the continued of reproductively inefficient heifers. Don’t get focused on pregnancy rate; focus on profitability of the enterprise.

### Know Your Profit

I want to drive the point home that heifer development needs to generate a profit—not just break even—as an independent enterprise, even if you intend to retain some or all of the bred heifers produced. The reason is that heifer development will tie up resources that you could be using to do something else. If you are not making a profit developing replacement heifers, you could be using those resources to make a profit doing something else.

Remember, at the end of the day, profitability is just revenue minus cost. We can increase profit by increasing revenue or by decreasing costs (or, ideally, both). By freeing up resources tied up in an unprofitable heifer development enterprise, you may be able to bring in more total revenue from other enterprises (e.g., running more cows, retaining weaned calves longer, or seasonally grazing stockers). Alternatively

or additionally, you may be able to reduce costs by better aligning your stocking rate to the current carrying capacity of your land, stockpiling forage for winter grazing and reducing expensive hay-feeding.

Finally, we often emphasize different traits when selecting bulls to purchase if we operate both a cow-calf enterprise and a heifer development enterprise. These are real opportunity costs to consider. Personally, I love developing heifers; it is my favorite part of the cattle business. But it comes at real costs. We need to be honest about those and demand the revenues produced cover those costs and leave us with a profit too.

### Final Thoughts

Metrics like pregnancy rate are helpful for evaluating reproductive performance of heifers, but this doesn’t tell us about the profitability of the heifer development enterprise. You can write your heifers’ pregnancy rate on a deposit slip at the bank, I suppose, but the teller isn’t going to know quite what to do with it. No pregnancy outcome in heifers is “good” enough that it justifies losing money to achieve it.

By the way, if you haven’t started tuning into the weekly MU Extension Forage Livestock Town Halls, I would encourage you to check them out. If you want to ask questions or interact, sign up for the Zoom sessions at [ipm.missouri.edu/townhalls](http://ipm.missouri.edu/townhalls). If you cannot attend the Zoom sessions live on Thursdays at noon, every session is also available to watch at your convenience at [youtube.com/MUIPM](https://www.youtube.com/MUIPM). My talk on “Building a Profitable Heifer Development Enterprise” will be one of the more recent topics, but you will find a wealth of good information from my colleagues in MU Extension as well. 🐮

*Jordan Thomas, a Ph.D., is the state cow-calf Extension specialist with the University of Missouri. Contact him at 573-882-1804 or [thomasjor@missouri.edu](mailto:thomasjor@missouri.edu).*

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## TRENDING NOW

# Mentor or Mentee

*Either role can be beneficial*

By B. Lynn Gordon for Cattlemen's News

This summer, I was able to attend several national junior beef association shows. I grew up participating in national junior cattle shows. However, the opportunities today are much more expansive than when I was a young person.

One activity added and incorporated into many of these events is a mentorship program. The goal of these programs is to show “first-timers” the ropes during their rookie year by having a senior member paired up with one or more “first-timers”.

The mentor’s role is to answer questions, inform the mentee about experiences they can partake in at the event, and make them feel more comfortable and welcome by introducing them to other exhibitors. The value of these formal mentor programs is unmeasurable. If I asked my nieces and nephews, they could still remember the name of their mentor who guided them that first year and how each year after that initial experience they would look forward to seeing that mentor again.

My Dad, born in the 1930s, didn’t have the advantage of these current-day mentor programs, yet he learned at a young age the value of mentors. Having the dream to breed top-quality seedstock cattle, he took it upon himself to seek out mentors.

My Dad had a long list of cattlemen and farmers who were willing mentors. He referred to these individuals as “Master Farmers” or “Master Breeders.” He had great admiration for these agriculturalists and was always grateful to them, aware that his success stemmed from these individuals’ willingness to share their time and talents with “a young farm kid.”

### Value of mentors

Mentors are invaluable. They serve as role models, sounding boards, provide advice and guidance. They can cheer you on or act as a devil’s advocate. They are objective, teach new skills, help you develop confidence, and challenge you to grow and develop in your career or business.

Mentor relationships can be informal and unstructured, like many of my Dad’s relationships with fellow cattlemen. However, some mentorships can be formal,

where actionable goals are set and defined, such as the mentorship programs I mentioned earlier in this article.

### Pinpointing a mentor

Where do you begin? Start by creating a list of five to ten people you admire and with whom you have a connection. For example, a fellow member of your cattlemen’s organization or breed association. What do you admire most about their experience and expertise? Do you want to learn about their ability to market bulls to commercial cattlemen, background cattle, or manage pastures sustainably to reduce feed costs?

Consider having more than one mentor. For example, my Dad selected “masters” in the specific areas such as genetics, nutrition, fitting, and showing cattle. Each of these mentors will help you develop different skill sets to a greater extent.

Mentors may be a trusted friend, a colleague, a fellow cattleman, or your banker. Select individuals who excel in their abilities and knowledge yet someone with who you are comfortable communicating with. Connection is key. Your goal in selecting a mentor is to gain from someone else’s expertise on a particular subject or learn about a process.

Mentoring relationships are often long-term. They involve discussing, practicing, evaluating, or researching information. Be considerate of your mentor’s time by being focused and prepared during your discussions.

It might seem logical that one of your selected mentors is your supervisor, manager, or boss. You will undoubtedly learn from them, but keep in mind choosing a supervisor can make it difficult for them to have an objective view.

### Serving as a mentor

There are also many benefits to being a mentor - the opportunity to expand your viewpoints as you learn new ideas and insight from someone of a different generation or different experience trajectory.

Mentors also can strengthen their skills. They can enhance their leadership and communication skills. A mentor’s most rewarding outcome is the reassurance they are assisting another person in reaching their goals. Mentoring can bring you great pride.

In my Dad’s time, choosing a mentor meant selecting someone he could visit with face-to-face or by making a phone call. Times have changed. One of my nephews, who participated in a formalized mentoring program developed by a cattlemen’s association, selected a mentor who lived over 750 miles away. Today, a virtual face-to-face relationship, referred to as e-mentoring, can be developed using social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Whether you decide to serve in the role of a mentor or that of a mentee, keep in mind, the most productive mentoring relationships are those where both parties involved are engaged and open to learning from each other. Undoubtedly, the end result will be a rewarding and beneficial experience. 🤝

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## Asian Longhorned Tick Confirmed in Missouri

First confirmed presence in Greene County

For Immediate Release from the Missouri Department of Agriculture

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. - The Missouri Department of Agriculture, working in conjunction with the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services and Missouri State University, has confirmed the first finding of an Asian longhorned tick (*Haemaphysalis longicornis*) in Missouri. Missouri becomes the 16th state with a presence of the tick species, following the first confirmed report of the Asian longhorned tick in the United States in 2017.

Asian longhorned ticks are light brown in color and are very small, often smaller than a sesame seed. Unlike other ticks, a single female Asian longhorned tick can produce offspring (as many as 1,000 at a time) without mating. That means individual animals could host thousands of ticks, which can cause great stress on a heavily infested animal.

The Department encourages producers to continue protective measures and to check their livestock regularly for ticks. Keeping grass and weeds trimmed and clearing away brush are important tick prevention practices. If you spot any unusual looking ticks or large infestations on your animals, contact your local veterinarian.

According to the Center for Disease Control, the Asian longhorned tick appears to be less attracted to human skin. However, ticks of any kind should be removed immediately, as they can carry diseases that affect human health. Use EPA-approved insect repellent when you will be in or near tall grasses or wooded areas.

Research on the presence of tick species in Missouri continues through a partnership between the Missouri Department of Conservation and A.T. Still University. Residents are asked to send ticks to the University through September 2022 so that University researchers can study the distribution of ticks in Missouri and any human pathogens transmitted by those ticks. For more information, or to find out how to submit a sample, visit Missouri ticks and tick-borne pathogen surveillance ([atsu.edu](https://atsu.edu)).


To learn more about the Missouri Department of Agriculture, please visit [Agriculture.Mo.Gov](https://Agriculture.Mo.Gov).



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## MANAGEMENT MATTERS

# Strategies for Boosting Fall Fescue Forage

By University of Missouri Extension for Cattlemen's News

GALENA, Mo. – There is little doubt that tall fescue is one of Missouri's greatest assets in the livestock industry. Missouri's reputation for being a leading cow-calf state would simply not be without tall fescue as a significant forage. Though there are many issues that we have to deal with when using fescue, the benefits outweigh the drawbacks.

"The greatest benefit has been the ability to graze a high-quality standing feed source well into the winter months without having to rely solely on a more expensive and sometimes lower quality stored feed," said Tim Schnakenberg, field specialist in agronomy, University of Missouri Extension. "Producers who have learned this technique of conserving and rationing out this grazed forage through the winter have gained an advantage in the industry. Feed costs, which are the greatest annual expenses in managing beef cattle, will be lowered, allowing more take-home pay after the off-spring are run through the sale ring."

Key to taking advantage of this resource lies in the planned strategy a producer has to boost and manage the fall fescue growth. The good news is that the stockpiling strategy is not difficult for most producers if they are not overstocked.

Schnakenberg points out, "If you are over-stocked in a cow-calf operation, you will be forced to depend on a less profitable plan to get your cows through the winter. When running real numbers on a per-cow basis, producers are sometimes shocked at how the cost of maintaining their cattle is cost-prohibitive when depending mostly on low quality hay with heavy feed supplements all winter. It reminds us that the old adage that 'More is Less' is absolutely true."

It starts with dedicating some paddocks that have an abundance of tall fescue. Weedy, overgrazed and abused fields that have a weak stand of tall fescue are not good candidates. Fields with excessive bluegrass may also not work out as well. August is a great month to walk some paddocks and see how good the stands are. Extension demonstration projects have shown that stands of fescue that don't have adequate levels of phosphorus or potassium and have an exceptionally low pH will not respond to nitrogen applications as well.

For optimal quality in the fall, it's usually best to start with a field that has been mowed off or grazed down to 3 inches by mid-August. At that point, close the gates of designated paddocks and apply nitrogen fertilizer. This is also a good time to apply any phosphate or potash that is recommended on your soil test report.

The rate of nitrogen can vary depending on if the stand is Kentucky 31 or a novel endophyte variety. It is well documented

that the fescue endophyte can still be a problem in Kentucky 31 stands in the fall. High nitrogen levels can make this threat even greater. For that reason, it may be best to limit nitrogen rates to about 40 pounds of actual nitrogen per acre on those fields. Novel endophyte or endophyte-free stands can potentially respond well to up to 60 or 70 pounds per acre.

Schnakenberg recommends waiting as long as possible before opening gates back up for grazing. Allow some time to get maximum growth in the cooler fall environment. The optimum temperature range for tall fescue is somewhere between 68° F to 77°F and growth will end around 40°F.

"Most years you can wait until December to begin grazing if we have a good fall. This prolongs the need to feed hay and every day the farmer doesn't have to feed hay is that much money and time saved," said Schnakenberg. "I have marveled at the producers I have worked with who have adequate land resources and have carefully rationed out their grass to graze well into February. It proves the practice can be done. If it turns out to not be possible to graze into February, even an extra month of not feeding hay is profitable."

Success is always dependent on rainfall in the fall. In parts of our area there was a very dry fall in 2020 and it didn't work out as well. And early ice storm could also reduce the quality and abundance of forage. Those years of poor growth will happen but the odds of success are greater and it pays to make preparations for stockpiling.

Once stockpiling begins, the livestock producer should focus on how to ration the forage out to the cows. Tall fescue is most efficiently grazed using Management-intensive Grazing. Another approach is to ration the fescue by strip-grazing, using a temporary fence that is moved every few days to give the cows only what they need without wasting the grass.

While grass is still growing, a back fence is ideal to keep them from tracking on to new grass growth. Doing all this can lead to close to the ideal 70 percent utilization of forage in the winter months, compared to the more typical 40 percent utilization when giving the herd the entire field.

"Stockpiling is one of the easiest ways to reduce the outflow of cash on a farm. When given the opportunity, I think most farmers would rather graze their cows on high quality 15 to 20 percent protein fescue than to buy and feed expensive eight percent protein hay throughout the entire winter," said Schnakenberg. 🐄

*Tim Schnakenberg is the Field Specialist in Agronomy in Stone County, MO.*





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## TRENDING NOW

# Manage Bulls Correctly Now for a Successful Upcoming Breeding Season

By Rebecca Mettler for Cattlemen's News

Bull management in late summer can positively or negatively impact the fall breeding season. So, while the bulls are spending the off-season camped out in the back forty, remember these key points when preparing for their next outing with the cowherd.

### Know the Effects of Heat Stress

"Typically heat stress is the most common contributor to fall infertility in my area," said Will Gentry, DVM, Animal Clinic of Diamond, Diamond, Missouri. "The amount of fescue in this area definitely doesn't help us."

When temperatures stay above 70 degrees overnight, cattle are less likely to reduce their core body temperature appropriately, and finding factors to mitigate heat stress become more critical, according to Brianne Bishop, DVM, owner of Bishop Reproductive Services, Fulton, Missouri.

Providing shade and clean water during times of heat stress can have the biggest impacts on heat stress. Also, management factors to help minimize heat stress included genetic selection for heat and fescue tolerance, as well as avoiding processing or moving cattle during times when heat stress is anticipated.



Strategic feeding times can also be helpful. Cattle use the rumen to digest forage by fermentation and a by-product of fermentation is heat.

"Switching your feeding schedule for the bulls to around dusk would allow for peak fermentation to be occurring during the night hours while the environmental temperatures are cooler," Gentry said.

A bull's workload can also impact his susceptibility to heat stress.

"If bulls are breeding over the late summer months, a high bull to cow ratio could increase the chances of causing heat stress on the bull, as he will be working to cover more cows during the breeding period," Bishop said.

### Stay on Top of Foot Soundness

Another common problem seen by producers is lameness. Whether caused by an infection or injury, having a lame bull can wreck a breeding season. Early detection and treatment is not only important for when the bull is actively breeding, but also will preserve soundness for upcoming breeding seasons, said Jason Zwilling DVM, JLZ Genetics, Chickasha, Oklahoma.

Beyond the obvious fact that lame bulls can't easily trail cows and mount for breeding, lameness can come with a longer-term fertility problem.

Cattle like to stand in ponds to combat the heat of the summer and fescue toxicosis. This can lead to foot rot problems and ultimately, fertility issues in breeding bulls because bulls that are laying down more often exhibit more heat stress related sperm abnormalities, according to Gentry.

"The testicles are meant to remain a couple degrees cooler than internal body temperature to allow for normal sperm development," Gentry said. "A bull who is laying down all day because his feet hurt is now insulating his testicles by laying on them."

Bottom line, address bulls who are lame early.

"It takes right around 60 days for sperm to complete development," Gentry said. "That means when I'm looking at semen on a slide, it is a reflection of the bull's health almost two

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Continued from previous page

months ago. So if your bull is significantly lame in May/June, fertility in August/September may be compromised.”

### Vaccination Protocols

While the sheer size of some bulls make them difficult to work, herd bull health is vitally important.

“For the most part, they are treated similarly to cows,” Bishop said.

Pre-breeding vaccines should be given twice annually to help prevent against the venereal disease vibriosis, as well as respiratory diseases that also impact reproductive health including infectious bovine rhinotracheitis (IBR) and bovine viral diarrhea (BVD), then finally, the bacterial disease leptospirosis, which is more commonly known for causing late term abortions. The aforementioned protocol along with strategic deworming, pinkeye prevention measures and anaplasmosis prevention, control, and treatment are key to a healthy cow herd, bulls included.

“Clinical cases of anaplasmosis are more common in older cattle, making it more important to watch for in aged bulls,” Bishop said. “I recommend that all herds have medicated mineral available to adult cattle during the spring, summer and

fall when flies are prevalent.”

Lastly, non-virgin bulls should always be tested for trichomoniasis before being introduced to a new herd. This should be done at the time of a breeding soundness examination (BSE) prior to sale.

### When in Doubt, BSE

Typically, a BSE is performed on bulls 30 to 60 days prior to the breeding season. This allows producers enough time for a retest and ample time to find a replacement bull, if needed.

“If a bull was used during the spring breeding season, pregnancy data can be a useful screening tool to know if there may have been an event during the breeding season that should be investigated,” Bishop said. “If you have any concerns related to bull health, scheduling a BSE sooner rather than later is recommended.”

Late summer is a good time to assess bull body condition and plan for fall breeding season. Herd bull health problems, both body function and reproductive function, take time to rectify. Planning ahead and addressing problems early can help provide a successful fall breeding season. 🐮

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## TRENDING NOW MLS Tubs: Your Multi-Tool Supplement(s)

By: Midcontinent Livestock Supplements

There is One Tool of Choice for Producers when it comes to receiving in ultra-high risk stressed Calves. For Tom Gallery of Gallery Ranches in Northeast Oklahoma, MLS #5 Stress tubs have become a vital part of his nutrition program when receiving and then starting these ultra-high-risk calves where he ultimately grazes them as stockers on native pastures. He talked to MLS Territory Manager, Logan Kennedy about why he has chosen to keep using the MLS #5 Stress tubs and some of the differences he has personally experienced since incorporating them into his operation and receiving program.

**MLS:** What got you started with MLS Tubs?

**Tom:** "A very respected industry friend of mine sent an MLS salesman to see me and I thought if this company and their stress product has his interest, then I really need to take a look at it."

**MLS:** What differences have you seen when using stress tubs to receive in your ultra-high risk cattle?

**Tom:** "It's nice to see who is at the tub or feed troughs. It makes it much easier to locate where the sick cattle are for myself and our crew, as we decide what calves to pull. If calves aren't at the feed troughs or the tubs then we know something is up and we need to look at that specific calf further. I also think it helps get them started and going on feed faster which ultimately gets them gaining and performing quickly. I know what's in the Stress tubs so if I know they are eating it, because of the product, I know they are getting what they need to perform."

**MLS:** Specifically with challenges to gut health and immunity, with these highly stressed calves have you seen a difference since using the tubs and your pull rates?

*Continued on next page*





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*Continued from previous page*

**Tom:** “We wrestle with such high-risk animals so of course we are still going to have our problems. Nothing is going to be a silver bullet that can eliminate that completely with the kind of animals we receive in. However, I think with using the tubs it is one more tool to help that animal stay out on pasture grazing and at the feed bunk gaining as opposed to having to be pulled, run through our chute and doctored.”

**MLS:** How do you feel the nutritional advantage of the MLS #5 Stress Tub is worth the investment?

**Tom:** “We have had a couple sets of cattle here more recently where we got along really well and didn’t have to doctor to the same level we normally expect. It was at that point that the stress tubs really caught my interest and attention with a much lower death loss and medicine cost. At that point I knew we needed to keep this product in our receiving program for future sets of calves coming in.”

**MLS:** What specific ways have you seen using MLS tubs help in your daily operations? Saving Time? Saving Labor?

**Tom:** “In the world we live in, cattle equal work. Using tubs is our effort to cut down on the pull rates, the doctoring and all of the other time-consuming factors associated with an increased workload on a daily basis. That is the king pin of our operation, it’s a small crew with just three of us so everything runs smoother if we can decrease our pulls. It puts our whole operation into a different gear.”

To learn more about the MLS #5 Stress Tub or check out the entire MLS line of supplemental solution(s) visit [mlstubs.com](http://mlstubs.com), send a message to [info@mlstubs.com](mailto:info@mlstubs.com) or reach out to your local MLS Territory Manager. 🤠



*Above: Logan Kennedy visits with producer Tom Gallery of Gallery Ranches.*





## TRENDING NOW

# Start Early to Market Your Calves for Better Health and Added Value

By Derrell S. Peel for Cattlemen's News

Mid-summer might seem too early to worry about marketing spring-born calves, but early planning will help improve the health of calves and add value at weaning this fall. One of the biggest sources of cost and frustration among stocker and feeder cattle buyers is the challenge of animal health. Bovine Respiratory Disease (BRD) is the most costly disease affecting the cattle industry. Despite better vaccines and more management focus on BRD treatment, the impacts continue. Average feedlot death loss is increasing over time, much of it attributed to BRD (Peel). There is a growing recognition that the key to improved animal health is prevention rather than treatment, and the key to that is improving the health and immunity of calves at the cow-calf level. Cow-calf producers respond to economic incentives to improve calf health and those incentives are growing. Moreover, additional incentives for further improvement in calf health are likely in coming years.

It begins with the basics: castration and dehorning. Castrating bulls early reduces performance losses and improves health. Bulls arriving at the feedlot are three times more likely to develop BRD. For 400-500 pound bulls, the market discount ranges from four to seven percent, and is sometimes as high as 12 percent. In today's market that is a loss in value of \$30 – 55/head or more. Horns have been removed from many cattle with polled genetics, but if present they need to be removed prior to marketing. A group of calves with horns will receive 2.5 to 3.0 percent less than comparable calves. That is roughly \$15-\$25/head. Castration and dehorning should be done well in advance of marketing, to allow plenty of time for calves to heal fully.

BRD occurs in feeder cattle because of poor health status and the stressors involved in handling, sorting, shipping and commingling cattle after marketing. Proper vaccinations of calves are important and should include two rounds of respiratory (IBR, PI3, BVDv and BRSV) and clostridial vaccines at a minimum. These can be given at branding and weaning;

pre-weaning and weaning; or weaning and post-weaning. Earlier studies have shown that vaccination alone increases calf value nearly 1.5 percent or \$10 - \$15/head for a 400-500 pound calf.

Weaning is particularly important to prepare calves for the rigors of handling, sorting, commingling and shipping. Low stress weaning prior to marketing is key, with plenty of time for calves to recover; build a stronger immunity; and learning to eat from bunks. Earlier studies found that weaning a minimum of 45 days increased calf value by 1.5 – 2.0 percent or roughly \$12 to \$18 per head. Observations in recent years have shown that many buyers are paying additional premiums for calves weaned 60 or more days. Weaning alone can add \$20/head or more over unweaned calves.

The value of vaccinations and weaning are additive and all of these practices are even more valuable when combined in a preconditioning program and especially as part of a certified preconditioning program. There are many preconditioning programs available, most of which are similar in the protocols required for participation. Certification by a third party adds additional value to assure buyers that proper management and production practices have been followed. This can be particularly valuable for smaller producers who may not have the reputation of large producers. Data from one such program, the Oklahoma Quality Beef Network (OQBN), shows that premiums for 400-500 pound steers have averaged \$20.19/cwt. the past five years over non-preconditioned calves, adding \$80 - \$100/head to calf value. For similar weight heifers, the premiums have averaged \$12.91/cwt. Premiums decrease for heavier weight cattle as bigger cattle typically are older and represent less health risk to buyers. Net returns for preconditioning depends on the size of premiums; the additional weight of preconditioned calves over newly weaned calves; and the costs for feed, health inputs and labor/management during preconditioning. Producers should evaluate preconditioning opportunities for their individual circumstances.

Finally, preconditioned calves realize higher value when sold in conjunction with other preconditioned calves in sales that are advertised and attract buyers that value preconditioned calves. Larger volumes of preconditioned calves will attract more buyers who can fill orders and trucks with healthier calves. 🤠

*Peel, Derrell S. "Effect of Market Forces on BRD." Vet Clin Food Anim 36 (2020): 497-508.*

*Derrell S. Peel is a Livestock Marketing Specialist for the Oklahoma State University Extension.*



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## TRENDING NOW

# Plant Cool-Season Grasses in September, Says MU Extension Forage Agronomist

For Immediate Release from the University of Missouri Extension

COLUMBIA, Mo. – “Plant cool-season grasses in September,” says Craig Roberts, University of Missouri Extension forage agronomist. “The earlier the better.”

Early planting lets seedlings put down roots to start growth before frost. New plantings must store energy for spring growth.

In northern Missouri that means putting seed in the ground the first week of September. Ozark plantings can wait until mid-September. A late frost would help all.

Orchardgrass and tall fescue are favored in Missouri. Other options are timothy, bromegrass and perennial ryegrass. Fescue has staying power under Missouri grazing conditions.

Missouri isn’t easy on forages. Weather can be too cold, too hot and too dry. Over time, most grass needs reseeding, Roberts says. Fall seeding lets them get started for grazing next year. Then they must be used gently to start.

Missouri’s most used cool-season grass is K-31 tall fescue. Hardiness makes it popular. But K-31 brings many harmful side effects. Its hardiness comes from an endophyte fungus that protects the plant from pests—and grazing. That toxic fungus hurts livestock gains and reproduction.

“The absolute best cool-season grass is one of the novel-endophyte fescues,” Roberts says. In new grasses, plant breeders have replaced toxic endophyte with nontoxic novel endophytes.

Novel-endophyte fescues are hardier than endophyte-free fescue. Livestock thrive on them. Novel fescues need more care because cattle graze them into the ground if unmanaged.

All pastures benefit from management-intensive grazing (MIG) taught in Missouri grazing schools. Attending a grazing

school allows farmers to gain cost-share dollars from local soil and water conservation districts. Information on grazing schools comes from local MU Extension centers or NRCS offices.

Grass seeding is best done with no-till drill. This takes careful control for shallow seeding. “Plant no more than a quarter-inch deep,” Roberts says. “If planted too deep, seedlings may not emerge.”

A drill set incorrectly may not cut through thatch for seed to make good soil contact.

In a thinning pasture grown for many years, thatch may be a major concern. Some soil preparation may be needed. Concerns about drill-settings remain on prepared ground.

Roberts says to calibrate the drill for 15 pounds of live seed per acre.

After starting to drill, stop and check results before going too far. Dig up seed to check depth. Make corrections as needed.

“With shallow planting, some seed will be on top of the ground. That’s to be expected. Don’t wait until the whole field is planted to discover incorrect depth settings,” Roberts warns.

The Alliance for Grassland Renewal was formed in Missouri to promote novel-endophyte fescues. Now it holds pasture renovation schools across the Fescue Belt.

The group is made up of agronomists from universities, industry and government, as well as farmers. The website lists companies with approved seed varieties. Go to [www.grasslandrenewal.org](http://www.grasslandrenewal.org).



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## MANAGEMENT MATTERS

# Low-Input Forage-Based Heifer Development

By Emily Smith and Jordan Thomas for Cattlemen's News

Postweaning nutrition has substantial impacts on the timing of puberty attainment and fertility in the first breeding season for replacement heifers. In the past, the crucial role that nutrition plays on the reproductive success of these animals has driven development strategies, such as feeding heifers to a target weight of 65% of mature body weight. Achieving these goals often means raising heifers on feed in dry-lot systems or relying heavily on supplemental feed in pasture settings. With feed expenses accounting for 60-70% of developmental inputs, supplementation may greatly in-

crease the cost of development and reduce profit. Recently, more attention has been given to identifying heifer feeding strategies that rely on existing forage to greatly reduce or eliminate the need for supplementation in the post-weaning period. Research on these development programs is currently being conducted at the University of Missouri Southwest Research Center.

In the summer of 2020, I conducted the first round of a low-input, forage-based heifer development project under the guidance of

Dr. Jordan Thomas and Dr. Eric Bailey. Fifty fall-born heifer calves at the research center were weaned in early June and turned out on Kentucky 31 endophyte-infected fescue pastures in either a continuous, set-stock grazing program or a multi-paddock rotational grazing program. No additional supplementation was provided throughout the development period. Shade and water were available, and the stocking density permitted ample forage availability to all animals for the duration of the approximately 175-day grazing season. In November, pre-breeding evaluations were conducted, and heifers were put on the 14-day CIDR-PG estrus synchronization protocol to set them up for artificial insemination in mid-December. All heifers were bred with AI before bulls were turned out for a 45-day breeding season.

Unsurprisingly, weight gains for non-supplemented heifers on K31 fescue pastures were unimpressive. By breeding time, heifers had reached an average weight of 670 lbs at an average daily gain of 1.05 lbs/day over the 175-day period. This would correspond to a rather low target weight of 50-55% of mature body weight, assuming a mature cow weight of approximately 1300 lbs. Despite lower rates of gain and smaller size at breeding compared to previous years, pregnancy rate to AI was 67%. Additionally, 82% of the heifers conceived within a 45-day breeding season.

Does this mean you should stop supplementing your heifers? Not necessarily! Developing heifers to lower target weights has been evaluated as a profitable strategy in other parts of the country, but more research is needed for Missouri systems. Research from other states has generally used heifers from early-maturing breeds and crosses and involved breeding programs in which heifers move to high-quality pastures and undergo compensatory gain during a summer breeding season. We can't assume that those results will translate perfectly to Missouri systems.

For the tall fescue forage base common to Missouri, fall calving systems have some significant advantages. This model could allow for post-weaning development of fall-born heifers to occur during summer months with little to no need for expensive supplemental feeding. Although weight gains could be poor during the summer

## REAL ESTATE & ESTATE AUCTION

### FRIDAY SEPT. 10 & SATURDAY SEPT. 11, 2021

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100 +/- ACRE FARM IN LAWRENCE COUNTY BEING SOLD IN A COMBINATION OF TRACTS OR IT'S ENTIRETY!

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OWNERS: KENNETH & LORENE MACKEY

Tract 1: 7 +/- acres including 1500 +/- sq. ft. 2 story farmhouse w/3 beds & 2 baths, great pipe working pens w/alley & head chute, multiple barns & sheds, 30'x48' detached garage 12'x15' she shed w/12'x15' covered patio, home has steel siding, 2 wells

Tract 2: 5 +/- acres of open pasture and some trees, corner lot

Tract 3: 11.5 +/- acres of mainly timber, includes pond, great building site!

Tract 4: 9.5 +/- acres of pasture & timber, includes pond, great building site!

Tract 5: 41 +/- acres of mainly open pasture, flat ground, includes pond and would be great building site w/some land

Tract 6: 13 +/- acres open pasture, flat ground, great building site!

Tract 7: 13 +/- acres open pasture, flat ground, great building site!

### Real Estate Auction:

Being sold in a combination of tracts or its entirety!

**Friday, Sept. 10th at 6:30 PM** being held at:  
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*In case of postponement due to unforeseen circumstances auction will be held the following Friday (Real Estate) and Saturday (Personal Property). See **essickauction.com** for details and to stay up to date!*

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*Continued from previous page*

months, the “second spring” boost of forage growth in the fall could allow heifers to achieve compensatory gain and catch up on growth before the start of the breeding season.

What about during and after the breeding season? Stockpiling fescue for winter grazing is a great way to eliminate unnecessary feed costs. Stockpiled fescue maintains excellent forage quality through much of the winter, which means reduced dependence on hay and supplemental protein/energy. Heifers can graze stockpiled forage in the pre-breeding period of late fall. Following a December breeding season, bred heifers can be sustained on stockpile through much of the first trimester of gestation. Heifer growth may stagnate during this period, but supplemental feeding is likely only necessary with severe declines in forage quality or winter weather events. The spring flush seen in April and May should allow compensatory gains to be achieved in the second trimester of pregnancy, though appropriate grazing management through the next summer would be essential to ensure heifers calve in adequate body condition. From a whole system perspective, first calf-heifers could enter September calving season at the appropriate body condition without ever adding a dime of cost due to supplementation! Is this possible on Kentucky 31 endophyte-infected tall fescue? More importantly, is it profitable? Those are the kinds of questions we want to answer for Missouri producers.

The most profitable strategies for feeding replacements are those that use available resources—especially perennial forages—to meet the needs of the herd in the most efficient way possible. In some systems, excellent management of existing forage may allow heifers to be developed without ever spending a penny on additional feed. Because these heifers need to stay in the herd as cows, we will be tracking the long-term productivity of cows in these lower-input systems moving forward. The reproductive efficiency of the whole herd starts with the reproductive success of its replacements, so both productivity and cost control are critical for the long-term profitability of Missouri cattle.

For more information about the research being conducted at Southwest Research Center or low-input heifer development options, contact Dr. Jordan Thomas at the University of Missouri ([thomasjor@missouri.edu](mailto:thomasjor@missouri.edu) or 573-882-1804).

*Emily Smith is a DVM/MS candidate at the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine.*

*Jordan Thomas, a Ph.D., is the state cow-calf Extension specialist with the University of Missouri. Contact him at 573-882-1804 or [thomasjor@missouri.edu](mailto:thomasjor@missouri.edu).*

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## INDUSTRY NEWS

# A Missouri Celebration

By Chris Chinn, Director of the Missouri Department of Agriculture

Each year, August is a special time of celebration for thousands of Missourians. People come from all corners of the state to Sedalia for the Missouri State Fair, the state's agriculture showcase. For those of us in the industry, August IS the Fair and has become as much a part of our calendar as the first day of school or Christmas Day.

This year, the month of August means even more, as the Show Me State celebrates its Bicentennial. On August 10, Missouri will officially turn 200 years old. Celebrations are planned all across Missouri that day and the days leading up to it. The state capitol grounds in Jefferson City will play host to a full day of activities on this "Statehood Day." Communities are holding ice cream socials and special readings at their local libraries. Many locations are bringing the Bicentennial celebration to their annual festival.

The agriculture community will celebrate throughout the entire 12 days of the Fair, with this year's theme "Our Missouri Celebration." State Fair staff and Bicentennial Commission members have worked with a variety of groups and building superintendents to recognize Missouri's special birthday.

Visit the Women's Building, the unofficial "home" of Bicentennial activities on the Fairgrounds. At this historic building, you will find a beautiful quilt with one block representing each of Missouri's 114 counties. Another feature is the Bicentennial Time Capsule. Hosted by the State Historical Society of Missouri, the Time Capsule will hold items representing our past and our present, with words of wisdom for those



Missourians who open it on Missouri's 225th birthday in 2046.

The 4-H Building boasts its own new quilt, featuring blocks made by 4-H members from across the state. The blocks celebrate the rich agriculture and 4-H history in those home areas.

Over in the Agriculture Building, our Missouri Grown team is celebrating the history of Missouri agriculture at their AgVenture area. Each year, AgVenture teaches Missouri's youth about agriculture and how our food is grown. This year, fairgoers will see how Missouri's agriculture has changed. We will show you photographs of the Kansas City Stockyards in its prime and the Bootheel region when it was still under water. You can see a miniature history of farm equipment and watch videos showing the diversity of agriculture, the No. 1 economic driver in our state.

The Missouri State Fair is the culmination of months, even years, of work. It could mean bringing a prized heifer or ewe lamb, raised on your farm, to the livestock show or a pumpkin weighing hundreds of pounds that you have pampered all summer and just might be the largest one there. For so

many 4-H and FFA students, the Missouri State Fair means a cake project or perhaps a hay trailer built from scratch at the high school FFA department.

The State Fair means seeing friends we haven't seen since last year, or 2019 for many of us. Catching up with friends is always one of my favorite parts of the Fair. It always means funnel cakes, ice cream and delicious food on a stick. It means visiting the Agriculture Building to see the winners of the ham and bacon contests, and walking the cattle barns.

But it also means celebrating the hard work and dedication of hundreds of Missouri's next generation of farmers and ranchers. I challenge you to go watch a class in the Swine Pavilion. Go see a first-time exhibitor walk her market lamb into the ring. Find a project in the 4-H Building entered by a student from your county.

Our Missouri Celebration indeed! 🤠

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## MANAGEMENT MATTERS

### 'An Ounce of Prevention'

*Pro tips for fall pasture maintenance*

By Samantha Athey for Cattlemen's News

Most of us have heard the saying, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," and a bit of effort in the coming weeks can make a drastic difference in your pastures in the spring.

Dave Himmerich, owner of Himmerich Crop Care, LLC and a specialist in pasture and forage maintenance, said the top weed concerns for grain farmers are waterhemp and Palmer amaranth due to glyphosate resistance. For cattle producers, he said the biggest threat is poison hemlock.

"We seem to live in the weed capital of the country in southwest Missouri," Himmerich explained. "The reason I picked this as my worst is grass will still grow around thistle or ragweed — nothing will grow under hemlock. Plus, it is toxic to cattle."

Delmar Hunke, owner of Hunke Spray Service based in Stark City, Missouri, said the most common weed problems he's seeing in the region are pigweed, bull nettle, ragweed, poison hemlock and thistles.

"If you have thistles or blackberries, the timing to spray would be September to frost," Hunke said.

He recommended spraying sericea lespedeza from July until frost and brush from July through September.

Himmerich recommended spraying for thistles in October and November, too.

"An October treatment will help control poison hemlock and thistles next year," Hunke added.

"For your woody and brushy-type weeds — blackberry briars, tree saplings, etc. — late summer has been working really well," Himmerich said. "August and September are good months for this, providing we are not too hot or dry."

Essentially, producers should be considering what they can do this fall for weed control to promote healthier, cleaner pastures in the coming spring. For those worried about spraying pastures to be grazed this fall, both professionals said not to worry.

"Most pasture herbicides (Grazon products) are grazing safe," Himmerich said. "The main concern would be not to over-graze prior to spraying. You want a little new growth for the chemical to get on."

Hunke said none of the commonly used herbicides require you to move or rotationally graze cattle. However, producers should still pay attention to herbicide labels and watch for grazing restrictions as herbicide applications can make some poisonous plants more palatable, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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\*Figures based on IRI, Refrigerated/Frozen Meat Substitutes, 52 weeks ending 6/16/18; IRI/FreshMeat, Total US MULO ending 5/18/18; Categorized by VMMeat System.

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For those interested in non-chemical weed control, University of Missouri (MU) graduate students have been testing electrocution of weeds using a machine called The Weed Zapper. This machine has a copper boom attached to a tractor, and electricity is sourced from a PTO-driven 110,000-watt generator that hits the weeds with 15,000 volts of electricity.

Currently, the research is focused on row crops but shows promise for control of giant ragweed, common ragweed, marehail and waterhemp, according to a press release by MU Extension.

Himmerich recommended using the MU's Weed ID app and speaking to your county Natural Resource Conservation Service or Soil and Water Conservation District for additional help with pasture and forage maintenance. Hunke also suggested contacting the local Extension office or your local applicator or chemical dealer to learn more about noxious weeds and treatments. 🐮



## INDUSTRY NEWS

# Higher Feeder Cattle Prices a Possibility this Fall?

By Scott Brown for Cattlemen's News

With all the issues the cattle industry faces today, it is extremely difficult to predict the future movement of Missouri feeder cattle prices. However, discussing the driving factors in the market can help producers stay focused on important developments as they unfold. This will lead to more informed marketing decisions regarding current feeder cattle supplies for the remainder of 2021.

It is good to begin with a frame of reference of where feeder cattle prices have been over the past several years before looking ahead. USDA's reported weighted average Missouri auctions 600 to 650 pound #1 medium and large frame steers came in at \$168.53 per cwt for the week of July 16th, 2021. This series started the year at \$146.44 per cwt and has generally moved higher each week of 2021. Current price levels are also higher than the \$144.28 per cwt from the week of November 6th, 2020. However, current prices remain well below the \$258.04 per cwt level from the first week of November 2014. Those hoping this fall's feeder steer prices will rival the 2014 levels will almost certainly be disappointed, but for those hoping feeder steer prices can move higher than today's levels there are certainly factors that provide optimism.

The November feeder cattle futures contract is currently trading nearly \$15 above the current Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME) cash price suggesting higher prices ahead. Producers that would be greatly harmed by any downside price risk may want to take advantage of these prices either through the use of futures or options contracts or USDA's Livestock Risk Protection (LRP) insurance.

Cattle and feed supplies coupled with domestic and international beef demand are the key factors that will drive this fall's feeder cattle prices. Although the debate around fed cattle pricing continues to focus on changes in how negotiated fed cattle prices are discovered, this outlook for feeder cattle prices

assumes no major changes occur that would dramatically affect feeder cattle prices.

New crop corn futures contracts are more than \$1 per bushel off their contract highs and that has provided support for higher feeder cattle prices. Although this year's corn crop is not in the bin yet, recent weather and growing conditions have been causing many experts to increase their corn yield estimate. USDA estimates that 65% of the corn acreage is in good or excellent condition, which is nearly on pace with last year's reading. The Dakotas and Minnesota are exceptions as dry weather has hampered corn condition in these states. If corn yield ends up exceeding USDA's current 179.5 bushel per acre estimate, it could keep pressure on new crop corn prices, which could help feeder cattle prices to continue to increase from current levels into the fall.

U.S. beef exports have seen excellent growth in 2021. USDA currently estimates year over year growth of nearly 500 million pounds in beef exports. This growth has helped move beef prices higher, which has in turn supported cattle prices. China remains the critical country for the growth experienced thus far. This positive demand news seems poised to help feeder cattle prices this fall.

Domestic demand for beef has remained strong this year. When food service reopened as COVID-19 slowed and consumers were ready to get out, beef demand received a boost. Strong personal income growth of more than 6% in 2021 has also been supportive to domestic demand. The only potential cloud on the short run horizon is the recent increase in COVID-19 cases. If this trend continues into the fall, domestic demand could weaken. Longer term, most project personal income growth to slow, which often leads to slower beef demand growth.

July 1 cattle supplies tightened more than expected according to the July Cattle Market Report. Calves under 500 pounds were down 1.4% relative to a year ago. Fewer feeder cattle this fall could provide a significant lift to feeder cattle prices. To keep this report in perspective, the supply of calves less than 500 pounds of 27,400 head is still well above the 25,800 head reported in 2014. The direction of calf supplies is positive for prices, but the level of calf supplies remains strong enough that 2014 prices will not be repeated this fall.

Taking all the factors into account, Missouri feeder cattle prices could increase another \$10 to \$15 per cwt between now and November. Of course, there is no guarantee in this projection as unexpected events could derail that increase. While this outlook focuses on feeder cattle prices this fall, it looks like 2022 could be another year of increasing prices as the drought in the west and northern plains continues to drive contraction in cattle inventory. 🐮

*Dr. Scott Brown is an assistant extension professor in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics at the University of Missouri.*



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## MANAGEMENT MATTERS

# Preparing for Fall/Winter Pasture

By Mark Green for Cattlemen's News

Now is a good time to start thinking about your fall pasture. What are the fertility levels of your pastures? How are you going to use the pasture? Do you want to save any for winter pasture?

On the fertility side, it's always best to start with an up-to-date soil test. Without a test, you are just guessing what you need. You might be way over applying fertilizer, which is kind of like throwing your billfold out there on the pasture and leaving it. Or you might be way under applying and never getting the nutrients to your pasture that is needed. University of Missouri (MU) Extension has a great guide on how to pull proper soil test. Extension offices and local Soil & Water Conservation District offices usually have soil probes or augers you can borrow or rent to do the job. I use an old 1" auger bit in my cordless drill. It makes the job a lot easier.

### A few notes:

- Take multiple samples of your pasture. The more, the better. You are trying to get a sample that tells the most of that whole pasture.
- When you take your sample into your local Extension office, tell them what it is for, so they can give it the proper crop code (fescue pasture, overseeding legumes, new establishment).

Next, when do you apply your fertilizer and lime? An old saying I've heard for years and totally agree with, "Best time to apply lime is today". You can apply lime any time of the year. One bonus to applying this time of year is that the ground is solid, so the lime truck can get around your pastures without

many problems. Also, you get the best return for the buck on lime. If your soil pH is low, it will tie up the other nutrients, and they won't be available to the plant. Lime takes a long period of time to break down and affect the pH of the soil. So, once you get your soil tests back, I would get that lime applied as soon as possible.

Your fertilizer, nitrogen-phosphorus-potassium, application will depend on what your plans are. Application of phosphorus and potassium in the fall is a very good practice. It will strengthen the plants for winter and spring. I also believe it is a good option for nitrogen. Many times I have asked why we apply nitrogen fertilizer to pastures in the spring. In our pastures, the spring growth is so fast we can't keep up with it anyway. If we hit it with nitrogen, we just make that problem worse. So, a fall application makes more sense. This can give you some more fall pasture and also set up the stage for winter stockpile pasture for your fescue.

Fall pasture is probably one of the easiest to graze in a good rotation. The growth period is fairly even and a good rest/rotation can work well. To extend that fall pasture and provide good quality feed you should try to get around a 30-day recovery period on any paddock.

This is also an ideal time to set up your winter stockpile fescue pasture. Stockpiling the fall growth of fescue can make some excellent winter pasture. The recipe for winter stockpile includes stockpiling growth, fertility, use (strip-grazing).

### Stockpiling:

Remove spring growth by grazing or haying, leave 3-6 inch height by August 1-15. Remove livestock from fields to be stockpiled between August 1 and August 15. Keep livestock off area for at least 90 days to allow stockpile growth.

### Fertility for Stockpile:

Apply 30 to 60 lbs. per acre of actual nitrogen between August 1 and August 31. Applications of lime, phosphorus and potassium should be made according to current soil test. Both rate and timing of nitrogen fertilizer have an important impact on yield.

### Strip-Grazing Stockpile:

Wait to graze the stockpiled fescue forage until late fall or winter (or when you need it). Try to allow at least 90 days after starting the stockpile growth before grazing.

**MOST IMPORTANT** – strip graze your stockpile using portable electric fence (polywire).

*Continued on next page*

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*Continued from previous page*

Feed your livestock a 1–3 day strip at a time to reduce waste. Do not just turn them into the whole field; this will waste as much as 70% of the feed if you're not careful.

Start your 1st strip in the area closest to a freeze-proof water source and progress through the field by moving the temporary fencing forward every one to three days. A minimum grazing height of two (2) inches will be maintained. If possible, stockpile one acre per cow. Under normal conditions this should give a 75–90 day feed supply if grazed properly.

Some producers are able to get into March on stockpile fescue pasture without feeding much, if any, hay. Quality of the stockpile fescue will hold to adequate levels for a beef cow.

Hopefully, you've been able to keep rotating your pastures through the summer to give them some good recovery periods. Most of us have been blessed with good rainfall this summer, so those rested paddocks have some good forage. If we have those recovery periods in our grazing system, then those plants are stronger and healthier. If we end up having

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a dry August/September, those pastures will be in a lot better shape to handle that dry time and still provide feed for your livestock. They will also respond better this fall to fertility and fall growth.

Overall, keeping the fertility up and rotating pastures to provide some good recovery periods for regrowth during the entire grazing season will always provide you better feed for your livestock. This will also set you up to be able to stockpile a portion of your pasture for winter feed. Your livestock can always harvest the forage cheaper, higher quality and more efficiently than you can.

If you have questions on how to pull a soil test or how to read it once you get the test back, I would strongly recommend contacting your local MU Extension Office and talking to the Extension Agronomist in your area. They have a wealth of knowledge in this area. 🤠

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