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News

December 2020



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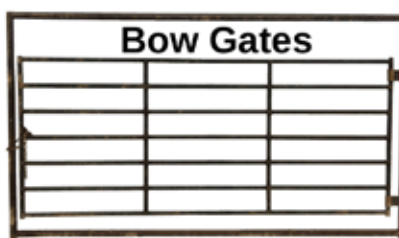
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Wishing You many Blessings
this Christmas and Always,

Matt Bales



ON THE BLOCK

with Jackie Moore

2020 - it's about over and I made it - that's what it makes you feel like! I've always said it's the things in life that happen to you that make the best stories when you're old and sittin' on the porch and tellin' the grandkids about it. Well, this year has left us with alot of stories to tell (I could have done without most of them!). The thing about it is my family is well and healthy, and we have to be thankful for that!

The cattle market has been everything from the good, the bad, to the ugly! It's been a little stressful for sure trying to decide which direction to go. It has wore on me along with other people and basically anyone that is in business.

As we start 2021, it appears we will have a new President and who knows what that will bring. Everyone always wants my opinion and I wish I could come up with one, but there is always something new comin' around the corner so how would you know?

If you look back, it got about as bad as it could get. Then, we started into fall and it has been pretty good over the last six weeks. We've sold a lot of cattle during that time. We had a yearling special where we sold 11,000 head, and those sold really good. We turned around and had 9,400 this past Monday, and Thursday, Dec. 3rd, we had 7,200 Value-Added calves. All of those sold really good as well. From a standpoint of whether they made money or not, they made a lot of money compared to trying to sell them unweaned two months ago because the market came along way since then. If you look at the grain prices where they came from, we saw corn go from \$3.20 to \$4.25 and the cost of gain on these cattle are going to get pretty high from \$.85 to \$1.00 something depending on the winter. The people that are buying those cattle are actually buying them too high if you put the pencil to them. From that standpoint, we have a pretty good market. I would like to think that 2021 will have a lot

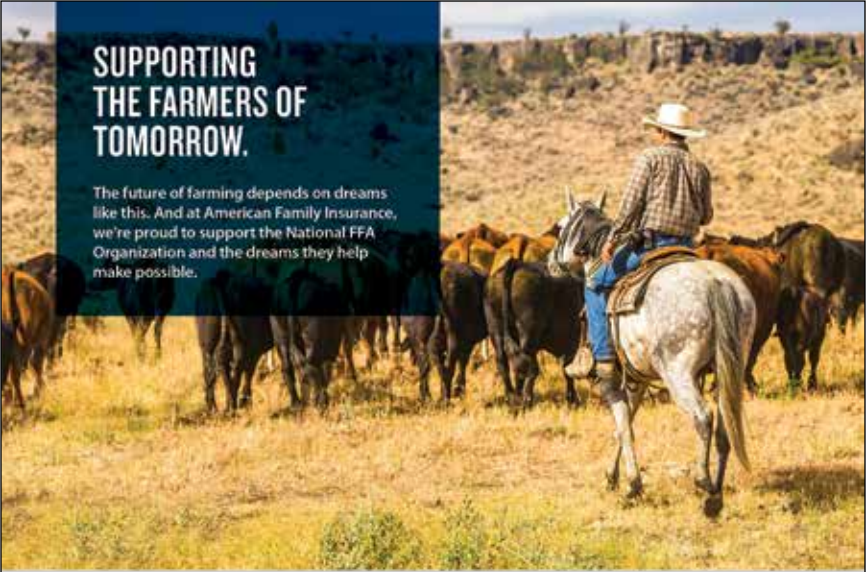
of changes compared to 2020 because if you're like me, I sure don't need or want another year like that on the business side of my life.

As we roll along, we placed fewer cattle on feed. The carcass weights have come down over the last 2 or 3 weeks and typically in the spring we see the fat cattle segment of the market be the best that it's going to be all year. Hopefully, we see grain prices come back down which will help support these calves and the feeder cattle. If you look at the light calf market and the cattle that can go to wheat, which we finally grew a little of that, the guys are thinking we are going to have spring grass right here in the middle of winter just like we always do. A guy once told me, "the thought of having something is usually better than getting it." Well, that's kind of like grass from a cattlemen's point of view because we always think grass is right around the corner and I guess it is, about four months from now! We are going to buy those lighter cattle and they will continue to sell good all the way through the spring months. That's just the way the market reacts. The feeder cattle end of it will be a little tougher. Most cattle won't get fat now until sometime in June, July or August which is typically the worst time of the year to have a fat one. Those cattle never make any money for those people feeding them. That market will be up and down and all over the place, and will be a struggle. One thing that is pressuring this market is there is no room. We have a record number of cattle on feed in the feedyards and these yearlings have been a little cheaper over the last few days, not so much at Joplin, but in other places and it's just because there is no place to put them. Every growyard and every feedyard is full. You just can't find anywhere to unload one. We've been selling a lot of cattle and hopefully over the holidays we can get it cleaned up so when we kick back off January 4th and Thursday, January 7th, this thing will be good. It's going to be interesting that's all I can say about it.

I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

God Bless you and your family!

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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Head: 43
Delivery date: 06/01/2018
Born 02/25/2017 to 05/20/2017
USDA Process Verification
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Breed Composition: Angus: 50.29% Charolais: 40% Simmental:
9.71%
Treatment History
Vaccination 05/24/2017 Nasalgen, Virashield 6xL5 HB,
Vision 8, Pinkeye Shield XT4
Vaccination 10/08/2017 Vision 8, Virashield 6xL5 HB,
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Feeding the Foundation

Utilizing an important technology component

By Justin Sexten for Cattlemen's News



Technology can be applied to beef operations in a variety of ways. Most assume technology is associated with electronics, sensors and mobile devices. Others consider technology any deviation from the mantra of “This is how we always do it.” There is plenty of middle ground between learning from the past and applying some modern twists on current practice.

This time of year we turn to a relatively simple approach to improving nearly all aspects of beef production using an age-old technology – feed. The simple solutions are often the best, and a well thought out winter feeding or strategic supplement model provides a good example.

Some of the greatest benefits to feeding the cow herd have little to do with nutrition. Even the smallest amount of feed simplifies gathering, moving, and checking cows with the rattle of the bucket or sound of the feed truck.

Limiting the search area of the calving pasture to the feeding area provides valuable time in the short days of winter. Even if your feeding program provides suboptimal nutrition, the animal handling benefits offer an instant partial payback.

When you consider the nutritional needs of the beef cow the challenge to deliver feed is often cited as an execution barrier. There are countless self-feeding solutions to the challenge of transporting supplements to the cow herd daily. For many the cost of this convenience is offset by the simplicity and labor savings.

Consider feeding quality forage and poor quality hay on alternate days to provide supplemental nutrition using forage rather than feed. In a year with rising commodity prices and limited availability, strategically feeding forages may offer the best option to deliver supplemental nutrients using existing infrastructure and equipment.

A forage test to quantify hay quality is easily the most underused technology in beef operations. Knowing how poor your poor quality hay is allows adequate supplementation without wasting resources.

Forage testing and chute scales are good example cases where spending more may actually save money. Consider the example of guessing the weight of the animal you are about to treat for pneumonia. Without scales, on average you underdose 50% of the time, spending enough to almost treat the animal. When the variable of interest is binary (ill verses cured or open verses pregnant) almost, but not enough, is an expensive error.

Forage testing provides the baseline to develop supplement programs around so when cold, wet weather rolls in you are not realizing the hay may not have been as good as you thought. Nutrition is one area where the costs are short term but the production impacts are long term, and getting close to feeding the cows enough is another expensive error.

We know cow nutrition is a key influence on her reproduction, and correcting nutrient deficiencies is difficult in the short term. This is one reason adequate nutrition should be a consideration year-round.

The greatest reason to ensure adequate feed and forage resources is the cow’s nutrition affects multiple aspects of the calf’s life. Early in gestation it is calf muscle and organ development setting the stage for carcass merit in steers and reproductive success of prospective replacements. The last trimester, when energy demands are greatest and environmental conditions are often the worst, the cow needs to consume enough nutrients to gain condition, grow 75% of the calf mass and begin colostrum synthesis.

The technology available to improve the odds of success are simple, and delivery options are flexible, accommodating varied operational needs. The beef producer is familiar with long production cycles. The key to success at weaning or harvest started at turnout, when genetic decisions “settled” the need to provide adequate nutrition to execute on this genetic potential that had already begun.

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

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For those making trips to check cows on occasion, consider alternate day or three times a week supplementation strategies. The beef cow is equipped with rumen technology to recycle protein and “distribute” supplement nutrition over two or three days between your trips to the pasture. This allows less frequent travel while still delivering adequate nutrition.

For some smaller groups of cows the greater supplement amount from alternate day feeding provides greater feeding opportunities for young or timid cows. These cows are often the greatest risk for falling out due to poor nutrition, so incremental feeding may be a good management option to minimize having to feed separate groups of young and mature cows.


Alternate day feeding is often overlooked when considering stored forages. Producers tend to plan forage feeding relative to the stage of production keeping the best forages for peak demand following calving. In most cases the key time to provide quality forage is before calving. Adequate nutrition at calving is the key metric to reproductive success.



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Energy Supplementation

Make sure you have adequate nutrition to help your cows through the winter

By Lisa Henderson for Cattlemen's News



Next year's success for your cow-calf operation is determined in large part by where your cowherd stands in the weeks headed into winter. Are your cows in good physical shape before snow flies, and are they ready for the challenges they'll encounter before spring green-up?

Cows with a low energy reserve or poor body condition prior to winter will have problems. To help ranchers understand the essential energy requirements of cattle and how to provide energy supplementation in a strategic manner, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and the National Corn Growers Association produced a webinar featuring University of Georgia Extension Beef Specialist Lawton Stewart and Oklahoma State University Extension Beef Specialist Dave Lalman.

"Feeding cows in the winter can be very frustrating," Stewart said. "When cows are not in adequate body condition prior to winter, it's hard to dig out of a bad situation."

It's important to understand your herd, Stewart said, and how the cows require and utilize energy. Further, what stage of production they are in determines the requirements that will be needing when fed. He said most producers rely on forage systems for the majority of their cows' feed, but most cows also require a supplemental feed to meet those nutritional requirements.

Stewart described energy as the "capacity to do work." Cows need energy for maintenance, growth and lactation. The amount of energy needed can change based on the type of cattle and what is expected of them. He said producers should ask themselves, "what are we trying to do?"

"The biggest factor affecting cowherd profitability is reproductive efficiency – a cow having a calf on the ground every 365 days," he said. "That reproductive efficiency is highly dependent on energy, nutrition and protein. The majority of energy in the ration or their diet comes from cellulose and forage, but we have the opportunity to use other sources such as corn."

One of the best tools producers have to properly manage and ensure their herd's nutritional needs are met is body condition scoring (BCS), a simple assessment of the energy status or condition of the cows. BCS scores can identify if a cow is in adequate condition for the demands of winter maintenance, or additional challenges

such as calving and lactation. If cows do not have adequate BCS, then supplementation is required.

"The biggest return on investment you're going to make is testing your forages," Stewart said. "That is a building block for putting together a supplementation strategy."

Stewart cited various research projects to drive home the point that it's not just the open cows that hurt your bottom line, but also the cows that slip a cycle and don't breed back as soon as you want. Because those calves will be born three weeks or more later, their weaning weights will also be lower and their dollars returned per cow will be less.

In his example, Stewart used 40 days less growth for the calves, meaning the calves would return \$120 less per calf on sale day. However, feeding those cows a supplement of corn and soybean meal could help them rebreed on time.

"It would cost \$23 to feed that single cow for 60 days in order to maintain her body condition," Stewart said. "So, that \$23 investment in that one cow returned \$120, which is a pretty significant return on investment."

Lalman focused much of his presentation on fat supplementation because he said many producers have questions about that practice. He said in general, cows on a forage-based diet should get no more than 3% of the animal's total diet with supplemental fat. Most forage-based diets contain about 2.5% fat, so another 3% would put the ration near the maximum 6% of total dietary fat for cows.

"Beyond 6% fat, forage digestibility in particular begins to decline," Lalman said. "So, feeding too much fat can be counter-productive."

Regarding fat and BCS, Lalman said, "If your cows are in good body condition, there is very little evidence that additional fat supplementation is beneficial for reproductive rates."

Producers with already high weaning rates and pregnancy rates are not likely to see advantages from fat supplementation, Lalman said, noting that fat is typically an expensive supplement.

"It's not a silver bullet to fix a huge reproductive problem," he said.

Lalman also cited research projects that suggest it is difficult to add BCS to cows, especially those that are lactating.

"It's very difficult to get cows to gain weight, particularly those that are lactating and especially if they are high-milk yield animals, because a substantial amount of the additional energy goes to milk production, not just to cow weight gain."

Lalman encouraged producers to review the online cow nutrition calculator made available by Oklahoma State. The tool, called OSU Cowculator, is an Excel-based spreadsheet program designed to assist cattlemen in making informed decisions associated with beef cattle nutrition.

The Cowculator can be found at cowculator@beef.oklstate.edu.

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TRENDING NOW

Health Advances Help Cattle Perform Up to Genetic Potential

By Merck Animal Health

What drives Steve Tegarden and his fellow Merck Animal Health representatives serving cattle producers in the Joplin Regional Stockyards area is simple. “Working with our customers, we want everything we do to help their cattle perform to their genetic potential.”

This often means preventing or removing barriers that keep cattle from performing their best. “This might be advancing a vaccination program to help prevent BRD or helping a producer better manage parasites,” Tegarden explains. “Merck Animal Health works to bring innovations that improve cattle health and well being, which results in better performance. When cattle perform at their best, we can optimize our pasture resources and help deliver a safe, sustainable food supply.”

One example is conducting Fecal Egg Count Reduction Tests (FECRT) to determine the worm levels in cattle and dewormer effectiveness. “Internal parasites can decrease feed intake, lower average daily gains and cause impaired immune responses to viral vaccines and diseases,” says Tegarden. “An effective deworming is critical to ensure our viral vaccines work like they should. FECRT’s will show if we’ve gotten the 90 percent parasite reduction¹ that’s necessary for optimal cattle health and vaccine performance.”

Tegarden also makes sure his veterinarians and producers are first to know about new vaccines or expanded labels. Using the latest vaccines can result in improved cattle health and reduce the amount of treatment antibiotics needed. Tegarden recently had a cow/calf operation incorporate Bovilis Nasalgen® 3 – an intranasal vaccine that protects against three of the most common pneumonia-causing viral pathogens. By adding the Bovilis Nasalgen 3, their calves should experience less bovine respiratory disease (BRD) and subsequently improve performance.

“Bovilis Nasalgen line of intranasal vaccines are an excellent choice when concerned about maternal antibody interference,” says Tegarden. Maternal antibody interference can be a problem when vaccinating calves less than 90 days old.

“If you’re vaccinating at turnout, calves may be less than 90 days old depending on the length of your calving season,” he explains. “Bovilis Nasalgen 3 is proven safe and effective for calves 1 week of age or older. It can help give calves a strong foundation of respiratory disease protection.”

It is important for producers to have a network of advisors to keep up-to-date on the latest cattle health tools and technologies. Tegarden works regularly with local veterinarians in the area, as well as Joplin Regional Stockyards representatives like Jim Hacker, to ensure cattle producers are aware of the latest animal health products and tools to optimize health and performance in their cattle.

Recently Merck Animal Health announced approval of an even broader-spectrum intranasal vaccine Bovilis Nasalgen® 3-PMH that will be available for purchase in early 2021. It is the only intranasal vaccine that protects cattle from the five most common pneumo-

nia-causing viral and bacterial pathogens.

Broad spectrum also is important when looking at BRD treatment options. “There are a lot of antibiotic choices and often with BRD, mixed infections with more than one pneumonia-causing bacteria are involved,” says Tegarden. “We want to get the BRD under control rapidly because the faster it’s eliminated, the better chances of less lung damage. As the animal grows and develops, it’s important to have healthy, fully functioning lungs.”

Preconditioned calves will bring more on sale day, according to Hacker. “Buyers are looking for the healthiest calves they can get,” he says. “They know they will be better served if the calves have been well prepared and are ready to go to the bunk and perform.”

Learn more about by talking to your Merck Animal Health representative or visiting [zuprevo.com](https://www.zuprevo.com). 

1. Dobson R., Jackson F., Levecke B., Besier B., et al. Guidelines for fecal egg count reduction tests (FECRT). World Association for the Advancement of Veterinary Parasitology (WAAVP) (2011) Proceedings: 23rd International Conference of the World Association for the Advancement of Veterinary Parasitology.

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¹Menge M, et al., Pharmacokinetics of tildipirosin in bovine plasma, lung tissue, and bronchial fluid (from live, non-anesthetized cattle). *J Vet Pharmacol Ther*. 2012;35(6):550-559. The correlation between pharmacokinetic data and clinical relevance is unknown.

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My Butcher in Shining Armor

By Erin Hull for Cattlemen's News



As you know, my beef operation is “Pasture to Plate”. Our small operation has cow/calf pairs, and we retain all the steers and raise them up to slaughter size. We then market our beef directly to the consumer. This model works for us, but it does present some challenges. The first challenge is consumer education. This is probably our biggest challenge and what I spend the majority of my “free time” working on. There is quite a learning curve for new customers, but rarely do I ever let it get me discouraged. We have the stumbling block of hanging weight vs. take home weights as well as non-negotiable “pick up” dates. These are challenges I am well aware of and spend quite a bit of time over coming.

The last few months have presented me with a challenge I never saw coming. Butchering. You see, we have worked with the same USDA butcher for almost twenty years. Two decades. That is a fairly strong relationship. Or I will say it WAS a fairly strong relationship. While my sales have been booming for locally raised beef, apparently the butcher’s business has also been booming. When news broke that there was a “meat shortage” in the United States, the first thing I did was pick up the phone and call our butcher. I booked as many dates as I could to make sure I could get our steers in. We also raise a handful of lambs that I always have slaughtered in October. No October dates were available. The best they could do was December. I booked a date in December for all the lambs and nearly started to weep. November and December in Upstate New York

are not “pasture lamb friendly”. We are cold. We are wet. We are snowy. But I would have to make it work. I could clear out the barn and make lamb pens. I would worry about it later. I felt confident I was able to overcome these new butchering challenges.

As COVID-19 dug its heels in, our butcher got busier and busier, and ornerier than ever (side note: he was never a sparkly unicorn, but he was generally fairly polite). I tried to be as understanding as possible. His business was booming, his employees were working harder than ever, and everyone was tired. Time marched on, slaughter dates came and went, and the relationship just seemed to be deteriorating beyond repair. Every visit left me feeling uneasy. My husband and I both agreed that maybe it was time we start the search from a new USDA butcher and forge new relationships. Calls were made and slaughter dates were made for 2021 with a new butcher. Life was good. Or so I thought. This new butcher filled fast and when I called back to solidify plans for the summer of 2021, they informed me they had no dates available for all of 2021. Yup... they have completely filled their schedule... for more than 12 months. This presented yet another new challenge. If you cannot get steers slaughtered, you can not provide customers with meat. Again, I took a deep breath and accepted the challenge confident we could over come it.

But.....

There is one thing we all know about farming and ranching... emergencies happen. I showed up at the farm to do daily chores one morning to find a cow dragging a leg. It seems she had dislocated her hip and her prognosis was not good. Now I am in a pickle. I have sworn I would never go back to our “old” butcher, and our “new” butcher is booked with zero chance of getting an animal in. I do not know the laws regarding meat sales in Missouri, but in New York, unless you have pre-sold the entire animal, it must be USDA butchered for the meat to be sold. I obviously do not have the luxury of time in this situation, and sadly I do not have the luxury of a USDA butcher. I was at a loss what to do. I sought the advice of the women on a Cattlewomen group I frequent on Facebook. They had several suggestions for me, and I am forever grateful to them for brainstorming quickly for me. The decision had been made. I would have a mobile butcher come to the farm that day. Our family would keep the meat from this cow, and we could sell our inventory of USDA beef from our own freezer. I was scrambling to make it all work.

A genuinely nice young man arrived at our farm to put down the injured cow and take her back to his shop to age. He was polite. He was clean. He was respectable. Not only did “Kenny the Butcher” help me out with the emergency, but he also saved me when it came to the lambs. While chatting with him I asked him if he butchers lambs. His answer was a solid “yes” and, wouldn’t you know it, but he had availability this same week to take all of ours in. A silver lining if I do say so myself. But... it gets better. You see, our butcher in shining armor is also in the process of opening a USDA slaughterhouse less than 30 miles from our farm. Currently, I am driving over 60 miles one way. I swear to you... at that very moment the skies started to lighten, the snowflakes stopped falling and the sun came out.

If ever there was a day that I needed a Silver Lining, this was the day. Who would have ever thought that a man in a pickup truck and trailer, a rifle and a butcher’s apron would be just that.



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 A screenshot of the Joplin Regional Stockyards website. The header includes the logo 'JOPLIN REGIONAL STOCKYARDS ESTD 1931' and navigation links: HOME, NEWS, SERVICES, CATTLEMEN'S NEWS, CATTLEMEN'S VIEW, and a highlighted 'SIGN UP' button. The main content area is titled 'Sign-up' and contains a form to subscribe to 'Cattlemen's News'. The form includes fields for Farm or Ranch Name, First Name, Last Name, Mobile Phone, Mobile Carrier (dropdown), Email Address, Street Address 1, Street Address 2, City, State (dropdown), Zip Code, and My Field Representative (dropdown). Below these are checkboxes for 'Text Message Groups': Cattlemen's News, Video Sales, Monthly Cow Specials, and Industry News. There are also three checked checkboxes for 'I want to subscribe to JRS Text Messages', 'I want to subscribe to JRS Eblasts', and 'I want to receive Cattlemen's News (please provide mailing address to do so)'. A disclaimer at the bottom states: 'JRS will not publish, share or sell your contact information to 3rd parties. JRS will use this information in their discretion to keep you updated on our industry. If you wish to receive text updates, please provide your mobile number and carrier and select the content groups in which you are interested.' A red 'Subscribe' button is at the bottom.

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Manage Lice Over the Winter

Improving cattle performance

By Dr. Carley Brucks for Cattlemen's News



After a hard-fought battle for the upper hand in fly control this past summer, cattle producers are thankful for the relief from one external parasite as temperatures drop below freezing. But, as these colder temperatures cause cattle's hair coats to grow longer, the perfect environment is created for lice to move in for the winter. Although not as immediately noticeable as flies, lice cause irritation along the backs and shoulders of cattle where they reside, causing rubbing, scratching and hair loss in those areas. This irritation can hurt cattle performance in the way of decreased weight gain and milk production. Carcass quality can also suffer, showing bruising and hide damage from scratching and hair loss. Producers also see losses in facilities, as cattle rub down fence posts, feed bunks and shelters to scratch their itch. Very severe lice infestations can even result in anemia and abortions.

Lice are small, wingless insects that can be divided into two general categories: sucking lice and biting lice. Sucking lice have long, skinny heads used for penetrating the skin and feeding on the blood of their hosts. Biting lice have short, round heads and eat the skin, hair, and skin cells of their hosts. Biting lice are more common, but typically cause more irritation and hide damage, whereas sucking lice can cause production losses from disease when occurring in large numbers. Both types of lice are spread through direct contact, thus spread more quickly in the winter months of October to February, when cattle huddle together. Come March, the majority of lice shed off when cattle shed their winter hair coat.

As with most issues in the cattle industry, early control and prevention is the best policy in preventing a lice infestation:

- 1. Ensure cattle have the proper nutrition and are in good body condition going into winter.** This will support their immune systems to resist lice infestations.
- 2. Understand the types of lice and treat against both.** Systemic avermectin injectable products used for deworming have good efficacy against sucking lice, but do not control biting lice. Using a permethrin pour-on product in addition to a systemic avermectin injectable will ensure protection against both categories of lice.
- 3. Know when to treat.** The first treatment can be done in October through December, when lice populations are just beginning to grow, with a follow-up treatment occurring two to three weeks later. This follow-up treatment is very important, as the louse life cycle is three weeks long, and the second treatment will kill those lice that have hatched since the first treatment.
- 4. Treat every animal in the herd.** Lice spread quickly and easily, so even one animal can harbor enough lice to infect the whole herd. This includes treating all incoming animals and quarantining for the length of two treatments to prevent reinfestation of the herd.

Lice are not only a nuisance, but can hurt cattle performance if not controlled. Early treatment is key. Consult with your local veterinarian if you have questions about your herd's health and to find the lice control products that are right for your herd. 🐄

Dr. Carley Brucks is a veterinarian at the Animal Clinic of Diamond in Diamond, MO.

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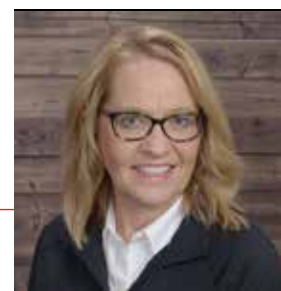
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Keep Making Memories

By B. Lynn Gordon for Cattlemen's News



Holiday time is synonymous with family time, traditions, and memories. Each year new memories are made that we carry with us for many years. As a young child, one of my Christmas memories was participating in our community Christmas concert. Our rural district held an annual Christmas activity night and supper for all the farm families to get together for some carols, skits, stories, and great fellowship. The night was full of laughter and neighbors catching up after a busy harvest season and before calving kicked off. It is a memory I will cherish.

Christmas 2020 will look different for my home district's Christmas event and many family traditions and get-togethers. Coming together as neighbors, friends, and relatives may not be possible this year or will need to be altered from what we have come to know. The bottom line is the holiday season of 2020 will be different, but one constant we can still focus on is making memories.

With creativity and rethinking ways of celebrating the holidays, we can still capture the traditions and importance of friends and families along with time to relax and recharge our batteries. It is a time to meet others with grace, knowing we are all dealing with a situation we were not prepared for and have never experienced. I encourage you to consider these practices this holiday season.

Embrace change – Accept that this year's holidays will be different, and rather than relish in why that is, focus on how you can make 2020's holiday celebration one your family will add to their memory bank. Accept the flexibility that must occur to keep your family and friends safe and comfortable by demonstrating your understanding of people's choices, decisions, and the new look of holiday celebrations. Change



brings with it a fresh perspective. The perfect, idyllic holiday you had dreamed about may have a unique mold this year.

Honor old traditions, create new ones – Don't spend your holiday focusing on what you are not able to do this year. Challenge yourself and your family members to find creative ways to honor long-time traditions to keep some normalcy, but if not possible, aim to find new traditions. Working together as a family to develop and create new memories will bring much joy and excitement. Bring loved ones together through group chats or zoom calls when opening gifts, singing carols on Christmas Eve or reminiscing about family history. These group chats may become routine connectivity opportunities for other holidays or special events.

Focus on gratitude – What are you grateful for this holiday season? If there is a silver lining to this season of life we are experiencing, is it has helped us see and value relationships more and brought clarity to the connections that matter the most to us. We have become grateful for our occupations, our parents or grandparents' health, and more time with family or reconnecting with someone we haven't had the time to connect with. Taking time this holiday to discuss and honor what you are grateful for will allow you to focus on the positives and celebrate what brings us happiness.

Take time for yourself – Holidays are typically a hectic time, but 2020 might be the year you can schedule more time for self-care and other priorities for yourself. With the slower pace of fewer family gatherings, events, travel, etc., what can you or your family do to focus on physical and emotional health? Is it scheduling in some extra time to enjoy nature, start a new hobby, or devote time to the one you have always been passionate about? Is it taking a break from electronics and social media to pick up a book or play a board game? Is it recognizing others may be fatigued from the stresses associated with this new normal or impacted financially and coaching, supporting, or connecting with them may be as impactful as a gift?

Lastly, I came across this inspirational post which I found very fitting for this holiday season and wanted to share:

Not Everything is Canceled.

- Sunshine is not canceled.
- Love is not canceled.
- Relationships are not canceled.
- Reading is not canceled.
- Naps are not canceled.
- Kindness is not canceled.
- Conversations are not canceled.
- Hope is not canceled.

The holiday season is a time to focus on family and friends. Enjoy this special time to cherish those relationships, no matter how unique they may look in 2020. 🦃

B. Lynn Gordon, Ph.D., LEADER Consulting, LLC, Sioux Falls, SD is an agricultural freelance writer and leadership consultant with an extensive background in the livestock industry. She can be reached at lynn@leaderconsulting.biz.

Winter Beef Cow Nutrition

Improving cattle performance

By Sara K Linneen, PhD, Elanco, Technical Consultant and Beef Cattle Nutritionist

Beef cow summer grazing is a time when cows receive the majority of their required nutrients from grazed forage that prepares them for the winter. The fall time of year is a great time to consider nutritional programs for the dormant grass winter months. Sampling and testing forages for nutrient content is the best way to determine if your forage is meeting the cow's requirement and whether supplemental nutrients (typically protein) are needed. Protein can be supplemented in many forms including cubes, tubs, liquid, total mixed ration, or blocks. Calculating the cost per unit of protein is the most economical way to value a protein supplement while considering logistics of feed delivery.

Additional nutrients from a supplement are important because a typical beef cow in late gestation requires more energy and protein, and this further increases at calving to over 50% above maintenance requirements¹. With this year being particularly dry in many regions of Missouri, grazed forage alone may have become an insufficient nutrition program earlier than expected potentially resulting in poorer than average body condition scores (BCS; 1-9 scale²) for both spring and fall-calving cows. This emphasizes a sound supplementation strategy through the fall and winter months to recover and maintain body condition resulting from dry conditions. Remember BCS is still the best indicator of nutrient status of a cow, and BCS at calving is the strongest indicator of subsequent reproductive success³.

Cows that calve in poor body condition (~BCS < 5) have greater days from calving to next heat and they require more energy to recover condition than cows that calve in ideal (~BCS = 6) condition⁴. Research has found that underfeeding cows in late gestation may have reduced conception rate from 10-13% (10 calves in a 100 cow herd) and result in 15 lb less calf wean weight (1,500 lb lost in 100-cow herd) compared to cows that were not underfed⁵. Depending on the type of supplement and delivery frequency, protein supplementation can cost approximately \$0.40 – \$0.60 per cow per day. This is a relatively low cost to ensure ideal conception and pounds weaned.

Nutritional shortcomings are often the leading cause of low productivity in a cow-calf enterprise. Strategically feeding cows to requirement using supplementation programs during



mid-to-late gestation and early lactation time frames is a means of improving nutrition to directly impact subsequent pregnancy rate and pounds of sellable product. For additional information about cow-calf nutrition, contact Dr. Sara Linneen at sara.linneen@elanco.com or 405.915.9635.

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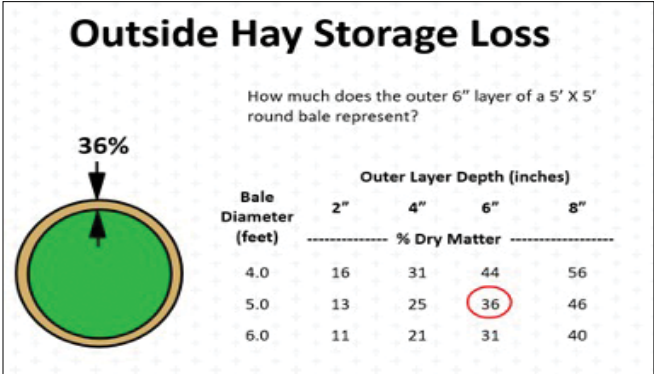


By Eric Bailey for Cattlemen's News

Technological advances such as the round baler have reduced labor needs on the farm. Today, this is as important as ever due to the increasingly difficult nature of hiring quality employees to work on farms. However, as we have focused on increasing our labor efficiency, we have lost the forest for the trees. Current storage methods for harvested forage bear little resemblance to methods from 60 years ago. Nevertheless, I argue that we did a better job of preserving hay back when we invested sweat equity rather than capital into forage preservation.

It would be improbable to preserve hay quality completely. Also, the round bale is more convenient to make, haul, store, and feed. However, it has led to sloppier hay storage and feeding by most producers. Back when small square bales were the “norm,” it was common to store hay under a roof. Today, many round bales rot out in the fencerow for six months before feeding.

Exposing stored forages to the elements reduces quality through the leaching of nutrients. Think about making coffee or tea. We expose the grounds to water and then drink it once it has steeped.



More information can be found at the University of Missouri Integrated Pest Management YouTube page. <https://youtu.be/JPdN1T4uuLs>

Photo courtesy of Jim Humphrey, MU Extension field specialist in livestock.



Hay stored outside weathers the longer it is exposed to the elements. The gray color indicates oxidation, meaning the loss of nutrients when fed to cattle.

Photo courtesy of Field Specialist in Agricultural Engineering Charles Ellis

Even with net wrap, the same process happens, to an extent. The equally troubling but less considered problem is when the ground underneath a bale gets wet, and the moisture wicks up into the bale, leading to spoilage. Net wrap reduces spoilage and weathering but does not eliminate it. The more surface area exposed to the elements, the greater quality losses from stored forages will be. Remember, the outer six inches of a five foot bale represents 36% of the feed in a bale. If much of it spoils, like the picture below, a significant portion of the hay harvested is lost.



Hay wicks moisture from the ground after a rain. Wet hay will spoil over time and cows will refuse to eat the spoiled hay.

Photo courtesy of Jim Humphrey, MU Extension field specialist in livestock.

The best things to do to preserve hay quality are: 1) store it under a roof, 2) store it off the ground, 3) minimize the surface area exposed to the elements, and 4) use net wrap rather than twine when making bales.

Given the investment required to make, store, and feed hay, I advocate for feeding as little hay to beef cows as possible. My analysis of Missouri hay and grazing systems suggests that it costs twice as much to feed hay as it does to let the cow graze

that forage herself. If that is not possible, I encourage producers to evaluate their resources. If you are feeding hay for more than 100 days a year consistently, you likely have

more cattle than your land base can support. Cattle have undoubtedly gotten bigger in the last 50 years, yet most still use historical generalizations of stocking rate (Ex. number of acres per cow). Try to focus on gross margin (revenue minus cash costs) rather than just revenue when making efforts to improve your business. Raising beef cows is inherently a capital-intensive, low-margin business. Do not invest heavily in depreciating assets and make the cow harvest forage herself! More information about beef cattle production can be found on the University of Missouri Integrated Pest Management YouTube page. 🤠

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The Future of Communications, Commerce and Building Trust



By Gregory Bloom for Cattlemen's News

Dr. Baxter was a futurist, from way back in the past. I was an impressionable sixth-grader sitting in a gymnasium during a school assembly, where we listened intently to the futurist's predictions. Dr. Baxter's credentials were extensive. He'd traveled the world observing existing and emerging trends, and extrapolated and postulated about which trends would become economically viable enough to survive in the long-term. To our recently minted ears, he sounded profound and prophetic.

Some of his futuristic predictions for 2020 were that fiber optic cable would replace copper cables, hydrogen would replace gasoline as fuel for cars, and we would no longer use cash to pay for things. It turns out he was about half right. But his prediction that missed the mark the most, the one thing that's changed our lives perhaps more than any other, is how we communicate. I think the 60's Star Trek series came closer to getting that one right.

Considering the changes in communications, it's a difficult field to predict. Email is a relatively new technology, but we're already seeing a decline in its use, especially with Millennials. Today, chats, texts and apps are becoming the preferred way to communicate. More and more people I meet tell me, "Oh, don't email me, I never check it. If you want to communicate, send me a text." But even text messaging, as new as it is, is already becoming obsolete among teenagers.

Here in the U.S., teens use Snapchat, WhatsApp, Instagram and others. In China, the app 'WeChat' has become the dominant way to communicate with family, friends, clients, and even people that you've just met at a business meeting. WeChat already has more than 600 million users.

Foreigners and Chinese natives alike use WeChat instead of emails. It's used to pay for goods and services and to send documents. Even if you've just met someone, you stay in touch with WeChat. Companies are using WeChat to keep employees informed and to exchange all sorts of information. On a recent trip to Beijing, when I exchanged business cards with new contacts, they would commonly ask, "are you on WeChat?" WeChat seems to have amalgamated the best parts of Facebook, Snap-

chat, Apple Pay, Amazon and LinkedIn; all rolled into one very easy-to-use app.

If I were playing the futurist, I'd predict that within the next five years, we'll see a new social media app in the U.S. like WeChat that will begin replacing Facebook, Snapchat, Sales Force (and other Customer Relations Managers), LinkedIn and Instagram. It will be an all-encompassing app that will be used to pay, book tickets, keep in contact, receive payments from customers, take orders, track your drivers, track your sales, log your timesheets, send flowers to your mom, keep your schedule, and pretty much run your life like a digital personal assistant.

But I also predict that this future app, weather it turns out to be WeChat or a newer, better one, will never replace face-to-face, personal communications. Face-to-face will always be an essential element to building trust.

Selling meat is not the same as selling clothes, hardware, or other non-food items. Meat buyers need to know and trust the people they buy from. Whether it's a chef buying steaks, burgers, chops and chicken wings, a corporate agent buying a few pallets of meat products or a Chinese buyer looking for 10 containers of beef short plates, they must be able to trust their source. Trust like that can't be easily formed over social media. To gain real trust, you have to look people in the eye and build a relationship in person. That will never change. For this reason, we'll continue to drive and fly to see customers, face-to-face.

I'm sure you have your own predictions as well. You're probably finding that your millennial customers, kids and grandkids are more likely to respond to you if you send them chats and texts than email.

Do you ever wonder where these communication options will go next, and how it will affect your future strategy to keep up with the competition? 🤖

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Hometown Heroes

Two Missouri cattle farmers and military veterans share their stories from WWII and Vietnam

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This November marked 75 years since the end of WWII and 65 years since the start of the Vietnam War. All across our region, there are veterans of multiple wars going about their daily lives. Some may talk about their military service, while others wish to forget it. Here are two farmer-veterans willing to share their remarkable stories.



At 97 years old, Dr. Tommy Macdonnell is pictured here in his military jacket adorned with medals of his service. Macdonnell sustained many injuries in battle. He was shot in the hip during the D-day invasion of Omaha Beach and suffered wounds to both legs during the Battle of the Bulge amongst others.

wife, Ann, on the farm where they raised eight children together.

On June 6, 1944, Macdonnell's boat was one of the first to hit Omaha Beach in Normandy in the top-secret Allied mission that was called Operation Neptune at the time. Originally scheduled to take place on June 5, when the moon was full and seas were predicted to be low and calm at first light, an unexpected storm delayed the mission.

"We left Portland Harbor in Dorset, England, at 3:45 a.m.," Macdonnell said in an interview for this article. "But Gen. Eisenhower called off the mission because the channel was so choppy. We were all seasick and wet."

Macdonnell's boat, known as a landing craft tank (LCT), was projected to hit the beach at 6:30 a.m., but high winds drifted the vessel east. He wrote he remembered the sounds of vast numbers of airplanes as they passed overhead to bomb the French coast and the German Army forces there. He remembered hearing the U.S. Navy ship bombardment that he hoped would take out most of the German defenses. He remembered double-checking rifles and ammunition and receiving hand grenades, gas masks, life preservers and other personal equipment.

"I landed at about three minutes after 7 o'clock in the morning," said Macdonnell, who was a machine gunner. "I started firing about five minutes after 7. By 11 a.m., the platoon sergeant had a shouting roll call. Instead of there being 25 of us, there were only 10. I'm not even sure there were 10, just very few of us left."

Though already morning, Macdonnell described the beach that day as dark and misty.

"We were the first boat on the beach as far as I could see," Macdonnell said. The LCT hit a mine when it landed, wound-ing a Navy officer and killing two men lowering the ramp.

Macdonnell's LCT carried four half-tracks, a truck equipped with

wheels in the front and tracks on the back, designed to navigate rough terrain. Each machine gun in these vehicles fired 50-caliber rounds.

"It took two big, strong, 1st Infantry Division men who had come up from Africa to load the canisters on those guns," Macdonnell said. "I had three canisters on each side of my gun, a quarter-inch steel plate guarding me in front with an opening for sights, and four machine guns."

Macdonnell remembered unloading the vehicles from the LCT quickly and firing at any likely target, honing in on what looked to him like a "larger coastal defense railroad gun" and two machine guns atop the hill.

"My guns fired rapidly," Macdonnell said. "Around 2,400 rounds a minute if you held them that long. You didn't though, just for short bursts. It didn't take but just one blast, and I had both machine guns of the German defense knocked out."

After a short while, one of his ammunition handlers was killed, leaving them with no one powerful enough to take his place. His lieutenant said, "you're infantry now," Macdonnell recalled. He and the other ammunition handler grabbed their rifles and took cover behind driftwood on the beach. The cover couldn't save his fellow infantryman.

"It was a fairly large log," Macdonnell said. "But it was facing the enemy instead of being crossways. A rifleman shot and killed him. Hit him right in the forehead."

A mortar knocked out the crews of the other two half-tracks, killing all but one of Macdonnell's friends in the process. He isn't sure what happened to the fourth truck, he said. He didn't look back.

"I was moving forward, when a bullet hit my left hip, and a mortar hit my buttocks," he said. "It was a big hole, bleeding quite a lot, but I truthfully didn't give it much concern."

Macdonnell started up the hill to find refuge from the onslaught.

"The first place I saw that would give me some cover was a slit trench used as a latrine," Macdonnell said. "I didn't hesitate. I jumped in and felt the shellfire over the top of me. I remember distinctly before my right eye was a song sheet written in German and before my left was a newspaper that said, 'Das Reich.' It was a little messy, you might say, but it was the safest place on the beach."

From there, Macdonnell was able to launch two rifle grenades aimed at a third machine gun. The first one was short, but the second one hit his mark. With his injuries, Macdonnell couldn't run. He crawled to a rock where his captain and two sergeants were sheltered.

"I told them that we had to get to the observation control area, because they were blowing our boats out of the water," Macdonnell said. "I didn't get an order, but I did get a suggestion to stay there, where I was out of range of the Germans having a direct shot at me. But I didn't."

Macdonnell had noticed a light in the distance. Designated a sharp-shooter, he knew he could hit anything he could see.

"I moved into the brush where I had a straight shot at the observation post," he said. "I could see a scope come up, just like the periscope in a submarine. I eased off a shot and knocked it out. I later learned that I took their eyes in one shot."

Macdonnell fought like this into the afternoon. He spent the night in a large bunker with other men, shielding against sniper fire. It wasn't until the next evening that he would be evacuated to a hospital ship. After three surgeries and three weeks in a hospital in England, Macdonnell would live to fight another day.

And fight he did. Macdonnell was transferred to the 3rd Army

under Gen. George S. Patton and fought in the Battle of the Bulge, the last major German offensive campaign on the Western Front during the war. There, he was again wounded—this time from “friendly fire.”

“We were counterattacking close to St. Vith (Belgium), when I accidentally exploded a roadside bomb,” he said. “They didn’t give me a Purple Heart for that one because it was our bomb I exploded, but that was OK with me. I already had two.”

That incident required more surgeries and, due to his injuries, Macdonnell was removed from the fighting unit. But there was still much to be done. He witnessed the release of a Russian prison camp in Czechoslovakia, and in Munich, Germany, he helped open the gates at Dachau Concentration Camp.

“That’s where I saw bodies stacked head to foot, foot to head, about 4 feet high and just skin and bones,” he recalled. “They were taking them to the incinerator or to a large ditch.”

Though the war officially ended on Sept. 2, 1945, Macdonnell wouldn’t return to the United States until November of that year. He’d ranked highly on the officer candidate school test, and Gen. Patton was building a cadre of trained men.

“They made me staff sergeant, but when the war ended, I told Gen. Patton’s adjutant I had done all the killing I intended to do,” Macdonnell said. “I was going to go home, go to medical school, become a doctor and start saving lives instead of taking them.”

While recovering in the English hospital, he had received an acceptance letter from the University of Missouri. After earning his bachelor’s degree, he transferred to the University of Indiana Medical School. In 1950, he earned his doctorate of medicine degree and worked for the city medical department in Indianapolis where he met his wife, Ann. She was a nurse and worked alongside her husband for the 73 years they were married. She died in 2013 at the age of 87.

“I had a wonderful wife,” Macdonnell said smiling, as he recounted a story about her cooking and one of their early dates.

Over the course of his medical career, Macdonnell delivered 4,582 babies, not including twins and triplets. He opened four hospital clinics and served as a Missouri state representative, helping to pass the Clean Indoor Air Act during his time in the legislature. He farmed, raising registered Hereford cattle. He’s met former President Bill Clinton, the queen of England and even carried the Olympic torch.

Since WWII, Macdonnell has been written about and interviewed many times, but perhaps the most poignant words are the ones he typed himself 35 years ago.

“War is hell!” he wrote. “I remember many things that caused me to have bad dreams for years. D-Day morning was the hell of war, the afternoon was tragic and the restless night was filled with horror.”

Vietnam valor

About an hour south of Marshfield, Dairl Johnson, a veteran of the Vietnam War, lives and farms in Reeds Spring, Mo., with his wife, Doris. Dairl was raised on a farm in this small Stone County community, the second-youngest of 11 siblings. At that time, farming wasn’t what he wanted.

“When we got engaged, he said he would never live on a farm, and he’d never live in Reeds Spring,” said Doris, who met her future husband when she moved to the rural area from Springfield as a high school sophomore.

In 1969, four years after the Vietnam War began, Dairl’s number was called. He was drafted into the Army at age 18.

“They sent me to Vietnam for my senior trip,” he said.

He completed basic training over the summer at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., preparing him for the jungles of Vietnam.

“They called it little Korea, because it was hot in the summertime and cold in the wintertime,” he said. “They had nice brick, air-conditioned buildings, but we stayed in what I called the Gomer Pyle buildings—those long, metal ones with a dome on top. They told

us where we were going, we needed to get used to the heat.”

When he completed basic training, he returned home to Reeds Spring and married Doris.

“We were married for a little over a week when he went back to base and had orders for Vietnam,” Doris said. “At that time, Nixon had said no more troops would be going. He lied.”

Prior to shipping out, Dairl received specialized training in gas chambers, nerve agents, flamethrowers and grenades among other military weaponry in Anniston, Ala. From there, he got to come home for a short time before heading to Seattle, where he could choose to board a boat or airplane. The boat took 31 days, but didn’t count toward time served. Dairl chose to fly.

In mid-November, Dairl boarded a 22-hour flight bound for a country in crisis. He landed at Bien Hoa Air Base in southern Vietnam. “That was a big holding place,” Dairl said. “There were probably 1,000 troops there, but a plane would land with 100 incoming troops, and 100 troops would get to go back out.”

He was stationed for 13 months at Phuoc Vinh Base Camp, located on the main road between Saigon and Dong Xoai.

“I was a decon specialist, that’s what they called us,” Dairl said. “We were in the chemical corps of the 1st Air-Cav (Air Cavalry) Division.”

“Agent Orange,” Doris further explained.

Dairl slept on nailed-together ammunition boxes. For a mattress, he blew up a poncho and poncho liner. Every night, he would cover himself with mosquito netting.

“We had tents surrounded by barrels filled with sand,” he said. “We called them hooches. Each hooch had a bunker next to it. That’s where we stayed.”

When asked what he could share about his war-time experience, Dairl simply said, “It was bad, and that’s about all.”

“I don’t dwell on it, and I never really talked much about it,” he added. “I tell you one thing, you learn to hear the difference between outgoing and incoming rounds really quickly. We were right next to a helicopter pad, and the V.C. (Viet Cong) would shoot rockets in trying to hit that helicopter. Sometimes the rockets would take out half a hooch or land in front, so I would sleep at the end closest to the bunker. I remember someone saying to a new guy, ‘If you can beat ol’ D.J. to the bunker, then you’ve really done something,’ because I was fast.”

While in the jungle, Dairl wrote letters to his wife and family, but in the spring of 1970, there was a long stretch of silence.

“We didn’t hear anything for over a month,” Doris said. “No letters, nothing. My dad went through the Red Cross to try and find him. After it was over, we found out he’d been in the invasion of Cambodia, and he couldn’t tell anybody. Our families didn’t have a clue what had happened to him for six or seven weeks. It was rough. It’s a good thing we were young. If we would have known then what was going to happen, we probably wouldn’t have made it nerve-wise.”

“Young and invincible,” Dairl put it.

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Dairl Johnson of Reeds Spring was drafted into the Army during the Vietnam War in 1969. He hasn’t talked much about his experience since. He doesn’t like to dwell on it, but spoke about his experience because he thinks it’s important to share the story for other soldiers.

In December 1970, he returned to the Bien Hoa Air Base— this time as one of the 100 outgoing troops. It was easy to distinguish the new from the old then, Dairl said.

“You could tell they were scared,” he said. “They were pale white, had clean clothes on and didn’t know what was ahead of them. We were all that way at one time.”

Dairl arrived back in the States around Christmas by way of Oakland, Cal. When he and the other soldiers got off the bus to go into the airport terminal, there was a crowd of people standing around.

“It was kind of sad in a way,” Dairl said. “A guy standing next to me and said, ‘Look. There’s a crowd. They’ve come to cheer us on.’ Another guy said, ‘No.’ When we unloaded the bus, the sergeant told us to keep our head down and not to say anything. People would throw things at you and stuff, but that’s just the way it was back then. You just didn’t tell anyone you were in Vietnam.”

Inside the terminal was a large mirror. It had been over a year since Dairl and most of his fellow soldiers had seen their full reflection—something so basic yet inextricably intertwined with identity.

“In Vietnam, we had a piece of stainless steel that we carried around, and it was just large enough to see your face,” he said.

“When we unloaded in Oakland, we would all just stop and look ourselves over in that mirror—you didn’t hardly recognize yourself. We were tan, and we were skinny.”

Back stateside, it took a while for her husband to acclimate to post-war life, Doris said.

“When he first got back, we were staying in a little cabin, and deer season had started,” she said. “The guns started going off, and he got under the bed. It took about five years for him to calm down.”

Dairl finished out his two-year active-duty obligation in Anniston, Ala., with his wife.

“I had the option to extend my time in Vietnam for four months,” Dairl said. “They called it short orders, and if you did that, you could end your active duty early, but I’d seen too many do that and not come back.”

In June 1971, the couple moved to Springfield, Mo., and Dairl worked in construction while Doris went to work at Zenith Electric Corp. After a while, though, the construction work dried up, and Dairl was laid off.

“I came home from work one day, and he said, ‘I bought a farm,’” Doris recalled. “I said, ‘You did what?’”

Dairl was paid for his time in Vietnam, but those checks went in the bank, slowly accumulating. He didn’t need money in the jungle.

“I used the money I’d saved up to buy this original 40 acres in ’72,” Dairl said. Shortly thereafter, he went to work for the Paul Mueller Company in Springfield, which produces a variety of stainless-steel products such as dairy milk tanks and beer tanks.

“Another day, I came home, and he told me he had purchased 10 head of cattle from the neighbor,” Doris said. “Again, I said, ‘You did what?’”

Dairl admits his perspective on life changed after the war. He recognized his upbringing was an idyllic life. He wanted to farm, and he knew how to raise cattle and put in the work it takes to be successful.

He seized opportunities for additional farmland as they arose. When a neighbor passed away, Dairl sold calves and bought the surrounding acreage while still also working nights in the manufacturing plant. In 1975, when Doris was pregnant with their only son, Dairl’s dad died. Dairl was able to buy half the homestead, again paying for the land with cattle sales. Later, he found 1,000 acres in Webster County near Marshfield and knew that was his shot to make it as a full-time farmer.

“At 18, I never thought I’d be where I am,” Dairl said. “But after Vietnam, I realized this is paradise.” 🦅



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Corn and Soybean Prices

Looking to the future of 2021

By Jessica Allan for Cattlemen's News



Most of us in the livestock industry would agree that we have at least a general awareness of the effects of the economy and other industries on the cattle market. When the economy is doing well, the public tends to eat more beef, and vice versa. Higher feed costs tighten the margins on beef, and other animal protein production make feed efficiencies highly desirable. What is happening in China and Brazil can make cattle prices jump up or down overnight.

One of the industries with the strongest effects on the livestock markets is the grain commodities market, specifically corn and soybeans. Dr. Scott Brown, associate extension professor at the University of Missouri-Columbia, is widely known and respected for his economic analysis of the commodities markets and their effect on each other. He says there are multiple factors that affect the supply and demand of the markets, which in turn affects the price. Carryover supplies, acreage planted, and harvested yields are important to determining price on the supply side, in addition to summer weather, which is used to estimate fall yields. On the demand side, there is the domestic animal feed use, industrial use (i.e. biofuels), and exports. Export demand is affected by countries such as Brazil and China, trade impediments and exchange rates. As you can see, the price equation is no simple matter.

Livestock farmers most often think of being affected by corn and soybean pricing through the price of feed they purchase cutting into their bottom line. However, says Brown, the most important effect is often found through lower bids for feeder cattle by feedyards. The feedyards adjust their bids on feeder cattle based on changes in fed cattle, corn and soybean meal prices. These are the major profitability determinants for a feedyard. The industry saw this come into play multiple times over the last decade. When there are ample feeder cattle available, higher feed prices are pushed back to the cow-calf producer through lower bids on the cattle. When there is a shortage of calves, bids are higher as the feedyards are more willing to absorb more of the feed costs.

But what about today's world, which is affected by unknown factors such as COVID-19? It would be naïve to assume that COVID-19 has and will have no effect on the livestock industry. But, according to Brown, it has had a smaller effect on the commodities industries. As the virus has depressed economies worldwide and created bottlenecks in the delivery pipelines, export markets have remained uncertain. Corn in particular have shown larger negative effects due to the shuttering of the ethanol industry in the United States for a time, said Brown.

So how can the livestock industry influence the corn and soybean industries? The livestock industry consumes at least one-third of corn production annually, per Brown. This means that when livestock producers change the size of the industry, such as by keeping back or selling heifers, it can have a long-term effect on the commodities industries. It is not an overnight change, however, says Brown, as the livestock industry can take years to adjust due to its biological nature. For example, in 2012, the industry adjusted to the record high feed prices, but it took a year to do so.

Knowing the change we can affect on the commodities industry, livestock producers can use that to their advantage by applying corn and soybean pricing to their marketing strategies. Per Brown, we have seen the record 2012 feed prices drop and remain relatively flat for several years. This has led many livestock producers to become lax in their strategies to guard against higher feed costs. Brown suggests that with feed costs now starting to rise again, the need for risk strategies has become more apparent. There are a couple ways of doing so, said Brown. One is physical storage of grain if a livestock producer is using large amounts of it. Another is using the futures market to hedge against higher feed cost through futures or options contracts.

In conclusion, we asked Brown what his projections were for corn and soybeans in the coming year.

"The economist in me answers this question by saying, 'it depends,'" he said.



Other protein industries will have an effect, like the recovering pork industry in China, assuming it has no further setbacks from African Swine Fever, and no other countries contract it. That will continue at least short-term feed demand strength. Weather will have a large impact as well; adverse weather in major growing areas can cause an increase in corn and soybean prices. One country being closely watched currently is Brazil. Current stocks are below levels seen just

a few short months ago, but if we see above average yields next year, that could lower prices. In short, Brown states that inelastic demand for corn and soybeans is responsible for the volatile and uncertain 2021 price outlook. 🐾

Jessica Allan is a commercial and agricultural relationship manager and lender with Guaranty Bank in Carthage and Neosho, MO. She and her husband live in Jasper County and maintain a cattle herd with her parents in Newton County.

Considerations for Winter Hay Feeding

Preparing for the road ahead

By Rebecca Mettler for Cattlemen's News



The force of Mother Nature factors into almost every decision producers make pertaining to their cowherds. This dynamic holds special priority when producers are making plans for winter hay feeding.

Like most things in agriculture, and life in general, hoping for the best and preparing for the worst most often pays off. And, while it's impossible to predict the weather, according to multiple climatologists, the Four State Area may experience average or warmer than average temperatures and a less than normal precipitation this winter.

A warmer and dryer winter may come as a welcomed reprieve for most farmers and ranchers looking to feed less hay this winter due to cold conditions. It also means that producers may feed a few less pounds of concentrate, according to Eldon Cole, livestock specialist with University of Missouri Extension.

To determine any nutrient deficits in the winter hay store, producers need to test a portion of their hay supply each year to accurately determine the nutrient value. Cole said it's common for producers to find that their fescue hay is low in total digestible nutrients (TDN).

"Some producers will be surprised that the TDN is down to around 50% or lower when a good target should be above 55 or 56% and it's a blessing if you can get to 60%," Cole said.

If TDN levels are low, producers will need to supplement more energy into the diet. High-energy feed source options include corn, a distillers grain, other byproduct feed, and alfalfa hay.

"Alfalfa in haylage or hay form is a good option," Cole said. "Some producers see alfalfa as something for dairy cattle or

horses, but beef cows can benefit from being fed alfalfa, however, I do classify that as a supplement to a regular grass hay diet."

Cole stated that the industry has been indoctrinated with the idea that cattle need additional protein supplement, however, in Southwest Missouri, it's not as critical supplement component as we once thought. Prairie and very mature-cut fescue hay, however, are exceptions to the rule.

"If they are able to hit the window (for quality hay production), the level of protein will be good enough we don't usually worry about protein," Cole said. "In our better-quality hay, there's a lot of hay that will run 10-12% protein."

Circling back to winter preparedness, there are some general rules of thumb to follow for various weather conditions.

"A cold winter means greater wind chills," Cole said. "That's what usually turns the cattle around and gets them going the wrong direction."

Cold weather, high winds, and winter precipitation increases the need for energy in cattle rations. The addition of corn, distillers grains, other byproduct feeds, or alfalfa will increase the energy and keep cattle going through the rough winter weather. Cole suggests that producers complete a price comparison to make sure that the supplemental energy source pencils out to be economical.

Another strategy to cut costs during winter hay feeding is to make sure that each class of cattle get exactly the nutrients they need – no more and no less. The first step with this concept is to sort cattle based on their nutrient needs.

For an extreme example, Cole stated that weaned calves have very different nutritional needs than a dry cow at a body condition score 6. To a more real-world example, a lot of producers don't sort out first-calf heifers from the rest of the cowherd because of lack of pasture space, but they should.

"The cattle are the ones that will suffer," Cole said. "The fat cow is going to get fatter and the cattle with a greater need, like the first-calf heifer that milks heavier will suffer.. Some of the cows are going to get the icing and some will get the crumbs off the cake."

Knowing the hay quality and the needs for each class of cattle can help allocate the proper amount of nutrients to each group of cows. This also provides an opportunity for cost savings and can extend an already pinched hay supply forage supply in some instances.

Most of Southwest Missouri experienced a drought in late summer and during most of the fall, which heavily impacted the amount of fall stockpiled fescue that pro-



ducers could accumulate. The lack of stockpiled forage could prove a challenge for keeping adequate hay supplies this winter.

Managing hay waste and also managing the amount of hay cows eat are two options to help stretch a hay supply. If given the opportunity, cows will become over-consumers of hay. Alleviate overconsumption and hay waste by shutting the gate to the hay ring for a portion of the day.

“A dry cow doesn’t need over 25 pounds of hay,” Cole said. “Let cattle go into a feeding area and give them enough time to eat 25 pounds, then shut them out and let them go ruminate, to digest the feed they’ve taken in.”

If producers find themselves searching for hay to buy, Cole suggests that they purchase hay by weight, not by the bale. Producers should also ask questions about the hay quality and where the hay has been stored. Hay quality can be highly compromised if too much moisture soaks into the bales.

“Best thing is to buy hay that has been put up in a barn,” Cole said. “Even two-year-old hay that has been in a barn doesn’t lose much of its nutrient value, other than vitamin A.”

However, no matter the situation producers find themselves this winter, whether it be unpredictable weather or a hay supply issue, preparing now provides more options down the road. 🐮



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Stock Tip, A Livestock Tip!

By Brian Fieser, PhD and Chris Hagedorn, Ruminant Manager

If a stock broker said “I have a stock tip that is guaranteed to increase your investments in value over time and will always pay out a dividend in the short run” - would you invest? Now, as cattle nutritionist, I have a “livestock tip” referred to as Generational Nutrition, sometimes called fetal programming. This would lead most to ask two questions: 1) What is

Generational Nutrition? and 2) How do I invest in it? Generational Nutrition is a feeding program with an intentional focus on maternal nutrition to drive animal productivity for this and future generations, rather than just a focus on the direct impacts of the current group of females. During each phase of pregnancy, specific attributes (better word?) of the calf’s development must take place to ensure a living and healthy animal. In the first trimester, there is rapid DNA/RNA replication taking place, placental and blood vessel development, tissue differentiation (organs start to develop), primary muscle generation (of which there is a lifetime supply at birth) and the generation of female oocytes (of which they are also born with a lifetime supply). Moving into the second trimester, the organs gain functionality, physiological systems start to function (nervous, immune, digestive, endocrine, initial respiratory, etc.) and carcass traits are initiated (secondary muscle cell and fat cell generation). The third trimester is the stage which producers are most familiar with, as it is the time during which the most obvious physical changes take place, such as 75% of fetal growth, increased placenta blood flow, final respiratory development, and notably a 20-30% decrease in intake.

One example of Generational Nutrition would be the concept of late summer/early fall protein supplementation of cows impacting three calf crops. How does this happen? When we correct a protein deficiency in a cow’s diet, specifically a rumen degradable protein deficiency, the cow is able to increase her forage intake and digestion. Simply put, by meeting or slightly exceeding her nutritional needs, we put her on a higher plane of nutrition. The 3 calf crops (or generations) that are impacted are the calf at her side, the calf growing in utero, and if the calf growing inside is a heifer, then the third is this heifer’s first calf.

The calf at side will benefit from the higher plane of nutrition in the form of additional milk output due to the greater energy consumed by increasing the intake and utilization of the forage. The second calf (feeding the fetus!), will benefit from the nutritional support to generate a more robust fetal development in the 1st and 2nd trimesters (for spring calving cows late summer and fall are generally the first 2 trimesters). These include primary muscle and oocyte formation, as well as carcass traits initiated and development of the im-



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mune system among others. The next generation or third calf was the focus of studies at the University of Nebraska that demonstrated when cows were fed supplemental protein in the last trimester, they gave birth to heifer calves that had increased pregnancy rates and earlier breed ups when compared to heifer calves born to cows receiving no supplemental protein. As a bonus, the steer mates that came from protein supplemented cows (last trimester) had a higher percentage grading choice than the steers from cows receiving no supplemental protein. Further evidence came from researchers at South Dakota State University when they demonstrated higher weaning weights and a higher functioning immune system in calves from cows who were fed a plane of nutrition in the second trimester that exceed the cow's maintenance requirements. These findings leave no doubt that nutrition done right can have benefits seen for generations.

The second question was how do I invest? As laid out in the previous section, the investment is in meeting the cows needs during all phases of production at all times. One way to look at it is that there are no days off in a cow's productive calendar. Of the 365 days in a year, she will be pregnant 280 days and open 85 days. In the 85 days, she will produce the highest volume milk and prepare to conceive the next generation. The investment in the cow's nutrition on a day to day basis will pay back in bigger, healthier, more productive calves now and generations to come. Again, I am just a humble cattle nutritionist, but an investment that will return dividends in the short run and provide economic benefit in the coming years as well... kind of makes me wonder if I chose the one right career path! 🐮

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Buy Quality, Buy Once. Buy Cheap, Buy Twice.

Recap from the Show-Me Select Replacement Heifer Sale



By Jordan Thomas for Cattlemen's News

The most recent Show-Me-Select Replacement Heifer sale in southwest Missouri was held on November 20th at the Joplin Regional Stockyards. Across the 212 spring-calving bred heifers that sold, the average price was \$1,731 per head. As is often the case, heifers carrying pregnancies that resulted from artificial insemination (AI) brought a higher average price (\$1,784) than heifers carrying pregnancies resulting from natural service (\$1,682). The high-selling lot of the night, a set of six black baldy heifers from long-time consignor John Wheeler, brought \$2,300 per head.

You might be asking how these prices can make any sense at a time when calf prices are down and profit projections for the

cow-calf sector are poor. Aside from an unprecedented global health situation and one of the more contentious election cycles in modern American history, large portions of the United States have faced extreme drought and fire. Even here in southwest Missouri, the late summer and early fall drought significantly impacted fall forage growth. With all of this going on, how are commercial producers willing to spend this kind of money on replacement females? Can bred heifers be worth that much?

I will grant you that part of it is branding. The Show-Me-Select program is now recognized as the gold standard heifer development program nationally. Another part of it is the reputation that long-time consignors have built with repeat buyers. Real commercial producers are coming and buying these "expensive" heifers year after year. Why is that?

"Buy quality, buy once. Buy cheap, buy twice." I couldn't tell you who originally said that, but it is a phrase I wish I had heard earlier in my life. The idea is that while cheaper options have a lower price at the time of purchase, they have a much higher cost if you consider their useful life. A \$500 chainsaw that lasts ten years is a lot less expensive than a \$200 chainsaw that lasts two. To put this in the business terms of straight-line depreciation, the \$500 chainsaw in that example would cost \$50 per year while the \$200 chainsaw would cost \$100 per year. Sure, it might be easier to cash-flow purchasing a \$200 chainsaw rather than a \$500 one. But the option that cash-flows most easily is not always the wisest investment. That is the case with heifers too. Cheap heifers can be expensive.


Each year, MU Extension Specialists Wesley Tucker, Eldon Cole, and Joe Horner put together a nice annual cow-calf planning budget for Southern Missouri. The updated version for 2021 is available at the following shortened link: <https://tinyurl.com/MOAg-Budgets>. I encourage everyone to sit down with this budget over the holidays and use it as an opportunity to rethink what you do.

Typical feeding costs in the cow-calf budget continue to be a major problem to address. In our state, feeding programs built around stored forage (e.g. hay and the supplementation it requires) are the "not-so-silent killers" of profitability. This is the major factor pulling down the gross margin of commercial cows. But the other major factor pulling down the gross margin of cows is the annual depreciation cost of cows. You see that reflected in this budget by the line items for cow replacement costs compared to value for cull cows sold. Cow depreciation costs are the silent killer in most commercial production systems.

Cow depreciation costs are a function of how long cows remain in the herd as productive females, the purchase price of the female, and the sale price of cows when they are culled or marketed. Wise commercial producers often realize they are better off purchasing replacements rather than developing their own. Likewise, they often realize they are better off purchasing high-quality, high-information replacements compared to cheaper alternatives. The purchase price of the heifers still matters, but what matters even more is whether the heifers will calve early in their first calving season without much risk of difficulty, maintain body condition, breed back, and stay in the herd for a long time.

As with buying a quality chainsaw that will last multiple years, spending a little more on replacements can actually result in lower annual cow replacement costs per year. Buy quality, buy once. Buy cheap, buy twice. 🐮

Jordan Thomas, Ph.D. - Assistant Professor and State Beef Reproduction Specialist
University of Missouri - Division of Animal Science.



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PHILLIPSBURG - 80 Ac., Omega Drive just off I-44 at exit 123, mostly open, 3 ponds, fenced and crossed fenced, great grass farm w/frost free waterer, rural water also available.....\$200,000

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ADRIAN - 5 Ac. Commercial lot with office/shop, great visibility located on I-49.....\$249,900

BILLINGS - 45 Ac., Hwy 174. Just West of Republic, new fence, open and level, good grassland.....\$260,000

REPUBLIC - 40 Ac. Hwy 60, 2 miles south of Exit 123, mostly open, 3 ponds, fenced & crossed fenced, private setting, automatic waterers, corrals\$386,900

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

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GROVE SPRING - 280 Ac., Red Barn Rd., hay ground & pasture, 14 paddocks, 2 barns, 8 waterers, 3 ponds, spring .. **REDUCED** \$658,000

ASH GROVE - 191 Ac. Law 2000, nice farm w/2 ponds, 3 BR, 2 BA home, pond, open, fenced & crossed fenced\$766,000

BILLINGS - 120 Ac. Hwy 174, Great location, farm house, large pond, great views, spring, pond, automatic waterers.....\$780,000

REPUBLIC - 160 Ac. Hwy TT & PP, open & tillable, 88 ft by 120 ft concrete floor, 2 BR, 2 BA home, pond, great road frontage.....\$880,000

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

GREENFIELD - 537 Ac., nice pastures, pond, spring, great baldy timber\$1,288,800

GALENA - 365 Ac., Hwy 173, 75% open, good pasture, fenced & cross fenced, frontage on state hwy, 3 BR manufactured home, several barns, corral, waterers, 2 wells, ponds\$1,249,000

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MOUNTAIN GROVE - Hwy 95, 244 Acres. Beautiful cattle farm, 3 BR brick home, all open, excellent pasture/hay ground, 3 wells, 2 ponds, 8 waterers, pipe corral..\$1,415,000

WILLOW SPRINGS - 683 Ac., County Rd. 1170. Great cattle farm w/165 acres of open pasture, great fence, waterers, 5 BR, 4 BA home, shop, marketable timber, great hunting & fishing\$1,725,500

MILO - 632 acres, Hwy. EE, 70'x48 cattle barn, equip shed, 2 BR, 2 BA home, pond, fenced & cross fenced, 1/2 ac. pasture & hay ground, 9 ponds, 2 acre lake\$1,900,000

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Building a Firm Foundation

Critical elements for insuring a healthy calf crop



By Eric Bailey for Cattlemen's News

Calving season is right around the corner, and it is crucial to build a firm foundation for your 2021 calf crop. There are two critical elements to getting a calf off on the right foot. Colostrum intake is critical for a newborn calf because its immune system is not fully developed at birth. The second critical element is preventing scours in young calves.

Colostrum is the cow's first milk. During the final month before calving, the cow loads immunoglobulins into the first milk consumed after birth. Timing of colostrum intake is essential. During the first 6-12 hours after birth, the calves have a very porous intestine. During this time, the large immunoglobulins pass can be absorbed out of the gut and used by the calf.

Cows with adequate body condition should produce plenty of high-quality colostrum for their newborn calves. There is some data to suggest the first calf heifers produce lower quality colostrum. Colostrum consumption should not worry producers unless nutrition during the final 4-6 weeks before birth is poor. If cow body condition has deteriorated, that would be a risk factor for below-average quality colostrum. The second risk factor is a calf that is not vigorous at birth. If the birth was difficult, or the weather prevented the calf from getting up and nursing quickly, it may be important to intervene with supplemental colostrum. Colostrum replacer is readily available for purchase but is pricey. Only give it if recommended by a veterinarian or if one of the risk factors above pertains to your scenario.

Getting adequate colostrum intake does not make a calf immune from all disease challenges. Scours has long plagued young calves across the country. I encourage anyone who has dealt with scours in the past to read up on the "Sandhills Calving System," developed by faculty at the University of Nebraska (<https://beef.unl.edu/beefreports/symp-2007-17-xx.shtml>). Two factors contribute to calf scours: 1) a susceptible host (the calf), and 2) a significant pathogen load. In essence, the Sandhills Calving System rotates cows that have yet to calve onto a new pasture every 10 to 14 days. Older calves do not interact with newborn calves, reducing a route of disease transmission, and cows calve on "clean" pastures, limiting the number of "bugs" the newborn calves are exposed to from the environment. I believe this idea is important to Missouri cattle farms because of our winter-feeding strategies. Feeding hay in the same spot all winter long will create a mud pit that serves as a reservoir of the scours bugs.

Giving calves a leg up by taking steps to promote adequate colostrum intake will help defend a calf from disease until they have a functioning immune system. However, the pathogen load can overwhelm well-functioning immune systems. Feeding hay in the same spot and making the calves live in a mud lot potentially exposes them to significant pathogen loads. Give the Sandhills Calving System a try with your next set of winter calving cows. 🐄



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Eric Bailey, PhD, is the State Beef Extension Specialist and Assistant Professor of Animal Science at the University of Missouri

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By Mo Fit (MoBKF) Program

As schools continue to face challenges around COVID, we are reaching out to schools to offer educational resources virtually, and activities as we head into holiday breaks.

Beef Box Outreach

Mo Beef Academy members received a box of educational resources to distribute in their communities. Resources highlighted beef's production and nutrition stories.

Resources: Want educational resources? Sign up at mobeefkids.com and we will send you a resource packet electronically or by mail.

In the meantime, visit the following resource and share with friends and family who may have a disconnect around today's modern agricultural story. <https://www.onthefarmstem.com/resources>

Kids in the Kitchen: Get your kiddos in the kitchen this holiday season and explore these beef recipes!

Beef Holiday Campaigns

The Missouri Beef Industry Council (MBIC) has teamed up with the Missouri Wine and Grape Board to offer an exclusive two-part holiday series, "Roast and Toast." Foodie influencers will learn about the beef and wine industries, how to entertain this holiday season with beef, beef cooking methods and tips to make a successful beef meal.

Beef it's What's For Dinner on Hallmark: Drool Log advertisements will appear throughout late November and December on the Hallmark Channel's holiday programming event "Countdown to Christmas" as part of a limited holiday broadcast and digital adver-



tisement buy as a way to have a broader reach with consumers this holiday season.

Chicory and Target: Nationally and with additional target campaigns in Missouri, we are teaming up with Chicory, an e-commerce platform, and Target to support retail beef sales for Holiday 2020 and keep beef top of mind for holiday shoppers.

Holiday Entertaining with Beef: State and national campaigns also focus on popular holiday cuts—to include rib/ribeye roast, tenderloin, and strip roast. Basic roasting tips and how to select cuts, cook and carve provides consumers of all culinary levels to be successful with beef this holiday season.

Chuck Knows Beef:

As a special holiday helper, Chuck will be the one guest you'll actually want in the kitchen this holiday season. Chuck can help through the whole meal planning process by helping find a great recipe—whether it's an appetizer for a part or the main holiday dinner. While in the store he can help with ingredient lists, knowing what to buy, cooking methods and more. 🐮



Kids in the Kitchen!

Peanut Butter, Chocolate-Hazelnut and Chocolate Chip Beef Jerky Cookies

Add this sweet and savory cookie to your holiday baking list!

INGREDIENTS:

- 3/4 cup butter, softened (1-1/2 sticks)
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup creamy peanut butter
- 1/2 cup chocolate-hazelnut spread
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1-1/2 cups all purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 2/3 cup finely chopped beef jerky
- 1/4 cup bittersweet chocolate chips

COOKING:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Combine butter, sugars, peanut butter and hazelnut-chocolate spread in large bowl. Using hand or stand mixer, mix until fluffy. Add egg and vanilla; mix until fully incorporated.
2. Combine flour, baking soda and salt in medium bowl; whisk together. Add flour mixture to butter mixture; mix until fully incorporated; do not over mix. Add in jerky and chocolate chips. Divide dough into 24 equal balls. Place on 2 ungreased shallow-rimmed baking sheets. Bake in 350°F oven 13 to 15 minutes or until tops are evenly cracked. Cool 10 minutes before serving.

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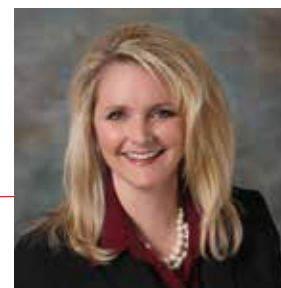
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Looking in the Rearview Mirror at 2020

By Chris Chinn, Director of the Missouri Department of Agriculture



In some ways, 2020 has been the fastest year I can remember. Though to most of us, it felt like one of the longest years in modern history at the exact same time. It almost feels like we were all in a Netflix movie that was paused in March and kept having to buffer as the COVID-19 situation progressed. No matter which side of that fence you sit on, I believe that when we look back at 2020, we will be proud of the challenges we've overcome in agriculture.

I wrote last month about the tremendous obstacles that Governor Parson was able to help farmers and ranchers work through. If I'm looking back at 2020, it doesn't hurt to list a few of those again simply to prime the conversation. As a state, we made sure agriculture and the food supply was deemed essential, worked to waive state and federal regulations that allowed farmers to continue with a successful planting season, and supported our farmers and food processors through unprecedented times.

But, many things in agriculture continued and prospered despite COVID-19.

2020 Missouri State Fair Youth Livestock Show. The original Missouri State Fair, dating back to 1901 started with a livestock show. Our team worked hard with Governor Parson to protect every aspect of the Fair that we could. Because of sponsorship, vendor and public health considerations, we decided that the best decision for our exhibitors and their families was to return to a "back to the basics" approach by hosting a Youth Livestock Show. Although it was a little less eventful on the Fairgrounds this year, we've heard from an overwhelming number of exhibitors that they were thankful for the opportunity to showcase the projects they had worked so hard on.

In the end, the numbers show that we did the right thing by hosting a Fair. FFA and 4-H youth projects were able to complete the judging process for agriculture mechanics, horticulture and so much more. We were up in entry numbers in 7 of 8 livestock categories, with a 12% growth in 4-H and FFA livestock classes overall.

2020 Ag Market Rally. Grain prices have rallied in recent months, supported by very strong exports and led by large purchases of corn and soybeans from China. Compared to last year, these strong export purchases have provided a 40 cent basis improvement in corn and 50 cent basis improvement in soybeans shipped out of St. Louis, one of our nation's busiest ports for grain shipping. Seeing market prices increase at harvest is somewhat unusual, but was great news for our farmers and ranchers.

On the livestock side, cattle and hog prices have made respectable gains as I write this. Prices are strong for cash feeder cattle and boxed beef. Likewise, hog prices are seasonally high and appear to be supported by an increase in pork exports.

An important factor as to whether the strength in livestock prices

continues is whether restaurants and schools remain open through the winter months, which will help support consumer demand for red meat. In 2018, 70% of foodservices purchases of beef came from restaurants and bars, and 10% were generated by education institutions.

2020 Harvest Steady. Harvest has always been a favorite time of year for our family. After months of waiting patiently after planting, you finally get to see the hard work pay off. This has been one of the most normal growing seasons we've had since I became Director of Agriculture almost four years ago, despite the fact that we are working through a global pandemic. As with the rest of 2020, there are many things that make it unique. In 2018, we saw a historic drought touch almost every corner of the state. Last year, flooding destroyed crops along the Missouri & Mississippi Rivers. Now that higher waters have receded along the rivers, it has revealed some critical repair work that must be done now to maintain proper navigation levels for barges moving grain to our international customers. Although we have seen some dry conditions in parts of southwest and northern Missouri, growing conditions have been decent through most of the spring, summer and fall.

2020 Election Outcomes. Missouri is unique in that our top two leaders, Governor Mike Parson and Lt. Governor Mike Kehoe, are farmers themselves. Gov. Parson is a third generation cattleman and resides today on First Lady Teresa Parson's original family farm. Lt. Gov. Mike Kehoe is a first generation cattleman who also loves and appreciates agriculture. It is good for Missouri to have elected leaders who have a working knowledge of agriculture.

As always, we are here to serve you at the Missouri Department of Agriculture. Please reach out to us if there's anything we can do to help you, your farm or your ranch! 🤠

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Rep Jack Chastian (417) 849-5748.

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Two purebred, 3-year-old Charolais bulls from Tim Mueller. American Charolais Reg: EM894091, BW 83, sired by RAILE 2250 T077.

Top Notch Farms

60 black pairs, cows are 4 to 6 years old, calves 3 weeks to 250 pounds, Gardiner bulls put in on Nov 10. FMI Bailey Moore 417-540-4343.

Top Notch Farms

13 black cows, 4 - SS short bred to Gardiner bulls, calve in the fall. FMI Bailey Moore 417-540-4343.

100 mixed cows, 4 to short & solid, 3rd period, bred to Angus bulls, few pairs by sale day. FMI Bryan Haskins 417-850-4382.

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It's very simple; just clip out this form and fill it out. When you unload your cattle, give this at check in, at the market of your choice or you can tell them to average off a percentage of your check or the number of cattle you want to donate to the organization.



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MARKET WATCH

Market Recap: Feeder Cattle Auction

November 23, 2020 | Receipts 10,922

CLOSE Compared to last week, steer calves and yearling steers under 750 lbs steady, steers over 750 lbs steady to 5.00 higher, heifers steady, except heifer calves under 500 lbs and yearling heifers over 800 lbs steady to 2.00 higher. Demand moderate to mostly good, supply heavy. A high percentage of yearlings in the offering and sharply higher Live Cattle and Feeder Cattle futures supporting the trade. The USDA Cattle On Feed showed 101 percent On Feed, 89 percent Placements, 100 percent Marketed. Supply included: 100% Feeder Cattle (66% Steers, 33% Heifers, 1% Bulls). Feeder cattle supply over 600 lbs was 78%.

Feeder Steers: Medium and Large 1 350-400 lbs 170.00; 400-500 lbs 160.00-182.50; 500-600 lbs 141.00-160.00; 600-700 lbs 132.00-154.00; 700-800 lbs 133.00-149.00; 800-900 lbs 133.00-148.00; 900-1000 lbs 129.00-139.00; 1000-1025 lbs 120.00-129.50. **Medium and Large 1-2** lot 382 lbs 150.00; 400-500 lbs 140.00-161.00; 500-600 lbs 135.00-145.00; 600-700 lbs 126.00-141.50; 700-800 lbs 126.00-143.55; 800-900 lbs 127.00-138.50; 900-1000 lbs 125.00-134.25.

Feeder Heifers: Medium and Large 1 300-400 lbs 145.00-152.00; 400-500 lbs 131.00-150.00; 500-600 lbs 128.00-147.00; 600-700 lbs 125.00-138.50; 700-800 lbs 121.00-133.00; 800-900 lbs 124.00-128.00. **Medium and Large 1-2** 300-400 lbs 131.00; 400-500 lbs 124.00-138.00; 500-600 lbs 121.00-136.00; 600-700 lbs 116.00-134.00; 700-800 lbs 116.00-129.25; 800-900 lbs 114.00-129.00; 900-950 lbs 92.50-110.00.

Source: USDA-MO Dept of Ag Market News Service
Rick Huffman, Market Reporter, (573) 751-5618
24 Hour Market Report 1-573-522-9244

MARKET WATCH

Market Recap: Feeder Cattle Auction

November 30, 2020 | Receipts 9,399

CLOSE Compared to last week, steer calves under 650 lbs 2.00 to 5.00 higher, steers over 650 lbs 1.00 to 3.00 lower, heifers under 550 lbs and over 800 lbs steady, heifers 550 to 800 lbs 2.00 to 4.00 lower. Demand moderate to good, supply heavy. The offering consisted of mostly wean/vac calves with a few unweaned calves in the mix and yearlings. Demand best of light calves suitable for winter grazing. Supply included: 100% Feeder Cattle (64% Steers, 33% Heifers, 2% Bulls). Feeder cattle supply over 600 lbs was 58%.

Feeder Steers: Medium and Large 1 300-400 lbs 180.00-190.00; 400-500 lbs 161.00-177.50; 500-600 lbs 144.00-167.00; 600-700 lbs 135.00-152.50; 700-800 lbs 134.00-144.50; 800-900 lbs 133.00-146.00; 900-1000 lbs 129.00-136.00. **Medium and Large 1-2** 300-400 lbs 165.00-172.50; 400-500 lbs 147.00-170.00; 500-600 lbs 140.00-156.00; 600-700 lbs 129.00-141.00; 700-800 lbs 128.00-138.00; 800-900 lbs 126.00-133.00; 900-1000 lbs 125.00-130.25.

Feeder Heifers: Medium and Large 1 300-400 lbs 143.00-150.00; 400-500 lbs 132.00-150.00; 500-600 lbs 125.00-140.00; 600-700 lbs 121.00-134.00; 700-800 lbs 120.00-134.50. **Medium and Large 1-2** 300-400 lbs 132.00-143.00; 400-500 lbs 125.00-142.00; 500-600 lbs 120.00-131.00; 600-700 lbs 115.00-126.00; 700-800 lbs 111.00-131.00.

Feeder Bulls: Medium and Large 1 pkg 426 lbs 145.00; lot 534 lbs 120.00; pkg 842 lbs 85.00; pkg 973 lbs 88.00. **Medium and Large 1-2** 350-400 lbs 142.00-145.00; 400-500 lbs 124.00-127.50; 500-600 lbs 105.00-118.00.

Source: USDA-MO Dept of Ag Market News Service
Rick Huffman, Market Reporter, (573) 751-5618
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Noon Hour

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Outlaw 106.5 FM
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11:45 a.m.

The Z 102.9 FM
Monday & Wednesday
12:40 p.m.

KTTS 94.7 FM
Monday & Wednesday
11:30 a.m. & 12:30 p.m.

KGGF 690 AM
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11:30 a.m. & 12:30 p.m.

KWOZ 103.3 FM
Monday & Wednesday
11:30 a.m.

KHOZ 900 AM
Monday & Wednesday
12:15 p.m.



MARKET WATCH

Market Recap: Value-Added Feeder Cattle Auction

December 3, 2020 | Receipts 7,076

CLOSE No recent Valued Added sale for a price comparison. Comparable sales of weaned calves to Monday's regular feeder cattle sale, steers under 750 lbs and heifers under 600 lbs steady to 3.00 higher, steers over 750 lbs and heifers over 600 lbs steady. However when comparing to unweaned calves of same quality and weight, steer and heifer calves 8.00 to 10.00 higher. Demand good, supply heavy. The bulk of the calves in medium plus to fleshy condition, with few thin flesh calves in the mix. Calves are weaned forty five days or more, on a vaccination program and heifers are guaranteed open. Supply included: 100% Feeder Cattle (61% Steers, 39% Heifers). Feeder cattle supply over 600 lbs was 47%.

Feeder Steers: Medium and Large 1 300-400 lbs 187.00-200.00; 400-500 lbs 164.00-184.00; 500-600 lbs 143.00-170.00; 600-700 lbs 135.00-155.25; 700-800 lbs 130.00-151.75; 800-900 lbs 131.00-135.00. **Medium and Large 1-2** 350-400 lbs 167.50-185.00; 400-500 lbs 155.00-175.00; 500-600 lbs 139.00-165.50; 600-700 lbs 132.00-145.00; 700-800 lbs 133.00-141.00; 800-850 lbs 131.00-135.75; 900-1000 lbs 122.00-129.00.

Feeder Heifers: Medium and Large 1 350-400 lbs 147.50-150.00; 400-500 lbs 136.00-150.00; 500-600 lbs 129.00-142.00; 600-700 lbs 128.50-133.75; 700-800 lbs 128.00-132.50. **Medium and Large 1-2** 300-400 lbs 138.00-152.00; 400-500 lbs 130.00-148.00; 500-600 lbs 126.00-138.00; 600-700 lbs 126.00-131.50; 700-750 lbs 127.00-131.75; pkg 864 lbs 125.50.

Source: USDA-MO Dept of Ag Market News Service
Rick Huffman, Market Reporter, (573) 751-5618
24 Hour Market Report 1-573-522-9244

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Beef Mo Kids program director, Mark Harmon - MBIC Region 4 board
member, Mark Russell - MBIC Executive Director, and
Donell Kleiboeker - MBIC Intern

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