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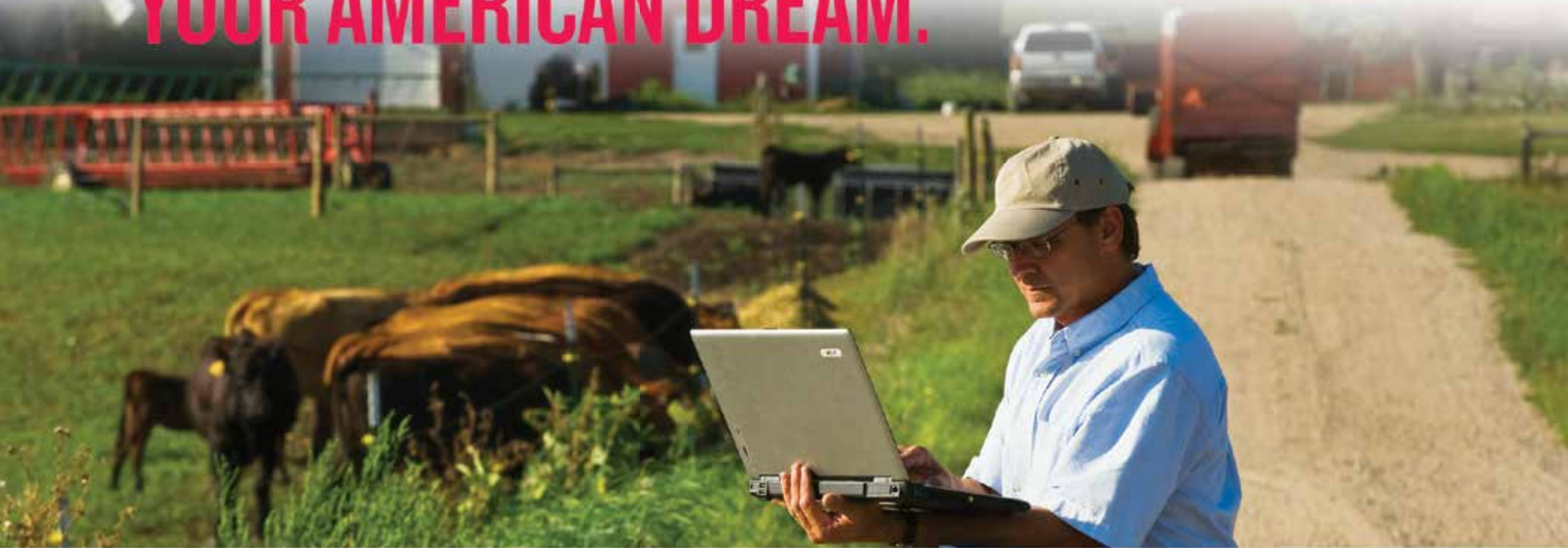
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## VIEW FROM THE BLOCK

We've talked about it before, but with the 2014 calf crop we all had some feed. The market was telling us to look ahead to \$2.30 or \$2.40 for the gain to get those calves big. If you look at the receipts at cattle auctions nationwide, the bulk of the cattle weigh from 750 to 800 lbs. Cattle that weigh 300 to 600 lbs. really haven't lost any value, maybe just \$10 or \$15. But, the big cattle have lost maybe \$30 a hundred. So, it's pretty tough if you have big cattle. That isn't going to change as we go on through spring. There's still going to be a lot of big cattle everywhere. They are going to be tough to sell, and they aren't going to make any money.

On the other hand, if you have some lightweight cattle that can graze, they will bring just about what they had been. Looking ahead to the summer months, the market will come back just like it normally does. We'll be short of yearling cattle during that time. Then, the market will



be good again. It's just not uncommon for the bigger cattle to lose some of their value from early December through May.

Weaned calves that can go to grass this spring will bring a pretty good price. I've thought all along that a 5-weight steer would bring as much per head as one that weighs nine, and we're seeing it. That will only continue.

On the cow side of the market, it continues to be full speed ahead for the cow/calf producer. Replacement cow trade continues to be strong and the slaughter market is really high right now. The weather has been bad in some areas and that's kept receipts down. That market will continue to be good with the on-going shortage of ground beef and the approaching grilling season.

Good luck and God bless.

*Jackie*



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Quality facilities and equipment play a key role in creating a safe cattle working environment. Read more on cattle working on page 28. —Cover photo by Joann Pipkin

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## BEEF IN BRIEF

### Cattlemen Partner with National Sheriffs' Association

National Cattlemen's Beef Association and the National Sheriffs' Association announced a partnership to work collaboratively on issues that impact both associations during the recent Cattle Industry Convention in San Antonio, Texas. Cattle producers and local sheriffs' offices interact on a daily basis addressing issues of criminal trespass or activity, animal welfare and the operation of motor vehicles in the local communities.

The Memorandum of Understanding between the groups specifically calls for increased collaboration between local cattlemen's associations and sheriffs' offices, coordination in advocacy on Capitol Hill and the development of joint media pieces on issues of mutual interest such as border security and immigration reform, animal welfare, private property rights and transportation policy.

—Source: National Cattlemen's Beef Association release.

### Community Improvement Grants Available to 4-H, FFA

Developing a thriving rural Missouri is important to FCS Financial. The Shaping Rural Missouri grant program offers Missouri 4-H and FFA organizations \$500 grants to implement projects that will benefit their rural communities and youth development.

Funds are awarded to assist club or chapter members in bringing positive change by establishing projects that make their local communities better places to live. FCS Financial encourages applicants to collaborate with other community organizations to develop and complete their improvement project.

Last year, FCS Financial funded 49 projects across Missouri. Projects improved local communities by building picnic tables, planting trees and landscaping school grounds.

Applications are due April 1, 2015. An application and more information on the Shaping Rural Missouri grant program can be found at [www.myfcsfinancial.com](http://www.myfcsfinancial.com) or by calling 1-800-369-3276 ext. 1173.

—Source: FCS Financial release.

### Missouri Cattlemen's Take Top Spot in NCBA Recruiting

The Missouri Cattlemen's Association (MCA) earned the use of a piece of equipment from New Holland for their efforts to recruit new members for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA). MCA leaders were recognized during the Best of Beef Breakfast at the 2015 Cattle Industry Convention and NCBA Trade Show in San Antonio, Texas.

MCA will get its choice of a one-year lease of a New Holland Roll-Belt® 560 Specialty Crop round baler or a New Holland T6 175 tractor. This is the second year in a row for MCA to be recognized at the annual convention for its recruitment efforts. This year, MCA took the top spot among NCBA's 45 state affiliates. MCA recruited 243 new members within the contest period, which lasted from Oct. 1, 2014 to Dec. 31, 2014.

—Source: Missouri Cattlemen's Association release.

### Cattlemen Renew Focus on Young Beef Leaders

A new program from the National Cattlemen's Beef Association is placing renewed focus on this country's young beef producers. The NCBA Young Beef Leader (YBL) program, which involves state affiliates from across the country, will give young people 21-35 years old opportunities for education and increased involvement in local, regional and national industry efforts.

For more information on the NCBA YBL program, contact Sara Arp at [sarp@beef.org](mailto:sarp@beef.org).

—Source: National Cattlemen's Association release.

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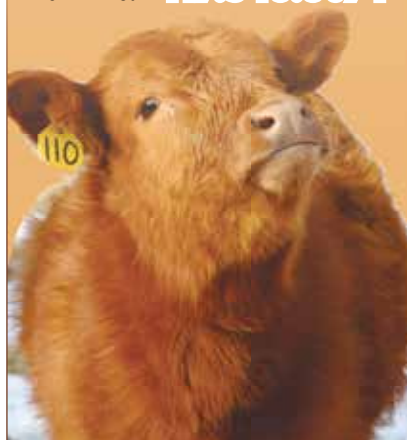
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# Selecting Mineral Supplements for the Cow Herd

## Regular supplementation minimizes intake variation

Story By Justin Sexten for Cattleman's News

Mineral nutrition is an often discussed topic among producers and feed suppliers with talks ranging from mineral source and level to any number of additives designed to prevent and/or cure disease. Mineral requirements vary with the production stage of the cow, while mineral supply is dependent on forage source and supplemental feeds. Since mineral supplements are the one feed typically offered every day, producers should have a goal in mind when developing a mineral program. This article will provide basic information on required macro minerals.

A fundamental goal for any operation's mineral program is to offer the mineral source

on a regular basis. The most common mineral problem observed is not selection of the wrong mineral, but an acceptable mineral offered too infrequently. Set a goal of making sure mineral is available every day to minimize intake variation and ensure timid and young cows are not pushed away from the feeder when mineral is offered. If mineral has not been consistently made available, begin by offering plain white salt to cows to prevent overconsumption of trace minerals in an effort to consume salt.

The most common mineral deficiency in cattle consuming forage is sodium. To address this requirement, mineral supplements contain salt. A cow needs 1 to 1.2 ounces of

salt daily to meet her sodium requirements. In a mineral with a daily intake recommendation of 4 ounces per cow, 25 percent salt should meet her requirement.

Salt serves as a good example to illustrate the relationship between mineral intake and concentration. If mineral intake exceeds 4 ounces per head, then the salt level or percent in mineral can be lower. Alternatively, if the mineral is labeled for 2 ounces of intake, then salt percent will need to be greater to meet sodium requirements. If the mineral you are considering has a lower labeled intake, then mineral concentrations should increase relative to a mineral with a greater labeled intake.



After salt, the most common mineral deficiency is phosphorus. One of the more expensive nutrients in a mineral supplement, it is beneficial to match mineral level with phosphorus requirement and supply. Poor quality and dormant forages generally require phosphorus supplementation. When feeding a 4-ounce mineral supplement, a 6 to 8 percent phosphorus mineral should provide adequate phosphorus.

When considering mineral supplements, remember minerals are present in many feeds. Distiller's grains provides a good example where 3 pounds of supplemental distiller's grains provides as much phosphorus as 4 ounces of a 10 percent phosphorus mineral. Supplemental feed is typically offered when forage quality is low to meet protein and energy needs and as a result might provide for mineral deficiencies as well.

Calcium is the macro mineral considered in combination with phosphorus. In forage-fed cows, a 4-ounce mineral

**CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE**

# SHORT ON MAGNESIUM?

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with 12 percent calcium should meet requirements. If producers are feeding a legume hay such as alfalfa, a cow's calcium requirements can be met by the forage. When protein supplementation is provided by high-phosphorus feeds such as distiller's grains or corn gluten feed, calcium supplementation should be increased to maintain a calcium to phosphorus ratio of two to one.

Sulfur is required by rumen microbes to synthesize sulfur-containing amino acids, however sulfur is rarely limiting in beef cow diets. Sulfur is more likely in excess when cows are supplemented with high levels of corn co-products such as corn distiller's solubles, distiller's grains or corn gluten feed. Excess sulfur can also come from water sources when well water contains excessive sulfur. Sulfur is an example where dietary mineral intake should consider feed, forage and water.

Potassium is a required macro mineral but is typically only deficient in weathered forages such as stockpiled fescue or rained-on hay. To meet potassium deficiency, offer a 4-ounce mineral with 0.5 percent potassium. Alternatively, feeding by-product protein supplements will often meet potassium requirements. As spring green up approaches, potassium supplementation offers an example of a common mineral interaction where excess of one mineral increases the need for another.

Grass tetany is considered a magnesium deficiency, yet excessive potassium in spring forage prevents magnesium uptake contributing to tetany. To prevent grass tetany, offer high-magnesium mineral supplements (10 percent magnesium or greater with no potassium) 30 days before green up to make sure cows are consuming adequate magnesium. Grass tetany demonstrates the variability in mineral requirements due to cow age or production level as tetany commonly affects older cows unable to mobilize bone magnesium or high-milk-producing cows with increased requirements. Grass tetany can be difficult to prevent because high magnesium mineral intake is typically low due to the poor palatability of magnesium oxide.

This article is designed to serve as a guide to further discussions with feed suppliers or nutritionists. Next month we will discuss key micro minerals and vitamins A, D and E. In the meantime, make sure the mineral feeders are full.

—Justin Sexten is state extension specialist, beef nutrition, University of Missouri-Columbia. Contact him at [sextenj@missouri.edu](mailto:sextenj@missouri.edu).

Editor's Note: Read more on grass tetany in Elizabeth Walker's article on page 18 in this issue.

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# 5 Tips for Better Animal Health

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2. Never allow biologicals to sit in the sun before or after being mixed.
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4. Always burn or otherwise destroy vaccine bottles.
5. Always read and follow label directions.

—Source: Oklahoma State University Extension.



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# What's BRSV?

## Examining the viruses of bovine respiratory disease

Story By Dr. Dave Rethorst for Cattlemen's News

**B**ovine respiratory syncytial virus (BRSV) is one of a number of viruses that are found in respiratory infections and diseases of cattle. When it is found as a single etiologic agent, the disease it causes is usually inapparent to very mild. If the virus is found in association with other viruses and/or bacteria, the disease tends to be more severe. The clinical signs associated with BRSV are limited to the respiratory tract. These signs include fever of 104-108°F, coughing, nasal discharge and ocular discharge. Open mouth breathing, indicative of severe respiratory distress, can be seen because of the lung emphysema associated with the disease. Effects of the virus do not include reproductive or fetal disease.

Disease associated with BRSV usually occurs in cattle less

than one year of age, although it has been reported in older feedyard cattle as well as mature cows. While the lungs from BRSV-infected cattle appear similar to lungs from feedyard cattle with atypical interstitial pneumonia (AIP), an association between BRSV and AIP has not been found.

When I began practicing in Nebraska, we dealt with very acute respiratory disease outbreaks in newly weaned calves that caused emphysema in the lungs during the fall of the year. Veterinary researchers at the University of Nebraska Diagnostic Laboratory consistently found BRSV in these calves. As a profession, veterinarians pushed hard to get a vaccine developed for this virus. When this vaccine became available commercially, we felt it helped in a number of herds, but was certainly not



the magic answer. In the 30 or so years since the vaccine was developed and marketed, the role of the virus in bovine respiratory disease (BRD) and the efficacy of the vaccine have been the topic of many discussions and still there is no clear consensus as to the role the virus plays in BRD.

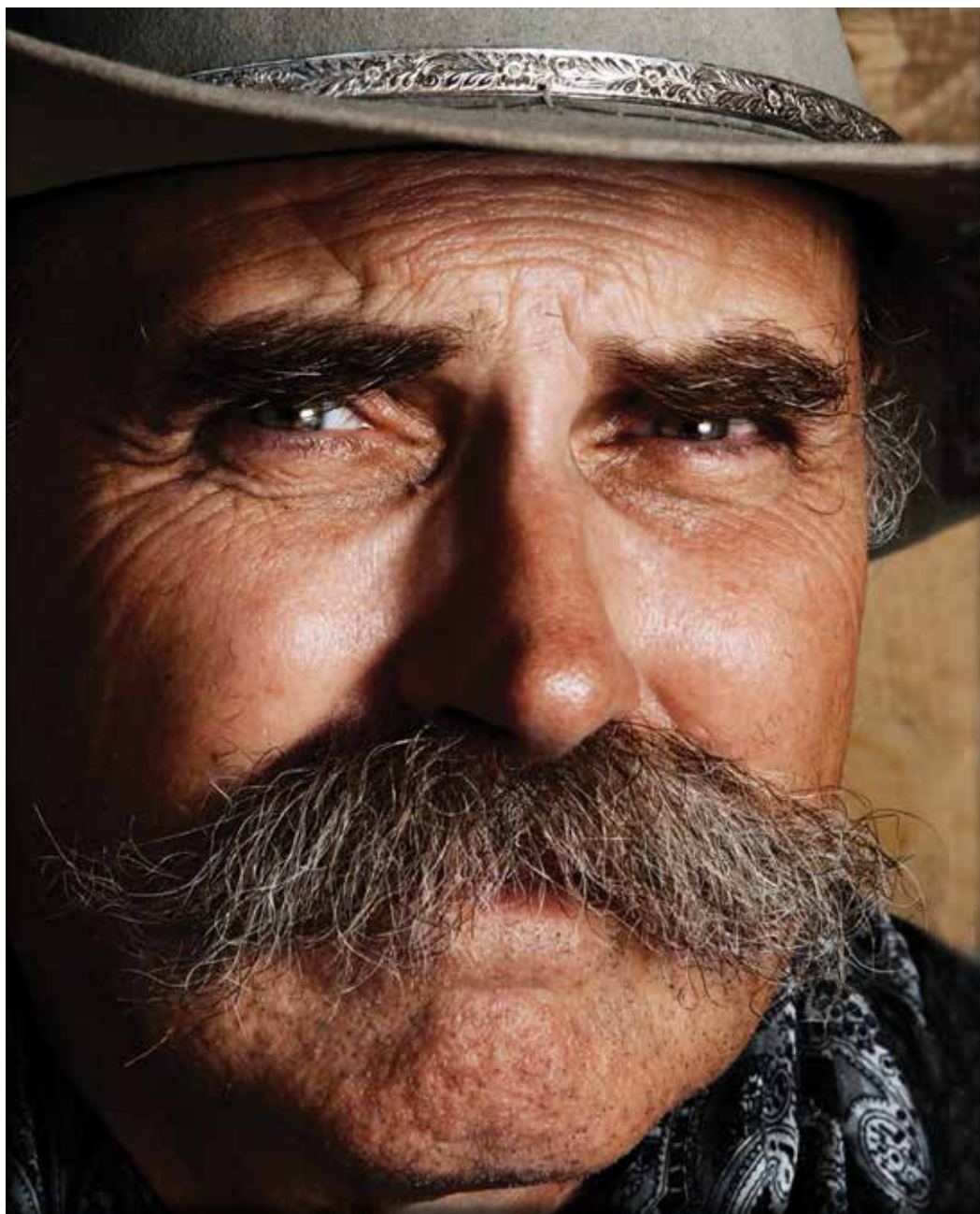
During my career, I have come nearly full circle on my view of this virus. While I believe it plays a role in BRD, I am not convinced that BRSV is a primary viral pathogen, nor am I convinced of the efficacy of the vaccine. I feel much the same way about bovine corona virus (BCV). I believe it is associated with BRD in some instances, but I am not convinced that it is a primary viral pathogen. In my experience, the PI3 virus

could be included in this discussion as well.

Immunosuppression, whether caused by infectious bovine rhinotracheitis (IBR) virus; bovine virus diarrhea (BVD) virus; or factors such as stress, inadequate nutrition, and a heavy internal parasite load is the real culprit in the development of BRD. Immunosuppression allows viral infections such as BRSV, BCV and PI3 to develop into BRD. It is also what lets bacteria such as Mannheimia hemolytica, Pasteurella multocida and Histophilus somni become involved in the disease process.

Several vaccines are available that aid in the prevention and control of BRSV. Two doses of the vaccine are required for it to provide adequate immunity. These vaccines have been shown to stimulate immunity in the face of colostral immunity so vaccination can begin at an early age. The vaccine should be used in conjunction with other management strategies designed to minimize immunosuppression and provide optimal immunity.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



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# Are You Protecting Your Bottom Line?

## NCBA Learning Lounge session focuses on livestock risk management

Story By Kindra Gordon

“Every sector within the industry has inherent risk. Your choice is to accept it or mitigate it,” Tom Clark told cattle producers attending the Learning Lounge session convened Feb. 6 in the trade show hall during the Cattle Industry Convention & NCBA Trade Show in San Antonio, Texas. Clark is director of agricultural product for the CME Group.

“Back in the day, producers simply looked at production (i.e., the calf crop) and would hedge it and be done,” he pointed out. “They didn’t have to think about inputs too much — because the prices didn’t change much.”

Today is a different story. Inputs like feed, energy and transportation all have volatile prices. Thus, producers should take “a more holistic view” of the marketplace, Clark suggested. “Volatility is always going to be here.”

He noted the importance of risk management and offered this definition: Risk management is a structured approach to managing uncertainty.

Potential strategies to manage that uncertainty include:

- transferring the risk to another party;
- avoiding the risk;
- reducing the negative effect of the risk; and
- accepting some or all of the consequences of a particular risk.

“You need to have a mix of pricing tools, and at various times, you will use some more than others,” he added. Pricing tools include cash sales, forward contracts, futures or options hedging or OTC (over-the-counter) markets.

He also emphasized the importance of including a lender in the marketing plan.

“You, your broker and your lender all need to be involved and on the same page,” he emphasized.

He concluded, “The marketing plan will change over time. It’s a living document. If you put it in the drawer and don’t change it, it’s not going to work for you.”

— Kindra Gordon is editor for *Angus Journal*®. This article is reprinted with permission from the *Angus Journal*®’s coverage of the convention for the newsroom at [www.4cattlemen.com](http://www.4cattlemen.com).

## WHAT’S BRV? • FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

These strategies should include a complete vaccination program and control plan for IBR and BVD due to immunosuppressive effects of these viruses. The use of low-stress handling and weaning practices are encouraged, as is early in life castration and dehorning. Controlling internal parasites ahead of weaning will have a positive effect on the calf’s immune system. The nutrition of the cow during pregnancy also plays a vital role here.

Preventing bovine respiratory disease is also good for animal welfare because of the reduction in the number of calves that require antibiotic therapy for the treatment of BRD, as well as the reduction of the death and production losses associated with respiratory disease. Let’s all do our part!

—Dr. David Rethorst is director of outreach for The Cattle Institute at Kansas State University. He can be reached at [drethorst@vet.k-state.edu](mailto:drethorst@vet.k-state.edu).

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## NEXT GENERATION

# What's the Future Plan for Your Farm's Future?

Get ready for challenges, future opportunities

Story By Darren Frye for Cattlemen's News

Exceptional results in a farm operation can happen because of the approach the farm's leaders are taking in their thought. The way that the farm's leaders create and use the operation's long-term plan makes a huge difference to the amount of success or lack thereof in the business. It also affects how the operation ulti-

mately will move into the future with the next generation.

In one family farm operation, multiple family members are leading the operation as a team, including several brothers and their brothers-in-law. Some members of the next generation have recently started to work on the farm

and hope to one day become part of the ownership and leadership team.

The current leadership team has very intentionally developed a future-oriented plan for the operation together. The plan is helping them move strategically toward the biggest goals they have for their operation.



The family members said they've certainly had differing views on some of the decisions they have had to make for the operation, but they've always seen their long-term plan as a rallying piece — that they can all point to and say, 'Yes, that's what we all want for the future.'

They say that plan has kept them moving forward together, regularly making major strategic and financial decisions for their operation — ultimately in agreement with each other.

Once they had this long-term plan in place, they were able to think about how the next generation would eventually

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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ZACTRAN is indicated for the treatment of bovine respiratory disease (BRD) associated with *Mannheimia haemolytica*, *Pasteurella multocida*, *Histophilus somni* and *Mycoplasma bovis* in beef and non-lactating dairy cattle. ZACTRAN is also indicated for the control of respiratory disease in beef and non-lactating dairy cattle at high risk of developing BRD associated with *Mannheimia haemolytica* and *Pasteurella multocida*.

**CONTRAINDICATIONS**  
As with all drugs, the use of ZACTRAN is contraindicated in animals previously found to be hypersensitive to this drug.

**WARNING: FOR USE IN CATTLE ONLY. NOT FOR USE IN HUMANS. KEEP THIS AND ALL DRUGS OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN. NOT FOR USE IN CHICKENS OR TURKEYS.**  
The material safety data sheet (MSDS) contains more detailed occupational safety information. To report adverse effects, obtain an MSDS or for assistance, contact Merial at 1-888-637-4251.

**RESIDUE WARNINGS:** Do not treat cattle within 35 days of slaughter. Because a discard time in milk has not been established, do not use in female dairy cattle 20 months of age or older. A withdrawal period has not been established for this product in pre-ruminating calves. Do not use in calves to be processed for veal.

**PRECAUTIONS**  
The effects of ZACTRAN on bovine reproductive performance, pregnancy, and lactation have not been determined. Subcutaneous injection of ZACTRAN may cause a transient local tissue reaction in some cattle that may result in trim loss of edible tissues at slaughter.

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

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

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**YOUR FARM'S FUTURE FROM PREVIOUS PAGE**

transition into ownership and leadership of the operation and how the older generation would exit.

They say it would have been tough to figure out the right plan for the next generation if they didn't have a clear vision of where the operation was heading. And, that would have made it more difficult to determine how the older generation would be transitioning out of the business as well.

**Planning is everything**

It's impossible for anyone to know what will happen in the future. Still, a plan like the one established by the leaders of this operation is a way for them to say, 'This is where we've determined we want our farm operation to go.' With that in their minds, the farm leaders can create ideas and take action to bring those ideas to life, all based on what's in line with the plan.

Dwight D. Eisenhower once said, "Plans are nothing; planning is everything." It's true, a plan without action is worth nothing. But planning is everything. It allows for the right action to take place. It makes the action possible that will move the farm business forward and on to the next generation. The plan is flexible so it can be adapted quickly to new developments in the future to take advantage of opportunities.

As you think about the future of farming – and the future of your farm – what do you think will be in store? How do you plan to make changes as needed, as outside influences affect the operation?

How do you plan to account for change that can take place within the operation – or within the farm families involved in the operation? Those changes can really affect an operation's transition plan, so the plan has to be adaptable in case any of those situations occur.

One example is if one of the owners were to get divorced. How would that affect the

farm's transition plan? Does the plan already have contingencies built into it that protect the operation and the other owners? These are the types of details that no one wants to think about but can happen. Protection for the operation should be built into the plan.

With all of the information and the things today's farm leader needs to be thinking about, the future of farming will take different thinking – to face different challenges and invite new opportunities than in the past. It's an exciting time to be in agriculture and it will take a new mindset to succeed.

It will also take a certain future-oriented mindset to get the right transition plan for the operation in place and to make sure that it's carried out. Is your operation ready for the challenges and opportunities of the future?

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

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## TRENDING NOW

# Strong Prices to Remain in 2015

## CattleFax: Cow-calf producers still in driver's seat

The popular CattleFax Outlook Session at the 2015 Cattle Industry Convention and National Cattlemen's Beef Association Trade Show gave cattlemen and women reasons to be optimistic. Analysts told the capacity crowd to expect fed cattle prices averaging in the mid-\$150s, slightly higher than last year. Prices will trade in a range from near \$140 at the lows to near \$170 at the highs in the year ahead. While early year highs for 550-pound steers will range from near \$285 to lows near \$235. Analysts cited the improved forage situation, lower grain prices and record margins in 2014 for feeders

and stockers as the primary reason cow-calf producers will remain in the driver's seat for the year ahead.

Despite exceptional prices in 2014, CattleFax CEO Randy Blach said he expects the market peak is behind the cattle industry now.

"We put the top in the market in the past year and the signal for expansion has been transmitted," he said. "We will begin to see some modest expansion in herd numbers now and that will cause prices to trend lower in the years ahead than what we saw in 2014."

He explained that growing supplies of cattle and beef over the next several years will rebalance the normal price and margin environment among industry segments.

"Prices will then retreat back to the lower end of the new trading range," said Blach.

Despite the adjustment, he noted that cow-calf producers will continue to see relatively strong returns over the next four to five years, aided by corn prices expected to average \$3.60 per bushel in 2015 and an improved forage production picture.

Art Douglas, Creighton University professor emeritus, presented the annual weather forecast, which projects moisture conditions in the United States through the summer.

"El Nino conditions have again built across the Pacific and this will fuel a split jet stream pattern into the Southwestern United States. Moisture will gradually increase in February from southern California to the southern High Plains," said Douglas. "Snowpacks in the northern Rockies are expected to remain well below normal at 50-70 percent levels while the southern Rockies should gradually build their snowpack through March. As the jet heads east it will pick up Gulf moisture and lead to above normal rainfall throughout the southeast."

"The pesky ridge in the West will gradually weaken during February and by the spring, this will allow moisture to increase in the Pacific Northwest," he explained. "A strong Great Lakes trough is forecast to keep a broad portion of the United States colder than normal through the spring and early summer."

Douglas said this pattern should lead to delayed planting in the Corn Belt with possible threat of late frosts into the late spring.

"The cool temperatures are likely to persist into early summer, and this will slow crop progress but be ideal for corn pollination in July," he said. "The silver lining in the forecast is that the Midwest should turn warmer by August and September and this will help speed up crop maturation."

—Source: National Cattlemen's Beef Association release.

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



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## PASTURE PLANNING

# Watching for First Hollow Stem

### Be on the lookout for when to pull cattle from wheat pastures

Story By Sean Hubbard

March 15 has historically been a date for wheat producers to remember. Waiting much longer than that to pull cattle from wheat fields would result in a drastic decrease in yield.

Research has shown that First Hollow Stem, a particular growth stage in winter wheat, is the optimal time to pull cattle off wheat to prevent yield loss. Using Mesonet weather and soil data, as well as FHS observations from 1995-2012, researchers at Oklahoma State University have developed a tool for producers to consult when deciding how long to leave cattle on their wheat fields.

“Grazing too long will reduce wheat yields, but removing cattle too early will reduce the profit potential of the stocker cattle enterprise,” says Jeff Edwards, OSU Cooperative Extension small grains specialist. “Finding the correct balance between these two factors has been the subject of investigation for decades.”

Available on the Mesonet website ([mesonet.org](http://mesonet.org)), the FHS Advisor is located in the Agriculture section, under both the “Crop/Wheat” and “Livestock/Cattle” tabs. A guide on how to use the Advisor is located in the “Learn More” section of the website. The tool utilizes a soil temperature-based model to predict when FHS will occur.

“Looking at a variety of weather and soil variables, we found that 4-inch soil temperatures under vegetative cover were best correlated to FHS dates,” explains J.D. Carlson, agricultural and fire meteorologist in the department of bio-systems and agricultural engineering at OSU, and developer of the models used in the tool. “The Advisor includes separate models for three different FHS categories of wheat varieties – early, middle and late.”

By visiting the website, producers can select their wheat variety to determine its category. Then maps, graphs and tables will provide information on the probability of FHS occurrence.

“Three maps are available for each FHS category,” Carlson states. “They include a current map of observed soil heat unit accumulations since model start date, projected one-week soil heat unit totals and projected two-week soil heat unit totals.”

The projected maps employ soil heat units based on 14-year daily averages of observed Mesonet soil temperatures over the next seven or 14 days from the current date. To arrive at these projections, the soil heat units over the next seven and 14 days are then added to the current heat totals.

In addition to soil heat unit totals, prob-

abilities for FHS are shown. A color scheme is used to show these levels of probability – blues for FHS probabilities less than 5 percent, greens for 5 to 10 percent, yellows for 10 to 25 percent, oranges for 25 to 50 percent, reds for 50 to 75 percent and browns for more than 75 percent.

“We recommend scouting for FHS in ungrazed fields once the 5 percent probability levels (greens) start occurring in the grower’s area, as FHS development starts to speed up at that point,” Carlson says. “For those who don’t scout, we recommend removing cattle by the date the 50 percent level is reached.”

A 50 percent probability level means that over an extended multi-year period (e.g., 100 years) FHS would have occurred by that date in 50 percent of those years. The same interpretation applies for other percentage values.

—Source: Oklahoma State University Agricultural Communications Services

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## Cow Inventory Takes Small Steps

### Fastest growth in Southern Plains

Story By Derrell S. Peel

The inventory of all cattle and calves was 89.8 million head on Jan. 1, 2015, though up 1.4 percent from last year, is still the smallest total herd inventory since 1952, excluding last year. The 2014 calf crop was up 0.5 percent from 2013 at 33.9 million head. The 2014 calf crop percentage (calf crop as a percent of all cows) was 88.5 percent, the highest percentage since 2006. Total U.S. cattle on feed on Jan. 1 was 13.1 million head, up one percent from last year. The estimated supply of feeder cattle outside feedlots was up 0.5 percent as a result of one percent increases in the inventory of steers, 500 pounds and over and calves, under 500 pounds; along with a slight decrease in the inventory of other heifers. Dairy cows and dairy replacement heifers were up one percent from one year ago.

The U.S. beef cowherd grew by 2.1 percent in 2014 to 29.7 million head according to the Jan. 2015 Cattle report. Though beef cow herd expansion was anticipated, this was a larger than expected increase. The largest increases were in Texas, at 107 percent of last year; and Oklahoma, up 6 percent from one year ago. These two states accounted for 62 percent of the total increase in the beef cowherd. Kansas and Missouri (see related article on page 16 of this issue) each accounted for about 10 percent of the cowherd increase meaning that those four states accounted for 82 percent of the total increase in beef cows. The increase in Texas beef cow inventory was higher than expected because, despite improved conditions, significant areas of drought remain in the state.

Some other surprising data in the report included the fact that California beef cow inventories were unchanged despite the severe drought in 2014, along with Oregon, which also experienced significant drought but had a 1.7 percent increase in the beef cow herd in the state. The lack of growth in the Northern Plains was also somewhat surprising with decreased beef cowherds in North and South

Dakota and a Nebraska beef cow herd unchanged from one year ago.

The inventory of beef replacement heifers was up 4 percent year over year indicating that further expansion is planned on the part of cow-calf producers. Jan. 1 beef replacement heifers, as a percent of the beef cowherd was a record 19.5 percent, indicating intensive heifer retention. Moreover, the calculated percent of heifers entering the herd in 2014 jumped 23 percent year-over-year, with those heifers entering the herd representing 96 percent of NASS reported heifers expected to calve in 2014.

Oklahoma beef replacement heifers were up 80,000 head, a 25 percent year-over-year increase, and accounted for 35 percent of the total increase in replacement heifers. The beef replacement heifer increase of 8 percent in Texas and the 12 percent increase in South Dakota, were the second and third largest increases in absolute numbers and, when combined with Oklahoma, represent 75 percent of the total increase in beef replacement heifers. Kansas also had an 8 percent year-over-year increase in beef replacement heifers.

This report does not change market fundamentals much, if any, in 2015. The fact that there are more cows than expected does not change the timing of beef production in 2015. The marginal increase in estimated feeder provides little relief to tight feeder numbers and might be offset with even more heifer retention and the possibility of smaller feeder cattle imports from Mexico and Canada this year. The jump-start to herd expansion could shave a year off of the time needed for herd rebuilding, depending on herd expansion in 2015 and beyond. In any event, herd expansion is expected to continue until late in the decade, barring setbacks from drought.

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

## Creating User-Friendly Replacement Heifers

### How to get heifers to become productive cows

By Rebecca Mettler

Patsy Houghton, Heartland Cattle Company near McCook, Nebraska, spoke at the Impacting the Beef Business with Maternal Influence panel discussion at the 2015 American Gelbvieh Association Annual Convention.

Heartland Cattle Company is in the business of professional heifer development, as Houghton pioneered the term. The team develops females for customers on a custom and contractual basis. Heartland Cattle Company also conducts commercial research development as well as provides calf-weaning services. Houghton discussed the importance of properly developing replacement females so they have the best opportunity to become productive cows and remain in the herd.

“You can’t have production without reproduction,” Houghton said. “If we can’t keep that female in the herd and keep her producing, it doesn’t matter what kind of growth is in that female, what kind of milk genetics, or what kind of carcass genetics she has. If she’s going to leave the herd, it’s going to be a wasted effort on everybody’s part.”

She explained that a good debate going on in the beef industry is proper heifer development, the various programs and the differences in them.

“I would submit to you that any of us in the heifer development business, whether you are on ranch or do it on a professional basis, our goal is to make user-friendly cows for our customers,” Houghton said.

Houghton keeps extensive records on the females they develop for their customers. Body condition scoring (BCS) and average daily gain are two data collection points that the group has been collecting for years.

Body condition should be kept under control in order for a heifer to reach their genetic potential, according to Houghton.

“Once you get a heifer fatter than a high five (BCS) and right

up to a six, she just falls off in terms of fertility,” Houghton said.

She argues that in a high-roughage, limit-fed dry-lot situation, she is able to better control daily gain and body condition.

Houghton believes that a \$3,000 properly developed, genetically selected heifer is considered a bargain in today’s market. As a rule of thumb, bred heifers are expected to bring two and one-half times the current calf prices.

Providing her customers data on the value of a properly developed and genetically selected heifer is important to her. Houghton compared properly developed heifers to data from the industry average.

Data concluded that a 10 percent difference in the number of calves weaned by first-calf heifers was present.

“When those cattle are developed properly, we get 97 out of 100 of those heifers to wean a calf, in contrast to only 87 head,” Houghton said.

Again, the user-friendly traits of disposition, calving ease, fertility and immune response make the difference, according to Houghton.

By the time a female reaches her second calf, there’s 8 percent improvement in the retention of young cows in the herd. The challenge for producers is rebreeding and keeping those second-calf heifers.

“See how this builds upon each other,” Houghton said. “See how important stayability is and how it has so much impact.”

It’s imperative for farmers and ranchers to see the value in a properly developed replacement heifer. Managing heifers correctly can positively affect production throughout the females’ lifetime and thus positively increasing the ranch’s bottom line.

—Source: American Gelbvieh Association.



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<sup>1</sup> Zoetis Trial MC013-07-AULA13 (Colorado study). <sup>2</sup> Zoetis Trial MC014-07-AULA13 (South Dakota study). <sup>3</sup> Zoetis Trial MC014-07-AULA13 (Oklahoma study). <sup>4</sup> Zoetis Trial MC017-07-AULA13 (New Mexico study).

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# Missouri Records Highest Cattle Inventory Since 2010

## Arkansas cattle numbers unchanged

Story From Our Staff

Missouri's cattle farmers and ranchers expanded their cattle herds for the second year in a row, according to Missouri Cattlemen's Association Executive Vice President Mike Deering. The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) released its 2015 cattle inventory report revealing that the

Missouri cattle herd expanded to the tune of 150,000 head — 300,000 head above 2013. The report shows Missouri's total cattle inventory is at 4 million head, making Missouri one of the top six states for herd expansion.

Missouri State Statistician for USDA-NASS Robert Garino said Missouri cattle farmers

and ranchers are seeing cattle numbers at levels they haven't seen for several years.

"This is the first time Missouri has been at 4 million head since 2010. After adding 103,000 beef cows in 2013, beef cow

numbers increased by 61,000 in 2014 to 1.881 million," said Garino. "That put Missouri third in beef cows, just 19,000 head below Oklahoma."

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE




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**INDICATIONS FOR USE**  
LONGRANGE, when administered at the recommended dose volume of 1 mL per 110 lb (50 kg) body weight, is effective in the treatment and control of 20 species and stages of internal and external parasites of cattle:

Gastrointestinal Roundworms	Lungworms
<i>Bunostomum phlebotomum</i> – Adults and L <sub>3</sub>	<i>Dictyocaulus viviparus</i> – Adults
<i>Cooperia oncophora</i> – Adults and L <sub>3</sub>	
<i>Cooperia punctata</i> – Adults and L <sub>3</sub>	
<i>Cooperia surnabada</i> – Adults and L <sub>3</sub>	
<i>Haemonchus placei</i> – Adults	<b>Grubs</b>
<i>Oesophagostomum radiatum</i> – Adults	<i>Hypoderma bovis</i>
<i>Ostertagia lyrata</i> – Adults	
<i>Ostertagia ostertagi</i> – Adults, L <sub>3</sub> , and inhibited L <sub>4</sub>	
<i>Trichostrongylus axei</i> – Adults and L <sub>3</sub>	<b>Mites</b>
<i>Trichostrongylus colubriformis</i> – Adults	<i>Sarcoptes scabiei</i> var. <i>bovis</i>

Parasites	Durations of Persistent Effectiveness
<b>Gastrointestinal Roundworms</b>	
<i>Bunostomum phlebotomum</i>	150 days
<i>Cooperia oncophora</i>	100 days
<i>Cooperia punctata</i>	100 days
<i>Haemonchus placei</i>	120 days
<i>Oesophagostomum radiatum</i>	120 days
<i>Ostertagia lyrata</i>	120 days
<i>Ostertagia ostertagi</i>	120 days
<i>Trichostrongylus axei</i>	100 days
<b>Lungworms</b>	
<i>Dictyocaulus viviparus</i>	150 days

**DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION**  
LONGRANGE® (eprinomectin) should be given only by subcutaneous injection in front of the shoulder at the recommended dosage level of 1 mg eprinomectin per kg body weight (1 mL per 110 lb body weight).

**WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS**

**Withdrawal Periods and Residue Warnings**  
Animals intended for human consumption must not be slaughtered within 48 days of the last treatment.  
This drug product is not approved for use in female dairy cattle 20 months of age or older, including dry dairy cows. Use in these cattle may cause drug residues in milk and/or in calves born to these cows.  
A withdrawal period has not been established for pre-ruminating calves. Do not use in calves to be processed for veal.

**Animal Safety Warnings and Precautions**  
The product is likely to cause tissue damage at the site of injection, including possible granulomas and necrosis. These reactions have disappeared without treatment. Local tissue reaction may result in trim loss of edible tissue at slaughter.

Observe cattle for injection site reactions. If injection site reactions are suspected, consult your veterinarian. This product is not for intravenous or intramuscular use. Protect product from light. LONGRANGE® (eprinomectin) has been developed specifically for use in cattle only. This product should not be used in other animal species.

**When to Treat Cattle with Grubs**  
LONGRANGE effectively controls all stages of cattle grubs. However, proper timing of treatment is important. For the most effective results, cattle should be treated as soon as possible after the end of the heel fly (warble fly) season.

**Environmental Hazards**  
Not for use in cattle managed in feedlots or under intensive rotational grazing because the environmental impact has not been evaluated for these scenarios.

**Other Warnings:** Underdosing and/or subtherapeutic concentrations of extended-release anthelmintic products may encourage the development of parasite resistance. It is recommended that parasite resistance be monitored following the use of any anthelmintic with the use of a fecal egg count reduction test program.

**TARGET ANIMAL SAFETY**  
Clinical studies have demonstrated the wide margin of safety of LONGRANGE® (eprinomectin). Overdosing at 3 to 5 times the recommended dose resulted in a statistically significant reduction in average weight gain when compared to the group tested at label dose. Treatment-related lesions observed in most cattle administered the product included swelling, hyperemia, or necrosis in the subcutaneous tissue of the skin. The administration of LONGRANGE at 3 times the recommended therapeutic dose had no adverse reproductive effects on beef cows at all stages of breeding or pregnancy or on their calves. Not for use in bulls, as reproductive safety testing has not been conducted in males intended for breeding or actively breeding. Not for use in calves less than 3 months of age because safety testing has not been conducted in calves less than 3 months of age.

**STORAGE**  
Store at 77° F (25° C) with excursions between 59° and 86° F (15° and 30° C). Protect from light.

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## CATTLE INVENTORY FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Garino said what made the 2015 report different from the 2014 report is the widespread growth in cow numbers across the country. Unlike previous years, Oklahoma and Texas both experienced herd expansion. The 2015 report shows that Oklahoma's cow herd expanded by 150,000 head.

"This year, unlike last year, a lot of other states also saw big jumps in inventory," he said. "At the U.S. level, all cattle increased by 1 percent to 89.8 million head, the first increase since 2007. U.S. beef cow numbers were up 2 percent to 29.7 million, the first increase since 2006."

Deering said Missouri beef cow numbers were not the only increase; the state's calf crop moved up 30,000 head to 1.76 million, which is the first increase since 2005. The report also showed that bulls moved up 10,000 head, which is the most since 2010.

### Arkansas Cattle Numbers Hold

As overall cattle numbers across the country inched up by one percent in 2014, beef cattle numbers in Arkansas remained unchanged while dairy cattle numbers dropped significantly, according to the Jan. 1 cattle inventory report.

The report shows overall U.S. cattle — including all cattle and calves — increasing 1 percent over Jan. 1, 2014 numbers to 89.9 million head as of Jan. 1, 2015. Almost all categories of cattle — including heifers, steers, bulls and calves weighing less than 500 lbs. — increased across the country.

While the overall number is an increase over the Jan. 1, 2014 cattle census of 88.5 million head, it is still significantly lower than the 25-year peak of more than 103 million head across the country in 1996.

In Arkansas, however, total cattle and calves across the state decreased by 1 percent to about 1.64 million head, with several other benchmark numbers remaining roughly the same. While the number of bulls remained unchanged at 55,000 head and the number of calves weighing less than 500 lbs. increased from 360,000 to 380,000, the number of adult steers decreased by 15,000 head to 130,000.

The number of Arkansas beef cows that calved in 2014 increased slightly over the previous year, from 862,000 to 863,000, but the number of milk cows that calved in 2014 dropped by 12 percent from 2013 numbers, from 8,000 head to 7,000.

University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Professor Tom Troxel said calving rates across the country during 2014 were strong.

"On a positive note, the 2014 U.S. calf crop was reported at 33.9 million, which implies a crop percentage of 89 percent, the highest percentage since 2006," Troxel said. The figure means that about 89 percent of all cows and heifers produced calves.


"The increase in calf crop percentage may be a result of culling unproductive cows, primarily due to drought over the past 3-5 years."

Arkansas ranchers enjoyed cool spring and summer with plenty of rain throughout the state in 2014, a situation that Troxel said could set the stage for ranchers to increase their herds.

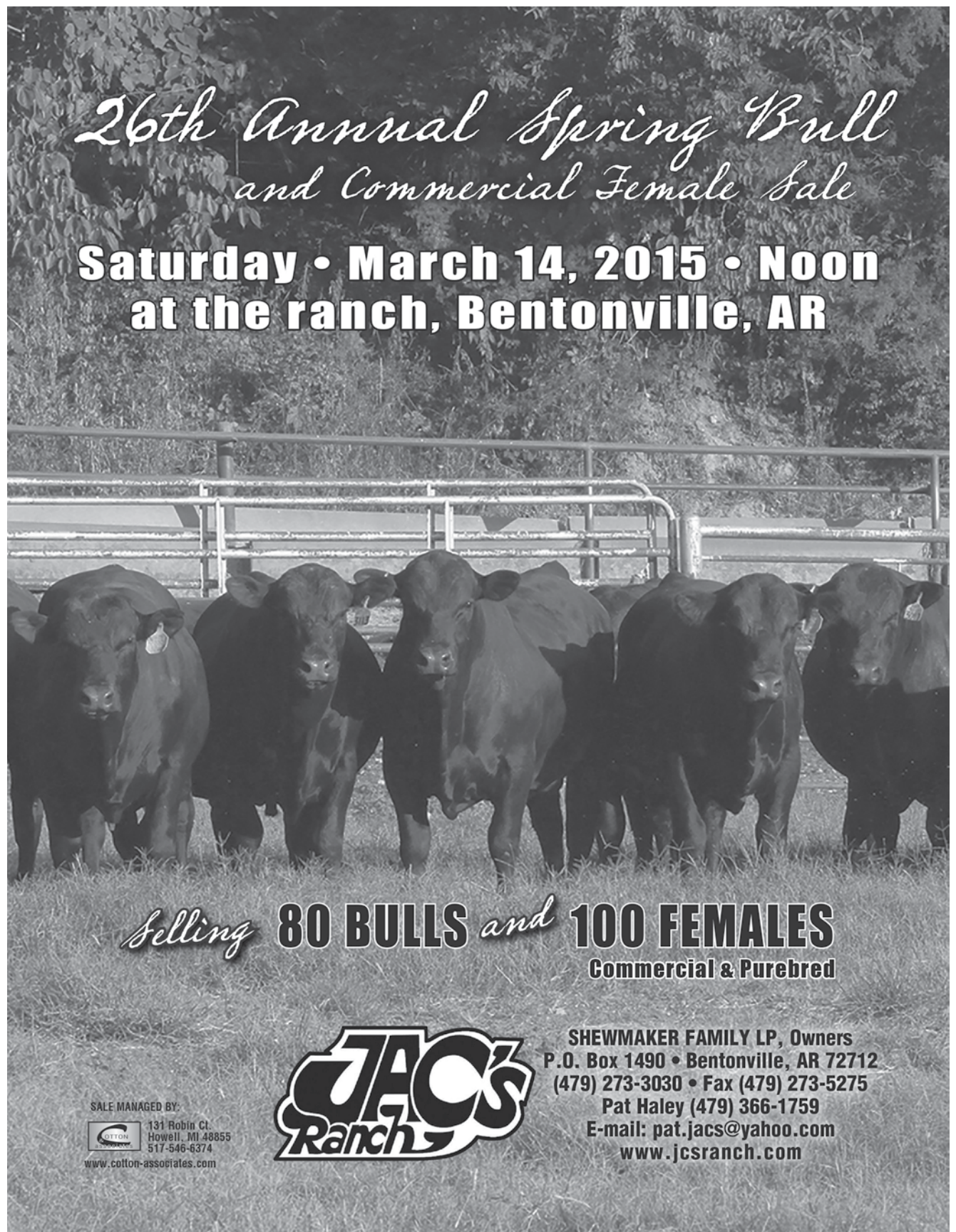
"With record prices, many cattle producers found it very difficult to keep extra heifers," Troxel said. "Other ranchers, given the extra forage and hay production, decided to retain extra heifers to expand their herd size for future production."

Troxel said cattle producers will likely see high selling prices in 2015, and many producers are expecting prices for weaned and yearling calves to average 13 and 10 percent higher, respectively, over last year's prices in 2015.

He said the slight increase in supply across the country might take a while to affect the average consumer's pocketbook, however.

"I don't anticipate any decline in retail price of meat until 2016," Troxel said. 

—Source: Adapted from releases by the Missouri Cattlemen's Association and University of Arkansas Extension Service.




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# What Leprechauns and Grass Tetany Have in Common

Magnesium plays key role in preventing this prevalent springtime disease

Story By Elizabeth Walker for Cattleman's News

In previous articles, I have discussed how certain minerals had trouble playing nice with other minerals. A good example of one of those problem minerals is magnesium. Perhaps magnesium (Mg) isn't the problem child. It seems, however, other minerals don't want to share or play nice with Mg and



when that happens, our cattle suffer the consequences. Fortunately, grass tetany, also called hypomagnesemia or grass staggers, isn't typically a year-round problem.

Grass tetany occurs most often in cattle grazing cereal grains such as tall fescue, rye and bluestem in the spring as weather fluctuates between cool, wet and cloudy to days of sunshine and warmth. These conditions are ideal for growing cool season grasses. Consequently, once we have sustained warmth, and soil temperatures reach 55 degrees or higher, grasses have a greater ability to absorb Mg from the soil, thus providing more Mg in the biomass of the stand, lessening the occurrences of grass tetany.

Obtaining spring forage samples is a good idea, especially if grassy tetany has been an issue or if you have recently fertilized your pastures. Levels of Mg in forages should constitute 0.20 to 0.25 percent of the plant on a dry matter basis.

However, other minerals also contribute to grass tetany. Soil and plants with elevated nitrogen levels along with high potassium (K) can exacerbate grass tetany problems. Potassium levels greater than 3 percent on a dry matter basis, interfere with Mg absorption in the rumen and reticulum of the cow. High nitrogen or ammonia (greater than 25 percent crude protein) might also interfere with Mg absorption. Hence, the reason for increased occurrences of grass tetany in newly fertilized fields where cool season grasses, especially cereal grains, are growing. Nitrogen and K can tie up Mg in the soil preventing the roots from absorbing Mg, making it unavailable to the animal.

In addition, low levels of sodium (Na), calcium (Ca) and phosphorus (P) can contribute to grass tetany. Nutrient ratios also contribute to grass tetany in grazing cattle. Ratios of 10:1 and 20:1 for K:Na and K:Mg lessen the risk for grass tetany. However, if those ratios increase above 10:1 for K:Na and 20:1 for K:Mg, animals may suffer from increased occurrences of tetany. Forage Na levels need to be above 0.15 percent on a dry matter basis and Ca levels need to stay above 0.4 percent. Low P values in feedstuffs usually mean those feeds will be low in Mg because P typically enhances Mg absorption in the rumen.

Animals most susceptible to grass tetany include mature, heavy-milking females along with newly weaned or stressed calves. In addition, animals used to hay or that have been under drought conditions are also susceptible to tetany after exposure to green, lush grass. Tetany cases have also been reported on cattle consuming grass hay, silage or even corn stover. Any feedstuff low in Mg or imbalanced in regards to the minerals listed above can cause tetany.

Initial signs of Mg deficiency include decreased appetite and milk yield, slight nervousness, anemia and udder edema. If not treated, signs might be elevated to nervousness, muscle twitching, loss

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



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<sup>1</sup> Dependent upon parasite species, as referenced in FOI summary and LONGRANGE product label.  
<sup>2</sup> LONGRANGE product label.  
<sup>3</sup> Data on file at Merial.



## TRENDING NOW

# Heart-healthy Beef Gets Nod

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of voluntary coordination of muscle movements, spasm, rigidity of the back, listlessness and staggering. Animals might also be easily excited and might keep their heads and ears in an erect position. Often times, the only sign of trouble is a dead cow, lying on her side with her head pulled back.

Ensuring the animal has enough Mg in her diet is the best way to prevent grass tetany. A loose, palatable mineral with at least 10 to 15 percent Mg should be provided at least 30 days prior to the spring green up. Make sure your mineral is fresh and easily accessible to all livestock, especially lactating cows. Also, make sure they are eating a sufficient quantity of mineral. Many premade minerals suggest consumption at the rate of about 3 to 4 oz. per head per day. Be sure to record or note when you put mineral out so you can keep track of mineral consumption. In addition to a mineral program, allowing animal's access to a pasture that is at least 30 percent legumes, like those lucky clovers), can also help prevent grass tetany as legumes are typically higher in Mg than grasses. Dumb luck hits us all, but smart management can prevent many production problems, and with any luck at all, grass tetany is one that can be prevented.

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

The Beef Checkoff Program announced that Extra Lean Ground Beef, ground beef that is at least 96 percent lean, 4 percent fat, is now certified by the American Heart Association® to display its recognized and respected Heart-Check mark. Retailers now have the opportunity to help identify eight different extra lean beef items as options for part of an overall healthy diet to their shoppers using one

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tip steak (USDA Select grade); top sirloin petite roast, boneless (USDA Select grade); top sirloin strips (USDA Select grade); top sirloin filet (USDA Select grade); top sirloin kabob (USDA Select grade); and top sirloin steak, boneless, center cut (USDA Select grade).

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—Source: MyBeefCheckoff.com.

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# Demand Strategies

## Understanding beef's consumer and checkoff programs

Story By Kindra Gordon, Field Editor, Angus Journal®

Polly Ruhland, CEO of the Cattlemen's Beef Board, kicked off a beef checkoff update session at the 2015 Cattle Industry Convention in San Antonio by asking attendees to consider one powerful question: "Why?"

She noted, "Everyone knows what they do. Some know how their organizations work. But few [take time to] know why they do what they do. What's your purpose? Why do you get out of bed in the morning?"

She went on to share a short video clip from a TED talk by Simon Sinek that highlighted the

importance of identifying and understanding "why" to business and organization success. Sinek essentially explains that the most successful companies—such as Apple—have surpassed their competitors because of their focus on "why" they are in business. (Watch the TED talk here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sioZd3AxmE>).

Ruhland added that "making money" is a result people want from what they do, but for most in the cattle industry preserving their business and passing their land and life's work on

to the next generation is truly their "why."

To that she said, "We [the Beef Board] are here today to bring more beef eaters into the environment. Why? To preserve your business for future generations."

Ruhland then asked who in the audience believed the beef industry's future lies in the hands of the populous ages 19 to 36 living in metropolitan areas like Los Angeles, New York and Beijing? She responded, "I do. Your future rests in the hands of a 22-year-old in LA (Los Angeles) ...without whom we [the beef industry] could not survive."

She added, "Consumers truly hold your future in their

hands." She encouraged those serving on checkoff committees to keep this in mind as they met and worked with committee members to help establish a long-range plan for beef checkoff programs.

To further emphasize the role of consumers, Ruhland highlighted insights from the Industry Scan report—the continued need for educating consumers about beef nutrition with a foundation of sound science; designing beef messages and products to reach the key beef consumer audience of older millennial parents; and continuing to focus on providing the best quality of beef, especially in these times of higher retail prices.

Ruhland said as global desire for U.S. beef has hit an all-time high, "the global marketplace is something the American beef industry should pursue aggressively."

To speak to the interest in beef by global consumers, Homero Recio, president and chief operating officer of meat export company Agri-West International, provided an overview of trends around the world.

He noted that flavor is a big trend, saying, "The world loves the flavor of U.S. beef, and consumers around the world are enjoying experimenting with flavors from around the world." He cited Asian, Middle Eastern and other cultural flavors as examples.

Recio shared that growth of the middle class around the world—particularly in Asia—is helping boost people's ability to buy beef. As examples of efforts to supply the increasing demand for lean beef, in Japan high-end steak houses, Japanese restaurants, and even take-out meals are emerging featuring a variety of beef cuts for diners.

Recio also provided updates on consumer trends in Hong Kong and Mexico as places where more opportunities for beef sales are expected over the next few years. He concluded, "Clearly, export markets will be a big part of your [American beef's] future."

— Kindra Gordon is editor for Angus Journal®. This article is reprinted with permission from the Angus Journal®'s coverage of the convention for the newsroom at [www.4cattlemen.com](http://www.4cattlemen.com).

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# Dietary Guidelines Proposal Misleads Consumers

## Lower red meat recommendation not backed by science

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture released the 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee's report. This report is a recommendation to U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Sylvia Burwell and U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack as they develop the 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans that will be released later this year. Unfortunately, the report is inconsistent and if adopted will lead to conflicting dietary advice. On one hand, the committee has endorsed the Mediterranean style diet, which has higher red meat levels than currently consumed in the U.S.; on the other hand, they have left lean meat out of what they consider to be a healthy dietary pattern.

Dr. Shalene McNeill, registered dietitian and nutrition scientist with National Cattlemen's Beef Association, said the recommendation that a healthy dietary pattern should be lower in red meat is not consistent with scientific evidence and would be unsound dietary advice.

"Lean meat is red meat," said McNeill. "Today's beef supply is leaner than ever before with more than 30 cuts of beef recognized as lean by government standards. The protein foods category, which includes meat, is the only category currently consumed within the current guidelines, and it is misleading to conclude that a healthy dietary pattern should be lower in red meat."

According to the report, "dietary patterns with positive health benefits are described as high in vegetables, fruit, whole grains, seafood, legumes and nuts; moderate in low- and non-fat dairy products; lower in red and processed meat; and low in sugar-sweetened foods and beverages and refined grains."

Unfortunately, the statement disregards the positive role of lean beef, which is one of the most nutrient-rich foods, providing high levels of essential nutrients such as zinc, iron and protein, as opposed to empty calories.

Dr. Richard Thorpe, Texas medical doctor and cattle producer, said the key to a healthy lifestyle is building a balanced diet around the healthy foods you enjoy eating, coupled with physical activity.

"It is absurd for the advisory committee to suggest that Americans should eat less red meat and focus so heavily on plant-based diets," said Thorpe. "The American diet is already 70 percent plant-based and to further emphasize plant-based diets will continue to have unintended consequences. The Advisory Committee got it wrong in the '80s advising a diet high in carbs, and look at what that got us - an obesity problem. My colleagues and I commonly encourage people to include lean beef more often for their health, not less."

Thorpe added, "We are disappointed the advisory committee would go outside the purview and expertise of nutrition/health research to bring in topics such as sustainability. We urge the Secretaries to reject the advisory committee's recommendations on topics outside of diet and health."

Lean meat plays an important role in the American diet and science shows it needs to be recognized as part of a healthy dietary pattern just as it was in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. On behalf of U.S. cattle producers that work each and every day to provide a nutritious and healthful beef product for consumers, we encourage Secretaries Burwell and Vilsack to reject the advisory committee's recommendation that healthy American diets should be lower in red meat. The process was incomplete with flawed conclusions specific to health benefits of red meat's role in the American diet.

—National Cattlemen's Beef Association

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 CE BW WW YW MA CM SC DC CW RE YG MS \$MI  
 7 3.2 74 109 26 6 0.6 22 39 .49 .03 .24 60

**MAGS BAYOU**  
 02.27.14 - Het Blk - Het Pld - 56.3% LF  
 MAGS ZODIAC X MAGS ZOUTCH  
 CE BW WW YW MA CM SC DC CW RE YG MS \$MI  
 13 -0.6 70 109 29 8 0.2 -- 34 .52 -.08 .35 64

**MAGS BROADWAY**  
 02.18.14 - Homo Blk - Het Pld - 56.3% LF  
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# Developing a Healthier, More Profitable Calf

## Hilton outlines preconditioning done right

Story By Miranda Reiman, Certified Angus Beef

“How many of you who sell calves want that feedlot guy to make a pile of money on your calves?”

When veterinarian Mark Hilton, Purdue University, asked a crowd of producers that question during the 22nd Cattlemen’s College, hands shot up all over the room. The Feb. 4 session during the 2015 Cattle Industry Convention & NCBA Trade Show focused on one of

the most important ways cattlemen can ensure profit down the line: health.

Hilton recommended a preventative approach.

“I’m a low-medicine veterinarian,” he said. “I want to use management instead of medicine and money.” Producers should focus on nutrition, genetics and creating the best environment, starting from gestation until the

calves are marketed.

Weaning is a critical time, and Hilton encouraged a good preconditioning program — the longer, the better.

“The more days we precondition the calves, the more profit,” Hilton said.

A 10-year analysis of Indiana beef herds showed after adjusting for expenses, like feed and medicine (including labor), preconditioning for 60 days or more generally produced \$80.17 profit.

Low feed costs coupled with high cattle prices put an exclamation point on that in today’s marketplace.

“2014 was the biggest ‘no brain-er’ year in history to precondi-

tion your calves,” he said. Those putting on the most weight during the postweaning phase earned \$210.15 last year. “2015 could be even better,” Hilton said.

He shared four keys to success:

**1. Team Building.** Get a team of experts who are willing to continue learning with you, he said. That might include a veterinarian, nutritionist, Extension personnel, etc.

**2. Weight gain.** “In preconditioning, if you’re not having those calves gain a significant amount of weight — you’re not going to have as much profit in them,” he said, sharing examples of 3-pound average daily gains prior to feedlot arrival. “The genetics we’ve got today — they can do it. They can put it right on and not get fleshy.” Calves just maintain weight during the first week of preconditioning, so every additional week you keep them helps the bottom line. “We want to dilute out that first week and make it not a big deal,” Hilton said.

**3. Herd health and nutrition.** Finding the right vaccination program and its timing is essential to preconditioning success. “I’m not going to tell you what diseases to vaccinate for, because I don’t know. I’ve only practiced in two states,” he said, encouraging one-on-one consultations with a veterinarian. In the Indiana study, 79 percent of the cost of preconditioning was in the form of hay and feed, Hilton said, underscoring the importance of nutrition.

**4. Marketing.** “Build a résumé for your calves,” he said. “Your calves are special. You need to build a résumé for them.” That includes finding out more about how the calves do after weaning, either by retaining some ownership or participating in a small-scale feedout. Hilton said the bottom line is that health pays, but it pays more when marketing matches management.

“If you are not adding value to your calves, you are making a huge mistake leaving money on the table and giving my feedlot owners a lot poorer quality cattle,” he said.

—Source: Miranda Reiman, is with Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) for Angus Journal®. This article is reprinted with permission from the Angus Journal®’s coverage of the convention for the newsroom at [www.4cattlemen.com](http://www.4cattlemen.com).

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## Hand in Hand

### Consider BVD/PI testing as part of your animal health plan

Story By Joann Pipkin, Editor

Yes, BVD is still a problem in the beef industry.

“The problem with the problem is that we don’t really know how big the issue is,” explains Dr. Brian Vander Ley, assistant professor, University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine.

BVD — or bovine viral diarrhea — occurs in two forms: persistent infection and acute infection. PI/BVD are the calves that carry the virus and spread it to others in the herd. Acute infection, on the other hand, is the most common form of the disease. Cattle with this form recover from the disease despite the fact it might cause, among other issues, abortions in cows.

Vander Ley has researched BVD diagnostics, particularly the distribution of BVD throughout the bodies of animals that were infected. He hopes in an up-coming project to find a way to manipulate that technology so the industry can do a better job of identifying herds that are infected with BVD without having to test individual animals.

“We hope to work on surveillance strategies that are more user-friendly than current test methods,” Vander Ley explains.

While PI testing plays a key role in controlling BVD, Vander Ley maintains it is not the magical silver bullet to curing the problem.

“Disease control is about three different things,” he says. First, biosecurity measures should be taken to prevent introduction of pathogens into a herd. Second, animals should be vaccinated to prevent serious illness if efforts to exclude pathogens fail. And third, record should be used to track infections in herds and monitor treatment success so that disease prevention efforts can be optimized. “PI testing removes the source from within the herd,” he notes. “Vaccinating those animals provides another level of protection.”

The glitch with PI testing is that it often is performed at the wrong time and it’s not happening universally, Vander Ley says. “In other words, just because you are testing, doesn’t mean your neighbor is.”

PI testing cattle in the feedlot sector can be effective it depends on a lot of factors. “There’s a much better value in having the calf removed long before it ever gets to the feedlot,” Vander Ley says.

According to Vander Ley, calving time is ideal, but certainly the earlier in a calf’s life the better.

Cattlemen ear tag, take weights and record birth information when a calf is born. He maintains that would be the perfect time to go ahead and notch the calf’s ear for PI testing.

“At that point, you’ve limited the amount

of contact that calf has had with other animals should it test positive,” Vander Ley explains.

The Missouri Department of Agriculture Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory in Springfield tested over 35,000 samples for BVD/PI with only 0.6 percent of the samples testing positive for the disease, according to MDA public information officer Sarah Alsager.

Alsager encourages producers to consult with their veterinarian prior to implementing a BVD testing program to establish their goals and protocols to follow upon notification of test results. The veterinarian should evaluate the results to determine if additional testing is required.

Vander Ley agrees. “PI testing goes hand in hand with all the other management protocols in the cow-calf industry like preconditioning, good nutrition, weaning, all of those tasks that help make a calf healthier when it leaves the farm — and stay healthier when it gets to the feedlot.”



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BW: 86 lbs. AWW: 765 lbs.  
Ledger x Makers Mark x Rio Blanco  
EPDs: CE: 6.1 BW: 0.5 WW: 33 YW: 72 M: 15 TM: 32



Lot 45 #378 Pld BD: 11/21/13  
BW: 86 lbs. AWW: 771 lbs.  
Ledger x Rio Blanco x Wyoming Wind  
EPDs: CE: 5.2 BW: 0.4 WW: 33 YW: 68 M: 15 TM: 32



Lot 3 #356 Pld BD: 8/25/13  
BW: 86 lbs. AWW: 793 lbs.  
Wrangler x Grid Maker x D040  
EPDs: CE: 9.4 BW: 0.8 WW: 46 YW: 72 M: 10 TM: 33



Lot 37 #361 Pld BD: 8/27/13  
BW: 84 lbs. AWW: 756 lbs.  
Grid Maker x Polled Value  
EPDs: CE: 5.7 BW: 0.3 WW: 30 YW: 61 M: 14 TM: 29



Lot 2 #357 Pld BD: 8/25/13  
BW: 86 lbs. AWW: 772 lbs.  
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EPDs: CE: 9.4 BW: 0.8 WW: 46 YW: 72 M: 10 TM: 33

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## TRENDING NOW

# Labor Dispute Dampens Meat Exports

### West Coast port controversy could impact beef industry

Story By Lisa Henderson for Cattlemen's News

U.S. meat export companies are growing increasingly concerned about the long-term implications of work slowdowns by longshoremen at West Coast ports. The situation is critical for beef and pork exporters as Asian markets accounted for more than \$2 billion in chilled beef and pork purchases in 2014.

Last month, U.S. Labor Secretary Tom Perez traveled to California to help negotiate an agreement between shipping companies and dockworkers, but the slowdown had already cost U.S. exporters billions of dollars.

During the Cattle Industry Convention and NCBA Trade Show last month in San Antonio, Jay Theiler, executive di-

rector of marketing for AgriBeef, Boise, Idaho, said the slowdown "is costing the U.S. economy \$1 billion a day."

As an exporter of high-quality beef to Pacific Rim countries, Theiler said the slowdown had already cost his company \$10 to \$15 million.

"We're getting out about 20 percent of our product that we normally export," he said.

AgriBeef and other meat exporters have shipped some product via air transport in an

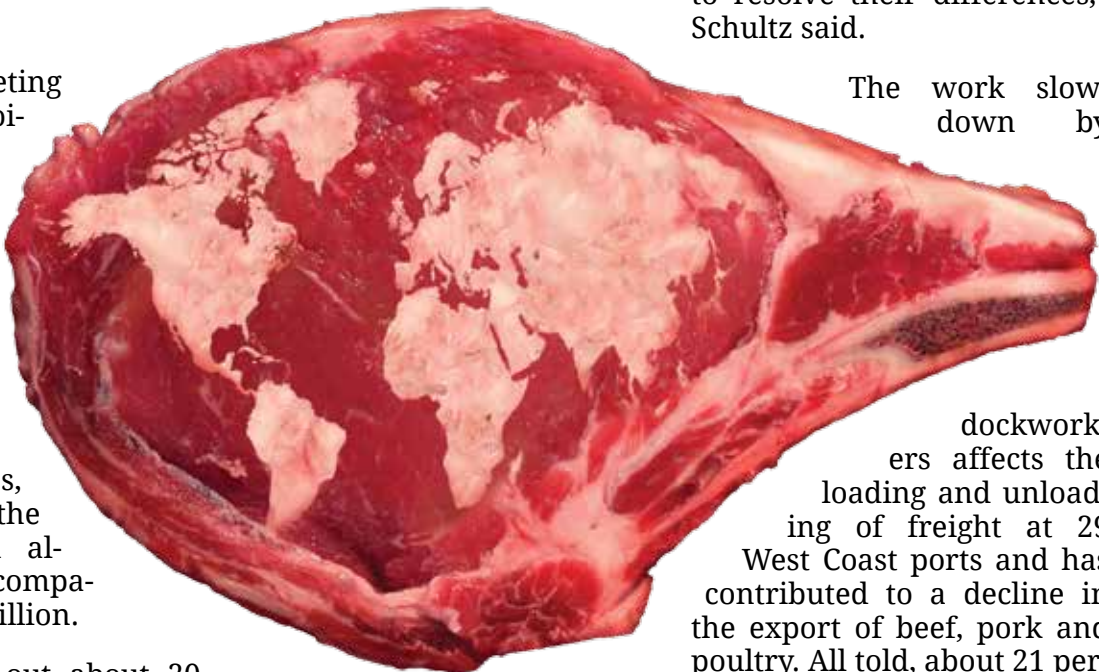
effort to keep some customers satisfied, but Theiler said that is much more expensive than shipping by sea transport in refrigerated containers.

The labor dispute has been ongoing since last fall, causing productivity declines and chronic congestion in freight

spokesman Eric Schultz said the Obama Administration has been working to help resolve the dispute.

"The negotiations over the functioning of the West Coast ports have been taking place for months with the administration urging the parties to resolve their differences," Schultz said.

The work slowdown by



dockworkers affects the loading and unloading of freight at 29 West Coast ports and has contributed to a decline in the export of beef, pork and poultry. All told, about 21 percent of U.S. beef was exported last year, but University of Missouri economist Ron Plain expects that number to decline in 2015.

traffic. The impact has rippled through the U.S. commercial supply chain as half of all imported goods arrive at west coast ports. White House

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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## LABOR DISPUTE FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

"We exported about 21 percent of the pork, 10 percent of the beef and 19 percent of the chicken produced last year," Plain says. "In total, over \$5 billion worth of meats went out through those ports last year. At the rate we're going, not near that amount is going to get shipped this year."

Japan is the largest importer of U.S. beef, and most of that ships as fresh, chilled product. With the slowdown, a lot of that beef will have to be frozen, which Plain says will mean a large dock in value. Plain also says that many Pacific Rim customers might turn to other countries if the U.S. can't supply their beef needs quickly enough.

The situation at the ports has resulted in a shortage of rail cars and refrigerated trucks and a reluctance to send meat to the coast, Plain says.

"It is impacting the revenue that comes to packing plants, and therefore impacting what packing plants are willing to

bid on livestock for slaughter," he says.

As one of America's largest beef-producing and exporting companies, Minnesota-based Cargill, Inc., stands to lose profits and customers as the labor dispute drags on.

"Recently, the industry has been experiencing delays of two to three weeks on chilled products as ships and product have been backed up in West Coast ports," Norman Bessac, Cargill's vice president for international pork sales, testified at a U.S. Senate subcommittee hearing.

"Any time you disappoint a customer it takes time to get their trust back," Bessac said. "With this delay, our Asian customers cannot count on a dependable supply of U.S. beef and pork, so they have started to cancel orders and are looking at suppliers in Chile, Australia and the European Union to meet their needs.

December's beef export volume slipped 2 percent compared to the previous year,

though the value of those exports still increased 17 percent to \$643.2 million, according to data reported by the U.S. Meat Export Federation. December pork volume was down 5 percent, but value was slightly higher than last year at \$541.3 million.

While describing 2014 as an "outstanding year for red meat exports," USMEF President and CEO Philip Seng acknowledges, "head winds continued to mount" late in the year.

"The West Coast port congestion is extremely troubling, because the delays faced by exporters in December have become even more severe in 2015," Seng said. "If this dispute is not resolved soon, the meat industry will have to win back long-term customers who still want our product but have no choice but to seek alternative suppliers."

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#### CAUTION:

Federal (U.S.A.) law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.  
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#### PRODUCT DESCRIPTION:

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

#### INDICATIONS:

**Cattle - Single-Dose Therapy:** Baytril® 100 is indicated for the treatment of bovine respiratory disease (BRD) associated with *Mannheimia haemolytica*, *Pasteurella multocida*, *Histophilus somni* and *Mycoplasma bovis* in beef and non-lactating dairy cattle; and for the control of BRD in beef and non-lactating dairy cattle at high risk of developing BRD associated with *M. haemolytica*, *P. multocida*, *H. somni* and *M. bovis*.

**Cattle - Multiple-Day Therapy:** Baytril® 100 is indicated for the treatment of bovine respiratory disease (BRD) associated with *Mannheimia haemolytica*, *Pasteurella multocida* and *Histophilus somni* in beef and non-lactating dairy cattle.

**Swine:** Baytril® 100 is indicated for the treatment and control of swine respiratory disease (SRD) associated with *Actinobacillus pleuropneumoniae*, *Pasteurella multocida*, *Haemophilus parasuis*, *Streptococcus suis*, *Bordetella bronchiseptica* and *Mycoplasma hyopneumoniae*.

#### RESIDUE WARNINGS:

**Cattle:** Animals intended for human consumption must not be slaughtered within 28 days from the last treatment. This product is not approved for female dairy cattle 20 months of age or older, including dry dairy cows. Use in these cattle may cause drug residues in milk and/or in calves born to these cows. A withdrawal period has not been established for this product in pre-ruminating calves. Do not use in calves to be processed for veal.

**Swine:** Animals intended for human consumption must not be slaughtered within 5 days of receiving a single-injection dose.

#### HUMAN WARNINGS:

**For use in animals only. Keep out of the reach of children.** Avoid contact with eyes. In case of contact, immediately flush eyes with copious amounts of water for 15 minutes. In case of dermal contact, wash skin with soap and water. Consult a physician if irritation persists following ocular or dermal exposures. Individuals with a history of hypersensitivity to quinolones should avoid this product. In humans, there is a risk of user photosensitization within a few hours after excessive exposure to quinolones. If excessive accidental exposure occurs, avoid direct sunlight. For customer service or to obtain product information, including a Material Safety Data Sheet, call 1-800-633-3796. For medical emergencies or to report adverse reactions, call 1-800-422-9874.

#### PRECAUTIONS:

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

The long-term effects on articular joint cartilage have not been determined in pigs above market weight.

Subcutaneous injection can cause a transient local tissue reaction that may result in trim loss of edible tissue at slaughter. Baytril® 100 contains different excipients than other Baytril® products. The safety and efficacy of this formulation in species other than cattle and swine have not been determined.

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

#### ADVERSE REACTIONS:

No adverse reactions were observed during clinical trials.

#### ANIMAL SAFETY:

In cattle safety studies, clinical signs of depression, incoordination and muscle fasciculation were observed in calves when doses of 15 or 25 mg/kg were administered for 10 to 15 days. Clinical signs of depression, inappetence and incoordination were observed when a dose of 50 mg/kg was administered for 3 days. An injection site study conducted in feeder calves demonstrated that the formulation may induce a transient reaction in the subcutaneous tissue and underlying muscle.

In swine safety studies, incidental lameness of short duration was observed in all groups, including the saline-treated controls. Musculoskeletal stiffness was observed following the 15 and 25 mg/kg treatments with clinical signs appearing during the second week of treatment. Clinical signs of lameness improved after treatment ceased and most animals were clinically normal at necropsy. An injection site study conducted in pigs demonstrated that the formulation may induce a transient reaction in the subcutaneous tissue.

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# Stop the Buzz

## How to get the most control from your fly tags

Story By Brittini Drennan for Cattleman's News

They buzz incessantly. To say their presence is a nuisance is an understatement. And to top it off, their impact on the bottom line of your cattle operation is insurmountable. Flies cause insufficient weight gain in cattle and unnecessary increase in metabolism from swatting flies. While insecticide-laden tags are effective in deterring flies, they should be used to supplement other methods for optimal fly control.

Fly tags have both advantageous and disadvantages. According to University of Missouri Extension Livestock

about \$0.75, let's say that's a ballpark figure of an additional \$20 per head at best."

Cole says fly tags seem to be more effective in deterring horn flies than face flies, but they are still effective in protecting against disease associated with pinkeye by helping to keep flies off of the face. Controlling face flies can greatly reduce pinkeye problems.

In addition to keeping flies off cattle, John "J.T." Tyra, D.V.M. at Animal Clinic of Monett, says another benefit to using fly tags is the reduced chance



John "J.T." Tyra, D.V.M., suggests using fly tags as a means of not only controlling flies, but also reducing the transmission of anaplasmosis in cattle. —Photo by Brittini Drennan

increased gains in calves because mommas are milking more and can put more energy into making milk and taking care of their babies."

Timing is also essential in achieving maximum performance from insecticide ear tags. Tyra and Cole both agree most producers tend to put tags in too early, and the application will not remain effective through the most impactful fly season.

"It's best to insert tags in late May to early June," Tyra notes. "Fly tags remain effective for about 90 days, so you need to time that with the optimal fly season. That way you have coverage through August or September, depending on the fly tag itself."

A known disadvantage to using fly tags is the build up in resistance among the fly population to the insecticide used on the tags. The best way to combat this problem is to alternate the kind of tags being inserted annually.


"All fly tags carry a specific type of chemical that is specific to the brand of fly tag," Tyra says. "Now that being said, it's beneficial to change and diversify the types of tags you use because using the same one repeatedly will develop resistance."

Cole suggests keeping accurate records on the kind of fly tags used each time. He also recommends removing the

tags immediately after fly season or once the tag has depleted its effectiveness, indicating flies will develop resistance more quickly if not removed timely.

As with all products, it is important to read labels. While handling chemicals, it is advised to wear latex gloves and avoid wiping sweat from your face. Certain tags are also labeled for dairy cattle, so read the labels for tags used in lactating animals to prevent a milk residue issue. Also, be aware of the environmental conditions when applying the tags and be prepared to work in properly ventilated area.

Fly tags are only one of several methods for controlling flies and should not solely be relied upon for complete control. Other products on the market include pour-ons, sprays, dust bags, backrubbers, the Vet-Gun and even oral larvicides, which prevent fly larvae from developing into adults and can be applied to supplements or minerals. Fly tags, along with the implementation of other methods, will enable a producer to effectively reach a more desirable level of fly control.

Especially with the current price of cattle, producers want to get all the live calves on the ground as possible, and it is critical to keep them healthy. To bring optimal profits in the end, it is important to have a good health plan in place. Visit with a veterinarian to determine the best health plan and products for your operation. 



Flies cause insufficient weight gain in cattle. Research indicates resting metabolism levels go up 10 to 20 percent from swatting flies. —Photo from University of Missouri Extension.

Specialist Eldon Cole, with the higher prices cattle are bringing in today's market, now is the time to invest in a good health plan.

"Additional fly control methods are advantageous because the pay offs are well worth the inputs," Cole says. "In a stocker program when you're trying to get the most gain, a good fly control program will increase average daily gain by approximately 0.2 to 0.25 pounds per day if you have more than 200 flies per animal, equating to about 30 pounds of gain in a 120-day period. Assuming the cattle's added gain is selling at

of animal anaplasmosis transmission and pathogens that can be spread by biting insects. Some brands even claim to be effective against other biting insects like mites and ticks, but it is most beneficial to read product labels.

"Another benefit of fly tags is they help your cattle be more efficient with their feed and forages in the hotter months," Tyra explains. "Research indicates resting metabolism levels go up 10 to 20 percent from swatting flies and using energy to keep flies off of them. So if we can use a fly control method, we can actually see





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## Communication Counts

### Safe cattle-working experience starts with a “stay-calm” attitude

Story By Rebecca Mettler for *Cattlemen’s News*

A successful day working cattle on any farm or ranch hinges on a lot of factors. It requires just the right amount of proper planning and skill as well as access to a fully functioning working facility. Plus, a dash of luck and the right sign from the Farmer’s Almanac never hurt anybody. In all seriousness, providing the safest environment possible for both handlers and cattle is the bottom line.

Communication. That one word, is what Eldon Cole, University of Missouri Extension regional livestock specialist, believes causes cattle producers the most challenges while working cattle.

“If working with several people, they all need to know what they do and what they do best,” Cole says. “Get that routine down.”

Laying out the routine, the equipment and medicine, along with communication and organization beforehand are

key players in a harmonious undertaking, Cole notes.

Reviewing the operations is critical for the safety of both experienced and inexperienced handlers alike. The most seasoned cattle working veterans can find themselves in a situation where problems arise, even if they have performed the task a million times.

“Human error. People cause accidents. Either it’s just lack of judgment or understanding,” adds Bob Schultheis, University of Missouri Extension natural resources engineering specialist.

Pairing an inexperienced handler with an experienced mentor is something larger operations, particularly feedlots, are implementing for safety training, according to Pat Murphy, livestock systems specialist in the biological and agricultural engineering department at Kansas State University. However, this is something any op-

eration can apply, regardless of size.

Proper attitudes set the stage for a better day.

“Try to keep animals the least stressed as possible,” Schultheis suggests. “Any time an animal is stressed, it can cause lower conception rates, reduced immunity, impaired rumen function and lower production.

Working cattle in a calm, slow and deliberate manner can reduce the amount of stress on the cattle, providing a safer working environment.

“Animals can sense what we are doing,” Cole says. “If we are nervous, they will be nervous.”

Schultheis states that cattle are very sensitive to loud noises. They don’t appreciate chains clanging, banging metal or high-pitched sounds like barking dogs. He urges producers to avoid unnecessary noises when possible.

“If cattle do get excited, research has shown that it takes 20 to 30 minutes for them to calm down,” Schultheis notes.

Although cattle dogs can assist the gathering process, it’s recommended that dogs be kept away from the working facilities. They often cause a dis-

traction in the form of noise or movement.

### Working facilities matter

A quality working facility design can enhance the ease and safety of processing cattle. A structure with the proper dimensions for alleyways, holding pens, circle tubs and working chutes is essential.

Sorting alleys should be sized to allow one person the ability to sort cattle off into holding pens and control the flow and speed through the alley. Murphy recommends alley widths of 10 to 12 feet for operations that will rely on sorting cattle on foot. If sorting on horseback, alley widths can be increased to 14 feet wide.

Murphy also cautions against crowding cattle once sorted and positioned to go through the alley leading up to the chute.

“Don’t try to get more animals in the alleyway than the chute can hold,” Murphy reasons. “If it holds three, four or five, count that number out and take them around.”

In general, overcrowding not only puts pressure on the structure of the facility, but it also causes undue stress to the ani-

**CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE**





# Understanding the Relationship Between Feed Intake and Veterinary Medicine Costs



As cattle arrive at the feedyard, the first 7 to 14 days are critical in reducing morbidity and mortality and optimizing average daily gain and efficiency. Because feed intake is a key driver of increased daily gain and improved animal health, it's important to understand the many factors that can affect it — geography, region, sex, in-weight and source — to name just a few.

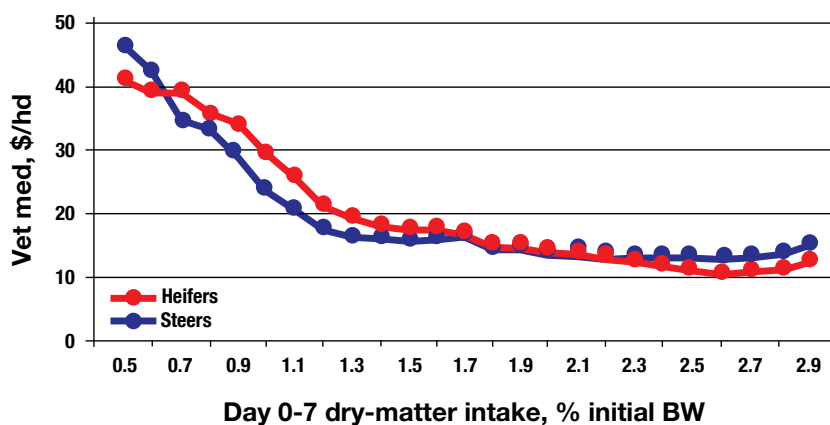
Casey Maxwell, Ph.D. and Elanco beef technical consultant, recommends that producers consider these variables, while simultaneously analyzing low feed intake levels, to manage high-risk pens and improve their bottom line.

“Low feed intake and decreased performance are highly correlated,” says Maxwell. “Cattle that experience low feed intake for the first 7 to 14 days experience higher death loss and veterinary medicine costs for the remainder of the feeding period.”

## Warning signals within the first seven days?

An analysis of Elanco's Benchmark® database from 2011-2013 on over 45,000 lots of cattle shows a strong relationship between feed intake levels within the first seven days and veterinary medicine costs (Figure 1). For example, steers and heifers coming into the feedyard that consume less than 1.8 percent of their initial body weight (DMI basis) are more likely to have increased veterinary medicine costs — about \$20 more per head. As the rate of dry-matter intake (DMI) decreases during those first seven days, veterinary medicine costs increase, getting close to \$50 per head for cattle consuming less than 1.0 percent of body weight (BW).<sup>1</sup>

Figure 1. Dry matter intake as a predictor of veterinary medicine costs<sup>1</sup>



## Key points

- Understanding the variables that result in lower feed intake can be used to identify and manage high-risk groups of cattle in your operation
- Lost performance costs more today than ever before; setting feed intake threshold levels can help pinpoint high-risk cattle before they have a negative impact on the bottom line
- To learn more about the correlation between feed intake and veterinary medicine costs or to determine your operation's intake threshold levels, contact your Elanco sales representative

“Cattle that don't consume enough feed as they come into the yard can be problematic down the road,” says Maxwell. “This may not be a novel idea, but understanding the correlation and setting threshold levels for feed intake right from the start can provide producers with the warning signal they need to address high-risk cattle and better manage their marketing objectives.”

## Using analytics to make decisions

Table 1 illustrates a sample model of feed intake threshold levels. Using this example, 400-lb steers consuming 1.83 percent or less of their initial BW within the first 7 days should be flagged as high risk. For 400-lb heifers, those consuming 1.75 percent or less within the first 7 days should also be flagged.<sup>1</sup>

Table 1. Modeled DMI signals as a percentage of initial BW as criteria for reducing mortality and veterinary medicine costs

Initial weight, lbs	Steers, DMI		Heifers, DMI	
	7 days	14 days	7 days	14 days
400	1.83	2.22	1.75	2.11
500	1.82	2.16	1.78	2.11
600	1.82	2.14	1.91	2.19
700	1.87	2.14	1.93	2.18

When feed intake threshold levels are set, as the example in Table 1 demonstrates, high risk cattle can be identified within the first 7 to 14 days, allowing producers to consider adjusting management practices to help improve cattle health and performance to capture profit.

“Utilizing Benchmark and the real-time data we're collecting now, Elanco is able to help producers not only identify and set their threshold levels, but also assist them with adjustments that may need to be made in order to meet their marketing goals,” says Maxwell. “For example, if we know certain cattle aren't going to gain as much or perform as well during the first 7 to 14 days, producers may need to modify their projections to minimize risk.”

To discuss management and risk strategies to improve performance on your operation, contact your Elanco representative or technical consultant.

Adds Maxwell, “it's all about what we can do to help producers improve their bottom lines.”



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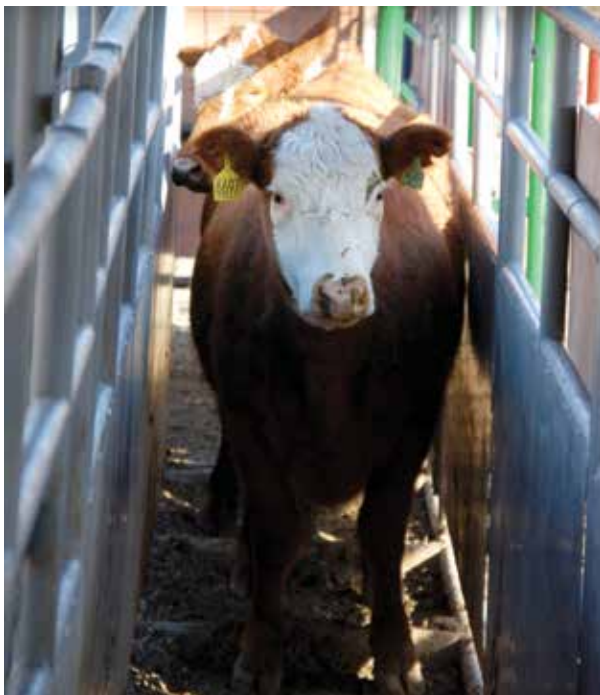
<sup>1</sup>An analysis of Elanco's Benchmark database of 45,392 lots of cattle involving 6,720,494 steers and heifers weighing 400-700 lbs from 2011-2013 in the North Plains, Central Plains and High Plains. Data was restricted to lots that consumed between 0.5 and 2.9 percent of initial body weight during the first 14 days.

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**COMMUNICATION COUNTS  
FROM PAGE 28**

Solid walls in alleyways help prevent cattle from seeing outside distractions. Non-slip surfaces are also desirable in working facilities.  
—Photo by Joann Pipkin



mals. Too many animals in a small space adds to their level of discomfort plus provides them with a reason to turn around and try to escape past the cattle handler, according to Murphy.

Schultheis recommends designing solid sides on the alley leading up to the chute.

“The cattle like the security of solid walls,” Schultheis says. “Instead of a pipe fence, panel the walls. The cattle will behave much better, and they don’t see any distractions from the outside.”

Once cattle are entering and exiting the chute, it’s important to provide them with a surface in which they won’t easily slip. When using concrete, it’s bet-

ter to have a rougher surface for extra footing compared to a slick-finished concrete pad.

Recently, Cole has worked in facilities that have applied rubber mats in front of the chute. Made from implement tires, the mat reduces injury as the animals exit the chute.

Another feature to consider building into a cattle-handling set-up are man passes or narrow openings placed in strategic locations throughout the facility. These provide workers an escape route without having to climb a fence.

Murphy suggests visiting Midwest Plan Service at [www-mwps.sws.iastate.edu](http://www-mwps.sws.iastate.edu) for more information. Midwest Plan Service is a multi-university collaboration and has a series on beef facility design.

**Prior Planning**

Proper maintenance of the working facility should take place long before cattle are gathered and in the corral.

“Review the structure of the fences,” Murphy says. “Over time, they do need maintenance.”

Wooden working pens require extra care. Rotten boards in a critical spot in the fence can cause detrimental accidents if pressure is applied during use. For pipe structures, welds might need repair.

“Make sure gate latches work,” Murphy says. “It seems kind of simple, but with younger people or people not as strong, they need to be able to secure the gates.”

Both Cole and Murphy advise producers to make it top priority to keep the working facility in shape.

Cole notes that with the higher-than-average cattle prices, there’s never been a better time to allocate some of that money to repairing facilities or buying a new chute. Newer chute designs add safety and ease of use.

Although accidents can always happen, it’s important for producers to understand the factors that contribute to a safe cattle-working environment. Just remember, even though it’s hard to do, the best strategy is to keep calm.

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# Watching and Waiting

## Uneasiness brews over federal control as proposed Clean Water Act clarification saga continues

Story By Rebecca Mettler for Cattlemen's News

Water and air issues are hot button topics as they pertain to agriculture from a federal regulatory level. Garrett Hawkins, national legislative programs director for Missouri Farm Bureau, works with members to influence public policy on primarily national issues.

Hawkins spoke to attendees of the 46th Annual Monett Beef Conference in Monett, Missouri, on Feb. 19, regarding the water issues that could affect agriculture in the future.

The Waters of the United States (WOTUS) is the front and center issue on the federal level that has agriculture's attention. It's also top of mind for homeowners and many in the construction industry.

WOTUS, unveiled in March 2014, is the proposed rule set to clarify the federal Clean Water Act. According to Hawkins, the decision to clarify was the result of two Supreme Court rulings, one in 2001 and 2006. The agencies see it as muddying the waters to be able to appropriately implement or enforce the Clean Water Act, and thus the new regulation is needed to clarify.

"When you hone in on water, I can easily sub out water and put land use because what we are talking about at the federal level, particularly with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), really hits at land use," Hawkins explained.

He expanded further by subbing out land use and placing property rights into the equation. Hawkins believes further regulating water is essentially regulating the practices farmers and ranchers put on the land around that water.

Under the Clean Water Act's current wording, traditional navigable waters and all interstate waters are protected by federal regulation as well as territorial seas and all inhabitants of the waters that are listed.

"Again, when Congress passed the Clean Water Act originally the words in the statute are navigable waters," Hawkins said. "That's always been the delineation."

Under the proposed rule, tributaries of waters and all waters including wetlands adjacent to waters are added to the list of protected waters. Also included is what Hawkins calls a catchall phrase, a significant nexus.

"Is there a subsoil connection," Hawkins said. "How can we connect the water back to a navigable water? So, really when you compare it to what's in place with the existing regulations, we truly believe there really is no limit to federal authority."

Hawkins showed a picture from a farm field in Tennessee with a dry gully, or erosional feature present.

"Now, how much water do you see in this picture," Hawkins asked. "None right now, but the Corps made the determination that this is a Water of the United States because it's a tributary that may eventually be connected to a navigable water."

This leads to Hawkins understanding that any farm or ranch in the U.S. could be at risk of having a feature that could fall under regulation. A permit would have to be granted for any activity directly affecting the area if such a feature is on an individual's property as regulated by the Clean Water Act under the proposed new regulation.

A final ruling regarding WOTUS is expected sometime in late spring or early summer of this year. Hawkins said Congress must step in and draw the lines. No major Congressional action has taken place since the Clean Water Act was passed in 1972 with changes made in 1977.

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## Why You Should Become BQA Certified

Raising the bar on consumer confidence

Story By Lisa Henderson for Cattlemen's News

You were taught to take care of your animals, and you've passed that compassion on to your children and grandchildren. Unfortunately, many of today's consumers don't understand how or why you do what you do. That's why the Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) program is so important to the future of your business.

Increasingly, consumers want to know more about their food. According to a study conducted last year by Sullivan Higdon & Sink (SHS) FoodThink, nearly 2 out of 3 consumers, 65 percent, want to know more about where their food comes from. The white paper, "Emerging Faith in Food Production," details the research and ex-

plains how Americans continue to ask questions about where their food comes from and what processes are involved.

The beef industry is rising to that challenge with the BQA program that was "written by beef producers and beef veterinarians for beef producers and beef veterinarians," says

Dan Thomson, director of the Beef Cattle Institute at Kansas State University. The goal of that program is to help improve the health and well-being of the cattle while improving producer profitability.

Ultimately, Thomson says he hopes consumers will "see a BQA stamp on beef products in the meat case. That will verify that BQA practices have been implemented from farm to fork." Thomson was recently honored at the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) convention as the BQA Educator of the Year.

The checkoff-funded BQA program helps producers understand proper animal health and management procedures and identify processes that can be improved. Information about the BQA program can be found at [www.BQA.org](http://www.BQA.org) or at [www.beefcattleinstitute.org](http://www.beefcattleinstitute.org).

According to the BQA website, Beef Quality Assurance is a national program that provides guidelines for beef cattle production. The program raises consumer confidence through offering proper management techniques and a commitment to quality within every segment of the beef industry.

Producers can earn BQA certification through online course study, which normally costs \$25. Now through April 15, however, BQA certification is free through the Beef Cattle Institute thanks to a grant from Boehringer Ingelheim VetMedica, a St. Joseph, Missouri-based animal health company.

The Beef Cattle Institute administers the Animal Care Training website where the BQA certification is hosted and producers can learn about current animal health and welfare practices. Proper animal care helps improve animal welfare, increases



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## BEEF QUALITY ASSURANCE CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

the quality of beef products and helps eliminate defects while ensuring the safety and wholesomeness of beef.

BQA training has become so popular that universities are now using it as part of their curriculum. At Kansas State, students in professor KC Olson's ASI 515 Beef Science become BQA-certified.

"We are training the future citizens of the beef industry to be responsible," Olson says. "Students develop expertise and can add a big gold star to their resume (upon completion of the BQA program)."

Students are required to complete the comprehensive BQA training package, which includes 28 modules covering a wide range of topics including animal welfare, food safety and personal responsibility.

"This requires students to invest at least 4-5 hours of self-study outside of class," Olson says. "They are also required to pass each module with at least an 80 percent on each

module and must retake the exam if that requirement isn't met."

Olson says this is not a lightweight aspect of the class and takes time and effort for the student to become certified. He also says this program sheds a positive light on the reputation of K-State's undergraduate program and how serious they are about turning well-qualified students into well-qualified members of the beef industry.

Barb Downey, owner-operator of Downey Ranch in Wamego, Kansas, says BQA certification is an important part of being a producer.

"Anything that benefits the quality of the product benefits the producer and the consumer."

Downey believes it is important to understand proper handling techniques to ensure consumers never have a bad beef eating experience. She says both she and her husband are certified and both of her daughters became certified when they were in middle school.

## BQA Certification

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"With more people becoming concerned about where their food comes from, getting BQA-certified is a tool to show the consumer that the industry is working assertively to ensure a quality product," Downey explains. "Anybody who does anything with beef cattle should take the opportunity to become BQA-certified."

Nels Lindberg, a senior partner and veterinarian at Ani-

mal Medical Center in Great Bend, Kansas, says BQA training helps improve the consumer image of beef animal welfare.

"I'm a firm believer in education and anytime there is an opportunity to further educate team members, the better off the whole operation will be," Lindberg says. "The people and the animals all benefit from continued education."

To learn more information about becoming BQA-certified visit [animalcaretraining.com](http://animalcaretraining.com), and use the coupon code: BIVIBQA to receive the training modules for free. 

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

For customer service, adverse effects reporting, and/or a copy of the MSDS, call 1-800-211-3573.

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# Pinkeye 101

## A guide to preventing, treating pinkeye

Story By Alison Bos for Cattlemen's News

Understanding causes, implementing effective prevention practices and knowing the most efficient methods of treatment are all important concepts cattle producers must be aware of when faced with pinkeye in their herds.

Pinkeye (Infectious Bovine Keratoconjunctivitis) is a bacterial infection of the eye that is contagious. The primary disease-causing agent is *Moraxella bovis*. According to Dr. Rick Sibbel, director of U.S. cattle technical services for Merck Animal Health, the bacteria works in the irritated eye causing inflammation that leads to infection. This infection can potentially become dramatic enough that the eye can completely lose its ability to function.

Pinkeye can affect all ages of cattle. However, according to University of Arkansas Animal Science Instructor Dr. Andrew Fidler, younger animals are typically affected more severely, and weight gain often suffers even in mild cases.

Face flies, tall weeds, fescue seed, dust, excessive exposure to UV light, nutritional imbalances and lack of pigmentation around the eye are all underlying eye irritants that have been linked to the development and transmission of pinkeye in cattle.

"Anything that causes extra irritation in the eye can set up the ideal environment for pinkeye to occur," Sibbel said.

Fidler states that pinkeye is transmitted between animals by direct contact or contact of contaminated objects. The bacteria release enzymes that destroy cells of the cornea and can be enhanced by trauma to the eye. Other bacteria and viruses can also enhance the infection and damage by *Moraxella bovis* such as other types of *Moraxella* or *Mycoplasma* species, or the Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis herpes virus.

Pinkeye can occur anytime throughout the year; however,

it is more prevalent in spring and summer months when the fly population is highest.

Several management practices can be implemented by producers in order to prevent pinkeye. According to Fidler, fly control is the most effective preventative measure.

Sibbel agrees that managing flies – especially face flies – is crucial as these pests are vectors carrying bacteria from animal to animal and encourage the eye to be irritated. He emphasized the importance of incorporating fly control strategies on a regular basis.

Since flies are considered major vectors of the disease, adequate fly control is essential in preventing pinkeye. University of Missouri Extension Livestock Specialist Patrick Davis says fly control strategies include fly tags, insecticide pour-ons, back rubbers, dust bags, knock-down sprays, fly traps and feed additives.

Proper pasture management can also aid in preventing pinkeye as tall weeds and grass will irritate the eyes, which can eventually cause the disease.

"Preventing overgrowth of pastures and providing shade may also benefit by reducing the chances of ocular trauma," Fidler said.

Pinkeye vaccines are available and can be used as a method to help prevent pinkeye. Administer to all pasture cattle, particularly calves, prior to spring turnout. Sibbel says great advancements have been made in vaccine development. A booster may need to be implemented if conditions that encourage pinkeye are incurred later on.

"Pinkeye is a bacterial infection that can be (controlled) with vaccine if producers are managing and using vaccine with other husbandry practices," Sibbel explains.

Since pinkeye is contagious,

# What's Pinkeye Really Costing You?

Story By Alison Bos for Cattlemen's News

The economic impact of pinkeye is important to understand as it can have tremendous negative impacts on the profitability of a beef herd's value.

According to the website, StopCattlePinkEye.com, pinkeye easily costs a producer an average of \$100 per head. This is due to reduced weight gain, added treatment costs and discounts on sale day. University studies have shown pinkeye reduced weaning weights in calves as much as 40-60 pounds. The website also identifies that the values of animals with pinkeye can be decreased an average of \$11.75 per hundred pounds of body weight when the animals are sold at auction. The bottom line: calves that get pinkeye gain less and are worth less per pound when sold. In addition, pinkeye costs producers in terms of labor and lost production. It is better economically to prevent pinkeye, than it is to treat it.

More information on pinkeye can be found at [www.stopcattlepinkeye.com](http://www.stopcattlepinkeye.com).

—Source: Information obtained from [www.stopcattlepinkeye.com](http://www.stopcattlepinkeye.com)

and common in southwest Missouri and surrounding areas, being aware of treatment options is important for beef producers. Davis explains that early treatment of pinkeye is important for a successful outcome and will decrease the transmission of disease to other cattle. He stated that treatment will depend on the stage of disease of the animal.

In early stages of the disease, cattle will have excessive tearing and increased sensitivity to light. Cattle will frequently blink, and redness on the eyelid will be noticeable. A small ulcer in the center of the cornea will develop. As the disease progresses, the ulcer will spread across the cornea causing the eye to become cloudy and eventually even yellow in appearance. In extreme cases, the ulcer will extend completely through the cornea and the iris might protrude through the ulcer. A glaucoma might occur which can lead to partial or complete blindness. Davis recommends calling a veterinarian to treat advanced stages of pinkeye as applying an eye patch, suturing the third eyelid over the eye or suturing the eyelids shut might be required.

Sibbel provides an example scenario to demonstrate his recommendations of treating pinkeye. If a producer has a group of calves where 10-20 percent of the population is showing signs of pinkeye, he recommends gathering calves into a corral and treating the calves showing signs. The remainder of calves should be

given a long-acting antibiotic to have on board since they have been exposed. He explains that if a producer does not act and allows the population of calves with pinkeye to increase, they might eventually end up with a large number of calves with partial or complete loss of eyesight. Ultimately, this could negatively impact the market value of the calves.

"Once an eye becomes very opaque from the chronic infection, it is really hard for that eye to become fully functional again," Sibbel says.

It is important for producers to understand that once bacteria that causes pinkeye makes its way into a herd, vaccinations to protect against those bacteria needs to be administered. Plus, Sibbel emphasizes the importance of recognizing that this bacterium is an organism that changes; therefore it is not the same year after year. The vaccine needs to cover a broad spectrum of pinkeye strains and must be managed accordingly.

Preventing and managing pinkeye requires daily review of cattle, monitoring the progression of the disease, not waiting too long after 10 percent of the herd is infected and being diligent in managing all facets of pinkeye prevention and management.

"If you fix fence on a regular basis, then you should manage your cattle to prevent pinkeye on a regular basis the same way," Sibbel says.



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# Overcoming the Odds

## Oklahoma Ranchers' Unflinching Courage Helps Them Thrive Despite Adversity

Story By Tanya Brown

Since 2011, Julie Carr and her husband, Robert, slowly swatched everything they worked for dry up and wither away.

Julie calls those lemonade days — long stretches of hardship where life is throwing nothing but lemons, and by the end of the day she has made lemonade. But those days were anything but sweet.

“We literally started with nothing,” said Julie, recalling how she and Robert left Texas 30 years ago and moved to Oklahoma just to buy a ranch. “We built this [business] cow by cow and calf by calf.”

They started with 80 acres and built up to nearly 600 acres of pasture with 130 cows. Then disaster struck.

One of the worst droughts to hit Oklahoma had rested on the Carr Family ranch and most of the Southern and Midwestern parts of the United States. With no wells and relying solely on surface water, the Carrs were hit hard. They started selling off their aged cows first, hoping the drought would end. But when they saw there was no end in sight, they made more drastic decisions.

“We had to decide which cow to take to sale and which one to sacrifice in order to save another,” said Julie. “We got to the point of praying for rain. When you see pastures turning into nothing and there is nothing you can do, you are helpless.”

Some income was still flowing from Julie’s consulting business. But the bad continued to get worse.

Last year, Robert was diagnosed with lung cancer, causing Julie to quit her full-time job and shut down her business to care for her husband and the ranch.

They sold off 60 percent of their herd, and their pasture was trashed. “But we had a prairie mentality,” she said. “Even though we didn’t have the money, we would persevere.”

One day, she took a trip to the Hughes County Farm Service Agency. “The timing was unique and special. I often check in with the FSA office, but I thought I was going in to give a report of my hay yields,” she said.

She was told that with the passing of the 2014 Farm Bill, she qualified for disaster assistance through the Livestock Forage Program. The program provides disaster assistance to producers who suffered through snowstorms, tornadoes, drought and other natural disasters and were forced to liquidate herds and sell land to make ends meet.

“I went in to sign the papers, and I was told the funds would be deposited into my account. I started to cry,” said Julie. “That was everything. It enabled us to keep going and rebuild.”

They are now in the rebuilding stage and have purchased cows, sprayed the pasture to help it grow back and hired a worker to help Julie run the ranch.

“There was a crisis and the rural communities were crying in the dark for people to listen. Someone finally heard. They [Congress] got it.”

—Tanya Brown is outreach marketing writer/editor, USDA Farm Service Agency.

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<sup>1</sup> Data on file, Study Report Nos. 2839A-60-00-025, 2239A-60-00-029, 2239A-60-00-030, 2239A-60-00-033, 2239A-60-92-027, 2239A-60-94-003, 2239A-60-94-007, 2239A-60-94-067, 2239A-60-94-068, 2239A-60-94-070, 2239A-60-95-156, 2839A-60-97-123, Zoetis Inc. All trademarks are the property of Zoetis Inc., its affiliates and/or its licensors. ©2014 Zoetis Inc. All rights reserved. DMX14002

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## Why Keep Records?

### Livestock Indemnity Program shows why record keeping is important

Story By Jay Parsons and Jim Jansen

The Agricultural Act of 2014 reauthorized retroactively to Oct. 1, 2011, and extended indefinitely four disaster assistance programs: the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP); the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP); the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP); and the Tree Assistance Program (TAP). On April 15, 2014, producers began enrolling in these programs for qualified 2012-2014 losses.

As of Dec. 1, 2014, over \$73.5 million had been paid out nationwide to cover 2011-2014 documented losses under the LIP. In Nebraska, producers had received over \$6.3 million as of that date with over \$5 million attributed to 2013 losses and over \$1 million attributed to 2014 losses. It is important for producers to understand that these disaster programs have been extended indefinitely. Therefore, the importance of keeping proper livestock records has never been greater. Documentation requirements for livestock deaths that occurred Oct. 1, 2011, through Dec. 31, 2014, were relaxed from the rules due to the retroactive nature of the reauthorization. Producers need to commit now to keeping good records for possible future loss claims and request for payments in 2015 and beyond.

#### LIP Basics

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) administers the LIP. It provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who have suffered livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather. It also covers attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law, including wolves and avian predators. Eligible livestock includes beef cattle, dairy cattle, bison, poultry, sheep, swine, horses and other livestock as determined by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. The

LIP payment rates are based on 75 percent of the market value of the livestock. For example, the 2014 payment rate for adult beef cows was \$1,223.45 per head. Payment rates for all species are published in the LIP factsheet from FSA. The most current version of this factsheet is available online at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov) by selecting Disaster Assistance Programs from the Programs and Services dropdown menu and then selecting Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) from the related topics box.

#### Applying for LIP Payments

To be eligible for LIP, a livestock producer must have legally owned the eligible livestock on the day the livestock died or, for poultry and swine contract growers, a written contract grower agreement and possession of the eligible livestock on the day of death.

Producers should submit applications to receive LIP benefits to their local FSA office. For losses occurring Oct. 1, 2011 to Dec. 31, 2014, the final date to submit an application for payment was Jan. 30, 2015. For 2015 and subsequent years, the notice of loss must be submitted to FSA the EARLIER of: 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock is apparent to the producer, or 30 calendar days after the end of the calendar year in which the loss of livestock occurred.

Supporting documents must show evidence of loss, current physical location of livestock in inventory, and location of the livestock at the time of death. LIP applicants must provide adequate proof that the eligible livestock deaths occurred as a direct result of an eligible adverse weather event or an attack by an eligible wild animal. The quantity and kind of livestock that died may be documented in a number of ways including production records, purchase records, veterinarian records, records assembled for tax purposes, and other means. A complete description of ac-

ceptable death loss documentation is available at [www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA\\_File/lip\\_long\\_fact\\_sht\\_2014.pdf](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/lip_long_fact_sht_2014.pdf).

Keeping good records is an important risk management tool for producers because it provides accurate, complete, neat, consistent and historical information for better analysis, better decision making, and easier application for insurance claims. A good set of records contains the right amount of

detail to meet the needs and the goals of the operation. The LIP is an example of how sound financial management behavior and good documentation are rewarded by ease of access to available programs designed to help producers recover from losses resulting from risks beyond their control.

—Source: Jay Parsons is biosystems economist at University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Jim Jansen is a UNL extension educator.



# Don't Treat It and Forget It

Monitor cattle health to keep lice problems at bay

Story By Joann Pipkin, Editor

You may have poured your cattle for parasites last fall. You shouldn't need to keep monitoring the herd for problems. After all, that one treatment should have taken care of all your parasite issues, right? Wrong.

"It's not a one-time treatment and forget it," explains Dr. Rick Sibbel, director of U.S. Cattle Operations, Merck Animal Health.

According to Sibbel, "Lice really prefer colder months of the year. As cattle congregate, the lice tend to infect and re-infect cattle populations."

Lice management requires pouring or spraying the animals as they are gathered in the fall for other herd health protocols or weaning. Back-rubbers can also be installed where cattle typically gather. Then, Sibbel says it's important to stay on top of lice man-



Cattle producers must be vigilant when controlling lice. The parasite prefers colder weather, often infecting and re-infecting cattle populations as they congregate. —Illustration from Shutterstock.

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agement as cattle go through the winter months.

"Animals are in close proximity for an extended period of time, then you will have lice problems," Sibbel explains. "So, you often have to go in more than once to control."

Most products are not season-long, Sibbel says noting those that are available, though, do a good job of keeping lice populations under control when used properly.

Both chewing and sucking lice are commonly found on beef cattle.

Chewing lice feed on hair, scabs and excretions from the animal's skin and irritate the skin with their sharp claws and mandibles. Infestations of this parasite weaken the animal, interrupt normal feeding activities and make the animal more susceptible to diseases. According to University of Missouri Extension, the cattle biting louse is the only species of chewing louse occurring on cattle in Missouri. It is yellowish-white with a reddish head. It can be found all over the animal's body, and, when full-grown, will be about 1/12 inch long. It is bothersome to both young and mature cattle.

Sucking lice feed by piercing the animal's skin with their sharp mouthparts and withdrawing blood. The loss of blood can stunt growth and reduce weight gain. Irritation caused by lice also hinders

**CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE**

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## LICE CONTROL FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

the animal's feeding activities, which might reduce the growth rate. Sucking lice can be found on the head, neck, withers, around the base of the tail, brisket and along the inner surfaces of the legs. MU Extension also reports continued severe infestations weaken the animal to the point that stress from disease or extreme cold weather might cause death.

In Missouri, three species of sucking lice can be found on cattle. The longnosed cattle louse is generally a pest of

young cattle and is about 1/10 inch long. The shortnosed cattle louse is about 1/16 inch long and is more often a pest of older cattle. The little blue louse is about 1/16 inch long. It is generally a pest of older animals and is more common around the animal's head.

Lice eggs, or nits, are glued to the hair and hatch in one to two weeks. The nymphs that hatch from these eggs become full-grown and start to lay eggs in about two weeks.

Both chewing and bloodsucking lice are most abundant during the winter. Infestations usually are small during

the summer and early fall but increase rapidly in the winter and spring. Some animals might be continuously infested with lice throughout the year. You might notice certain animals are particularly prone to lice infestations.

Rub marks on topline and backsides as well as cattle rubbing a lot are signs that your animals might have lice. "Look at the tailhead, in the ears, the poll and the brisket area," Sibbel says. "Those are places lice like to live."


Each year presents a new challenge for cattlemen, Sibbel says. "The only way to recognize that is by watching the

cattle and the way they look, their hair coats and eyes."

Regular attention to the health of your cattle is a good idea, he adds. "The key is finding (the problem) early and then using the right kinds of products to manage it thoroughly."

If your cattle have had a problem with lice in the past, Sibbel says it's very likely they will have a problem going forward. "It's very, very rare to eliminate external parasites completely, and if your herd has a history of that, you need to be extra vigilant to watch it going forward," he notes.

Brief Summary of Full  
Prescribing Information



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**Antibiotic**  
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**For subcutaneous injection in beef and non-lactating dairy cattle and intramuscular injection in swine only. Not for use in female dairy cattle 20 months of age or older or in calves to be processed for veal.**

**CAUTION**  
Federal (USA) law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.

**INDICATIONS**  
**Beef and Non-lactating Dairy Cattle**  
**BRD** – DRAXXIN Injectable Solution is indicated for the treatment of bovine respiratory disease (BRD) associated with *Mannheimia haemolytica*, *Pasteurella multocida*, *Histophilus somni*, and *Mycoplasma bovis*; and for the control of respiratory disease in cattle at high risk of developing BRD associated with *Mannheimia haemolytica*, *Pasteurella multocida*, *Histophilus somni*, and *Mycoplasma bovis*.  
**IBK** – DRAXXIN Injectable Solution is indicated for the treatment of infectious bovine keratoconjunctivitis (IBK) associated with *Moraxella bovis*.  
**Foot Rot** – DRAXXIN Injectable Solution is indicated for the treatment of bovine foot rot (interdigital necrobacillosis) associated with *Fusobacterium necrophorum* and *Porphyromonas levis*.

**Swine**  
DRAXXIN Injectable Solution is indicated for the treatment of swine respiratory disease (SRD) associated with *Actinobacillus pleuropneumoniae*, *Pasteurella multocida*, *Bordetella bronchiseptica*, *Haemophilus parasuis*, and *Mycoplasma hyopneumoniae*; and for the control of SRD associated with *Actinobacillus pleuropneumoniae*, *Pasteurella multocida*, and *Mycoplasma hyopneumoniae* in groups of pigs where SRD has been diagnosed.

**DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION**  
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Inject subcutaneously as a single dose in the neck at a dosage of 2.5 mg/kg (1.1 mL/100 lb) body weight (BW). Do not inject more than 10 mL per injection site.  
**Swine**  
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The use of DRAXXIN Injectable Solution is contraindicated in animals previously found to be hypersensitive to the drug.

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Cattle intended for human consumption must not be slaughtered within 18 days from the last treatment. Do not use in female dairy cattle 20 months of age or older. A withdrawal period has not been established for this product in pre-ruminating calves. Do not use in calves to be processed for veal.  
**Swine**  
Swine intended for human consumption must not be slaughtered within 5 days from the last treatment.


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The effects of DRAXXIN on bovine reproductive performance, pregnancy, and lactation have not been determined. Subcutaneous injection can cause a transient local tissue reaction that may result in trim loss of edible tissue at slaughter.  
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# Which One is *That*?

## Reasons for individual animal identification go beyond recordkeeping

Story By Joann Pipkin, Editor

In today's beef business, simply naming your cows "Bossie" or "Betty" isn't enough. With the increasing demand for consumer confidence in the industry's end product, identification and recordkeeping are paramount.

"Assigning individual animal identification is a necessity for keeping detailed records on things such as sire identification, vaccination and treatment records," explains Andy McCorkill, University of Missouri Extension livestock specialist. He says individual animal identification is also critical to track calving dates and performance.

But reasons to individually identify your cowherd go beyond record keeping.

"It is important to remember that identifying and keeping individual animal records are only part of the equation," McCorkill says. "In order to be truly useful, those records have to be looked at and used in making culling and breeding decisions that will keep you on track with your opera-

tion's long-term production goals."

As cattle prices continue to reach record heights and as theft circulates through the countryside, animal identification might also serve as proof of ownership in the event of lost or stolen cattle.

### The Ear Tag

Without a doubt, the ear tag is the most common mode of individual animal I.D. Ear tagging is fairly inexpensive, easily applied and usually visible for identification purposes. But, it doesn't come without drawbacks.

According to McCorkill, ear tags are almost as easy to remove as they are to apply. "Some styles are better about staying in than others, but generally speaking ear tags are prone to getting ripped out by low hanging limbs and other obstacles the ear might come in contact with," he says.

Another common problem with ear tags occurs when numbers wear off. McCorkill



Soon after a calf is born is a good time to secure an ear tag for individual identification. —Photo by Joann Pipkin

says many companies are now offering long-lasting options such as laser etched numbers and tags with two color layers.

Still, perhaps the biggest drawback to ear tags is the difficulty with proving ownership in the event of lost or stolen cattle. "(Ear tags) are easily removed or tampered with by thieves and with many people using similar tags, it makes them unacceptable to the court system as a sole form of proof of ownership," McCorkill notes.

McCorkill says it's crucial to devise a system of tagging that makes sense and has value to

you as a cattle owner. "I recommend producers develop some sort of system that can identify the age of individual animals," he says. Examples might be to use a system with a different color of tag every year or to use a numbering system where the first number coincides with the year of birth such as 501 for the first calf born in 2015. Still, another system might be to use the letter designation system where the letter represents the year of birth; the year 2015 letter is C.

### The Brand

Another common means of identification is the brand. McCorkill says this is an excellent method of permanent identification. Traditionally, brands have been used as the preferred method of establishing proof of ownership.

In order to be legally binding, McCorkill says the brand must be registered. In Missouri, the state department of agriculture keeps track of brands. A brand must have at least two characters and be at least 3 inches in diameter.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 42



Brands are used for permanent cattle identification and are traditionally the preferred method of establishing proof of ownership. —Photo by Joann Pipkin



Shelia, Brock, Karena  
and Jessica Karges  
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For more details, please see full prescribing information.

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# Year Letter Codes

Letter = Year of Birth

2015=C

2016=D

2017=E

2018=F

2019=G

2020=H

2021=J

2022=K

2023=L

2024=M

2025=N

2026=P

—Source: University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

## ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION FROM PAGE 40

Allowable locations for brands are the side of the animal, the shoulder, the center of the rib cage and the hip. “Before registering a brand,” McCorkill says, “put some thought into the design of the brand. Avoid complex designs as they are more likely to result in a blotched, difficult-to-read brand.”

Branding is often thought of with heating an iron over a fire and then quickly placing it on the hide of a calf. Modern techniques have been developed allowing the brand to be heated with electricity.

“Electric irons are able to heat faster and more uniform, speeding the process up while producing a better brand,” McCorkill says.

Freeze branding is a relatively new option, he says. In this technique, cold is used to leave a mark on the animal by killing the pigment in the hair follicles of the brand area causing the hair to grow back white in the shape of the brand. Liquid nitrogen or a mixture of dry

## 4 Tips for Animal Identification

1. Make the first number assigned to a calf its permanent herd number. In other words, do not assign a number to a calf at birth and then assign that calf another number when it enters the herd as a replacement animal.
2. Use the simplest method to number and identify the cows in a commercial setting. For example, a cow identified as X-1, in a letter system, the “X” would denote cows in the herd when the number system was established. For 2015, “C” is the letter of designation. In a purebred herd, the animal’s identification number will be part of its registered name.
3. Order ear tags well ahead of the calving season and keep a supply of blank tags on hand for replacing lost tags. Use a tag-marking pen on blank tags. This will give a longer lasting mark than regular markers.
4. Replace missing tags on a regular basis. Don’t wait until so many tags are missing that identification of individual animals becomes a problem.

—Source: University of Arkansas Extension.

ice and alcohol can be used as cooling agents in the process.

“Besides putting a regular brand on, freeze branding has picked up traction as a method of permanent herd identifica-

tion,” McCorkill says. “Number and letter irons are available to create any combination of herd identifications.”

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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Ear tags are a common form of identification in beef cattle operations. A simple numbering system works best in commercial settings. The bottom line is to use an identification system that is easy for you to understand. —Photo by Joann Pipkin

“Another consideration about a brand is the fact that it can be used as a marketing tool,” McCorkill suggests. “If buyers recognize your brand and associate it with quality stock, it could help bring you an extra bid or two as (your cattle) are sold.”

The bottom line, though, is to develop an animal identification system that is understandable and works for your operation.

“Once you have a system in place, use it to help make those difficult culling and breeding decisions based upon age, calving status and improving the quality of the calf crop,” McCorkill says. 

#### ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Like the ear tag, brands are not a fool-proof method of identification. Time is of the essence to cattlemen and depending on the methods used, branding might add several seconds or even a few minutes to processing time.

“The biggest drawback to freeze branding is the fact that you can’t brand white or light-colored animals,” McCorkill notes. “Branding is as much an art as it is a process. It takes practice to develop a technique that provides a good brand.”

He suggests working with friends or neighbors to learn the ins and outs of branding.

#### The Tattoo

Tattoos are another permanent identification method. In this process, the identification number is permanently stamped inside the ear of the animal. While the tattoo is permanent, it is also difficult to read because the animal must be restrained in order to view the number. The tattoo might also be haired-over, making it difficult to read.

#### When to ID

As close to the time a calf is born as possible is the best for securing an ear tag as individual animal ID. “It is a whole lot easier to figure out who a calf belongs to when it is freshly born and the mother is nearby than it is to try and pair them up when the calves are half grown,” McCorkill says.

Branding, though, can wait until the calf is a little older and the cattle are gathered for processing through a chute.

#### The Bottom Line

While branding and ear tagging are both good methods of animal identification, in all actuality the two work well together.

McCorkill says it’s important to remember ear tags will wear out and fall out at some point. “Putting a tag in both ears will increase the odds of having a tag to read for identification purposes,” he says. Ear tags are used in-herd, while brands are more commonly used to identify your herd to others.

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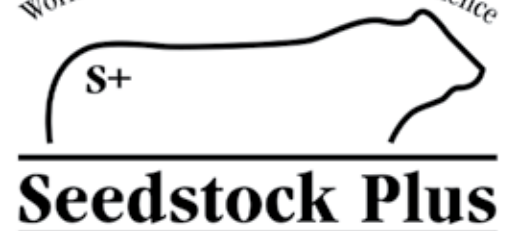
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# What Kind of Vaccine Should You Use?

## The debate continues: modified-live viral vaccines or killed vaccines

Story By Rebecca Mettler for *Cattlemen's News*

A finely tuned vaccination protocol is important to the health and well-being of both the cattle and your bank account. Choosing the right vaccination protocol requires taking a step back to evaluate your individual herd and management practices.

Even before deciding on a brand of vaccine, go back to the basics of determining if your operation would perform best with the use of a modified-live viral (MLV) vaccine or killed vaccine.

Craig Payne, D.V.M., director of veterinary extension and continuing education with the University of Missouri, explains that terms for the two types of vaccines refer to the condition of the bacteria or virus in the vaccine. "Killed" means the organisms are no longer alive. "Modified-live" means the organisms are still alive and have the ability to replicate, but they have been altered in such a way they don't cause disease when administered to an animal.

Payne understands that both types of vaccines belong in use on cattle operations, but each has its strengths, and in most cases, matches the other's weaknesses.

"In essence, the argument is generally made that modified-live viral vaccines provide better protection against viruses than killed because of the component of the immune system they stimulate," Payne explains.

The modified-live viral vaccines primarily stimulate the cell-mediated side of the immune system while the killed vaccines primarily stimulate the humoral side. According to Payne, the importance of that is typically the cell-mediated side plays a bigger role in defense when a virus is involved. In return, killed vaccines work well against bacterial infections.

It's important to understand that vaccines have their limitations. MLV vaccines have one critical requirement when dealing with breeding females. Pregnant cows or calves nursing pregnant cows should not be vaccinated with a MLV vaccine unless the vaccine is approved for use in the manner. In addition, the vaccines that are approved require the breeding females be vaccinated with a MLV before using it during pregnancy, according to Payne.

"If not previously vaccinated, you run the risk of abortion in that pregnant cow," Payne says.

There is also discussion on whether MLV's should be used in pregnant cows even though label directions have been followed. Payne points out that many of the diseases we vaccinate against in the breeding herd have an impact early in pregnancy. Therefore, he encourages producers to focus on pre-breeding vaccinations and consider immunizations during pregnancy as an opportunity to booster Lepto vaccine and possibly viral vaccines.

"Regardless of the vaccine a producer uses, vaccinate before they get bred," Payne notes.

Do you have a controlled breeding season? This is one management-related factor that Payne says must be considered when choosing a vaccination type.


On operations that have a controlled breeding season and you know when cows are open or bred, it's easier to incorporate an MLV into the vaccine program. On the other hand, when pregnancy status is unknown or timing is an issue, it is usually easier to use a killed viral vaccine.

Another advantage of an MLV is that you can get one-dose

protection in animals that have never been vaccinated before. There are very few killed vaccines that don't require a booster shot. Typically, booster shots are given 21 to 28 days after the first dose, or according to label, explains Payne, and once the animal has been appropriately vaccinated an annual booster is usually sufficient. One of the biggest mistakes he sees made with a killed viral vaccines is producers only vaccinating a naïve animal once and then assuming it has protection.

When handling vaccine, Payne mentions you should follow Beef Quality Assurance

(BQA) principles. Vaccines should be kept cool but not allowed to freeze. In addition, when using MLV's, never mix up more vaccine than you can use in 30 to 60 minutes.

All in all, vaccine decisions should be based on the individual herd while taking into account the management practices involved on your operation. And just remember, having a healthy cowherd is about more than just vaccine choice. Providing the right cowherd nutrition, along with proper biosecurity from a disease control standpoint, will help ensure the health of the operation. 

## Someone to Count On

### What do you look for in a vet?

Story By Joann Pipkin, Editor

A veteran consignor to the Show-Me-Select Replacement Heifer Program, John Wheeler knows the value of having a good relationship with his veterinarian. He counts on it.

As a part of the SMS program, a rigorous health protocol must be followed. And Wheeler works one-on-one with his veterinarian to ensure his heifers are healthy.

"For me, I need a vet that's really good with reproduction," Wheeler explains.

Maintaining that good relationship, in the end, makes life a little easier, Wheeler says.

The Marionville, Missouri, cow-calf producer isn't alone. Robert Bullis, manager, Top Notch Farm, Diamond, Missouri, keeps not one but two veterinarians a phone call away.

"We just can't do without them," Bullis explains. "We rely on the vet for overall animal health, from body condition scoring to breeding and breathing problems."

Dr. Michael Spragg, Spragg Veterinary Clinic, Rogersville, Missouri, has been practicing for more than 20 years. He says a good vet/client relationship is important so that the vet understands the goals of the producer.

"If I understand what your goals are, then I can help you achieve those goals," he says.


Spragg says in this day and time, the number one reason to maintain a good relationship with a vet is for preventive medicine. "Our vaccines today are very effective, but it's also about putting the animals in the best possible position for the vaccine to work. Getting the minerals right, making sure the herd is free of other diseases."

He recommends developing a comprehensive health plan with your veterinarian. "Don't cut corners," Spragg suggests, "and stick to the plan."

For cow-calf producers like Wheeler and Bullis, finding a vet that's trustworthy and knowledgeable are key. Reliability and reputation are also critical for establishing a long-term relationship.

"Availability is key," Bullis says. "I need to know in my mind that I can call (one of my vets), and they will know what I need."

Wheeler concurs, "Having someone accessible is very important." A vet with a helpful staff is also a plus in building that client/vet relationship. "You must have someone you can trust."

According to Bullis, "You need that assurance that if you've got a problem, they are going to be there to help you. In the cow/calf business, there are just times when you need somebody." 





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<sup>1</sup>Data on file.

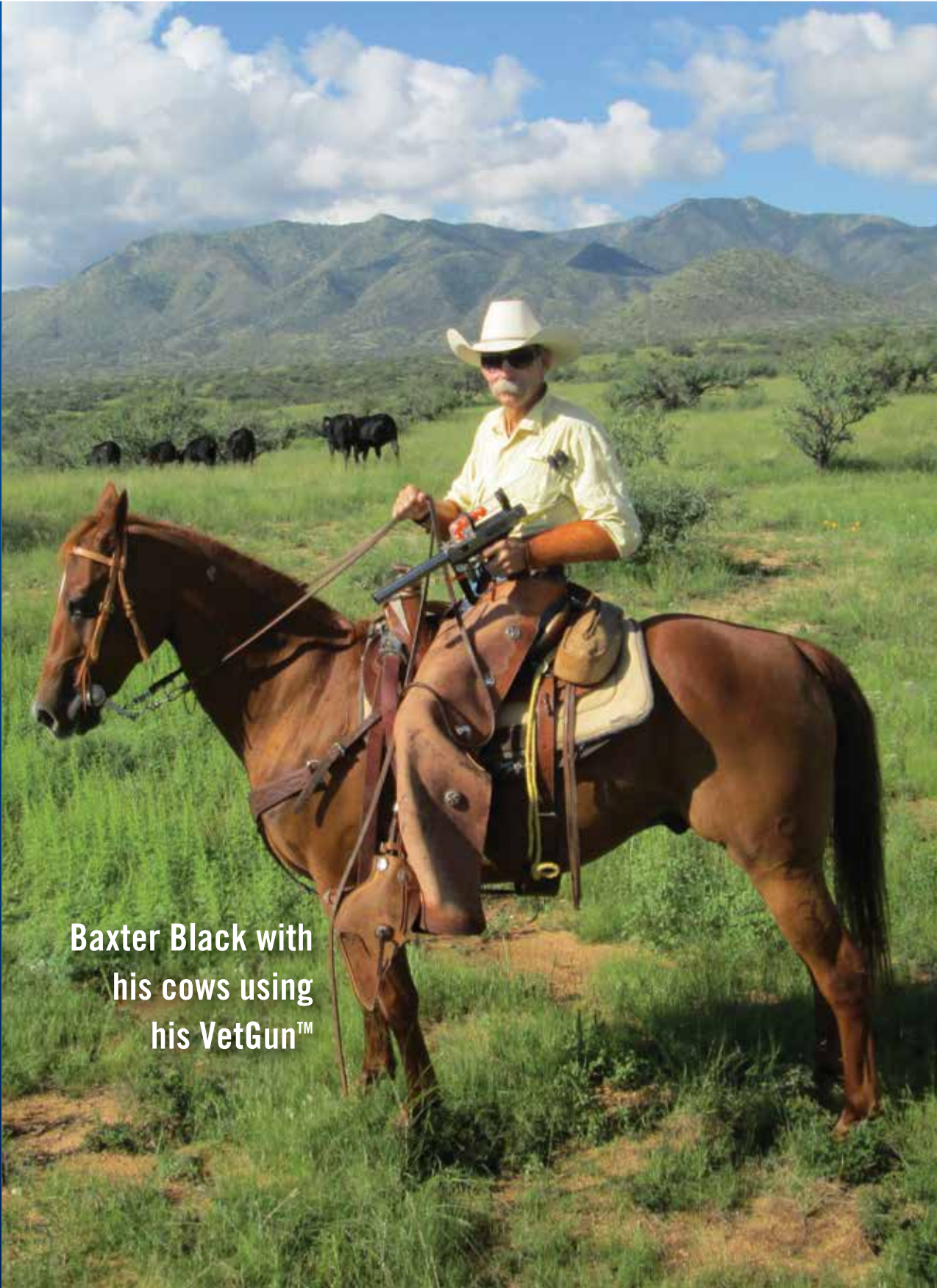


# Cow/Calf Planning Calendar: Basic vaccination recommendations

Time	Basic Program Recommendations	Other considerations/Consult Vet
60 days pre-calving all females	If management is adequate, should not need any vaccinations Evaluate BCS	Scours vaccinations
Pre-calving	Evaluate facilities and environment Equipment: sterile, proper function Review protocol for monitoring and when to assist delivery Monitor herd for nutrition and separate by age and BCS to manage feed intake appropriately	Quality frozen colostrum Colostrum substitutes Colostrum supplements Ensure record system data is current
Calf born	Individually identify Record birth Assure adequate colostrum	Dip navels, weigh calves Castrate Dehorn (complete)
Breeding bulls	Viral respiratory diseases (IBRV, BVDV) Leptospirosis Parasite control program (location and season dependent) Breeding soundness examination	PI <sub>3</sub> , BRSV Vibriosis
Start breeding heifers	Start breeding heifers 30 days or more before cows	
Start breeding adult cows		
Remove bulls	45-90 days after introduction depending on goals	
Branding time calves 2-4 months old	Individually identify (if not already performed): brand, ear tag. Castrate Dehorn (complete) Clostridial: 7- or 8-way (location dependent) Parasite control program (location and season dependent)	Brucellosis (bangs) - heifers (marketing decision) (follow age restrictions) Viral respiratory diseases Leptospirosis Pinkeye Tetanus
Weaning 5 to 9 months	Clostridial: 7- or 8-way (location dependent) 4-way or 5-way viral respiratory diseases (IBRV, BVDV, PI <sub>3</sub> , BRSV) Leptospirosis Weigh calves and evaluate BCS and growth BCS and pregnancy test cows; evaluate culling criteria	Brucellosis (bangs) - heifers (marketing decision) (follow age restrictions) Prewaning/weaning vaccination program Parasite control program Weaning/post weaning vaccination (location and season dependent) Pinkeye
Replacement heifers 13-16 month	4- or 5-way viral respiratory diseases (IBRV, BVDV, PI <sub>3</sub> , BRSV) Leptospirosis Clostridial: 7- or 8-way (location dependent) Parasite control program (location and season dependent) Monitor growth: Rule of Thumb: heifers should weigh 65 percent of mature body weight at start of breeding season	Make sure individually identified Vibriosis
Process adult cow herd	Viral respiratory diseases (IBRV, BVDV) Parasite control program (location and season dependent) Leptospirosis Evaluate individual animals: udder, eyes, disposition, feet, joints, legs, soundness Pregnancy check and evaluate culling criteria Evaluate BCS	PI <sub>3</sub> , BRSV Anaplasmosis control Vibriosis

—Source: Oklahoma State University Extension. These are general guidelines and recommendations. Individual herd programs may vary considerably. Consult your veterinarian for specific recommendations. Follow all label directions and your veterinarian's recommendations.





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# Decisions, Decisions

## Information systems aid better management decisions

Story By Steve Swigert

It's often said that you can't manage what you don't measure. With many agricultural operations, decisions are made on a daily basis without adequate supporting information. Every enterprise should have some type of information management system for the records it generates. The type of information generated and how well it is used will help determine success. However, the quality and quantity of the information gathered only has value if it is used to make wise management decisions.



The basic areas of any information management system should include a cash accounting system with a depreciation schedule, financial statements, inventories (cattle, equipment, feed, etc.) and production records to measure performance. These types of records should be kept to answer questions about different areas within the operation.

In most cases, a cash accounting system can be handled adequately by computer programs such as Quicken. QuickBooks might be useful for more complicated operations. These and similar programs can provide the information to meet tax obligations and to provide basic data for financial statements.

However, information prepared for tax purposes does not measure the profitability of a business or its financial position. The Farm Financial Standards Guidelines identifies the following statements as the minimum needed to document financial position and performance:

- Balance sheet with both cost and market valuation.
- Accrual adjusted income statement.
- Statement of cash flow.
- Statements of owner equity.

Another part of an information management system should track inventories. Equipment inventories are necessary for completing depreciation schedules and can aid in planning for future capital expenditures. An accurate cattle and feed inventory is essential for measuring production performance and completing financial statements. A complete inventory by category of cattle (cows, bulls, heifers, stockers, etc.) should be done at least twice a year. If only done twice, the inventory should be taken at the beginning of the fiscal year and at the beginning of the breeding season. This inventory should include a record of all deaths, purchases and sales.

After completing data collection, it is important to analyze the information. Financial accounting deals with historical records of financial activities, position and performance, particularly as it relates to tax and external financial reports. Management accounting focuses on providing data and reports with information useful for making decisions. Management accounting reports for different segments of an operation provide an understanding of each of the business components so that desired changes can be made with better understanding and less risk. A management accounting system should be designed, operated and staffed to provide management information to support the following internal business management functions such as:

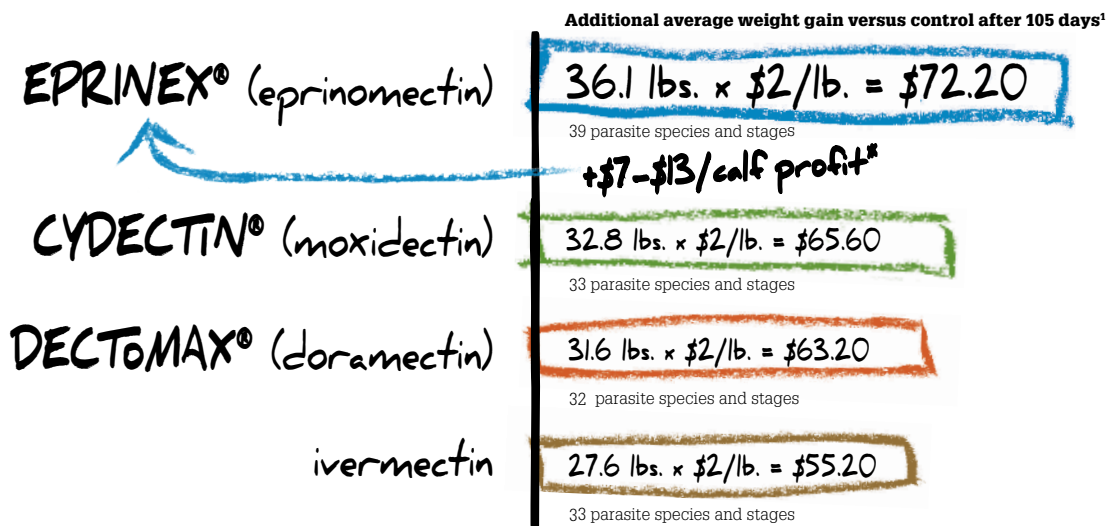
- Planning activities.
- Decision-making (marketing, investment and resource use).

**CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE**

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\*Based on 2 doses per calf at retail price Jeffers Livestock accessed 7/8/14. <sup>1</sup>Beckett J. Efficacy of pour-on dewormers differing in active ingredient and carrier on weight gain and fecal egg count in stocker beef cattle. College of Agriculture, Cal Poly State University. <sup>2</sup>Based on FOI summaries and label claims.

**IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION:** No meat or milk withdrawal is required when used according to label. Do not use in calves intended for veal or unapproved animal species as severe adverse reaction, including fatalities in dogs, may result.



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## PASTURE PLANNING

# Moisture, Compaction Key to Well-Built Pond

Cutting corners only costs in the long run

Story By Bob Schulteis

A pond can be a valuable asset to a farm or suburban landowner. A well-planned and built pond can provide livestock water, fishing opportunities, soil erosion control, fire protection and a nice place to relax. But a good, usable pond is not inexpensive to build. Depending on geology of the site, a half-acre pond could cost between \$11,000 and \$15,000.

Undersized ponds and leaky ponds are the two most common problems I encounter. A properly sized farm pond will have one acre of surface area for each 10-15 acres of watershed that drains into it, and be at least 8 feet deep. Cutting corners on size to save money only ends up costing more later in repairing erosion damage and downstream neighbor relations, and in dealing with aquatic weed problems.

Leaky ponds are frequently due to the wrong soil being used for sealing or because the right soil was improperly compacted. When building or enlarging a pond in the Ozarks, be sure to do it when the soil is moist and sticky, never when the soil is dry, if you want it to hold water.

Many of the red and yellow clay soils in the Ozarks are quite leaky in their natural state. Pulverizing these soils with a disk breaks down their blocky soil structure, and keeping them moist during the recompaction process and after construction will help the pond better hold water. Compaction of several 4- to 6-inch thick layers of moist clay in the pond bottom will usually be needed to assure a seal. Additives such as bentonite clay or soda ash might need to be mixed with some soils to keep them from leaking.

Don't expect a bulldozer to do good soil compaction. Bulldozers have a large "footprint" that spreads out their weight, resulting in ground pressure of 7-13 psi, which is no greater than a person just standing on the ground. A better choice is a wheel tractor and disk (15-45 psi ground pressure), or a sheepsfoot roller (300+ psi

ground pressure), shown in photo, to compact each clay layer before adding the next one.

A well-built pond should fill within one year, and seepage plus evaporation should be 12 inches or less in hot summer months and 4 inches or less in winter months.

Resources for planning, building and managing ponds are available through the federal Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Missouri Department of Conservation and University of Missouri Extension. A hot-linked list of these resources can be found online at [http://extension.missouri.edu/webster/pond\\_management.aspx](http://extension.missouri.edu/webster/pond_management.aspx).

—Source: Bob Schulteis is natural resource engineering specialist, University of Missouri Extension.

## DECISIONS, DECISIONS FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

- Measuring commodity cost and production performance.
- Controlling and monitoring the business.

All of these areas of information management should be addressed in each operation. Too many producers have only had tax-based information from

which to make decisions. Management strategies should not be made on tax information because it only tells part of the story. It is critical that financial and management information be collected and analyzed to make good decisions.

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## Close the Door on Toxic Fescue

### Four schools teach how to seed, manage new toxin-free varieties

Story By Duane Dailey

“Say ‘goodbye’ to profit-robbing toxic fescue” is the theme of four schools to start March 30 across Missouri.

The long name is “novel endophyte tall fescue renovation school.”

The action plan is simple, says Craig Roberts, University of Missouri Extension forage specialist. “We teach how to kill the almost impossible to kill toxic fescue,” he says. “Then we teach how to seed and manage new toxin-free fescues.”

The story sounds complicated, Roberts says. “The plan works if it is followed step-by-step.”

Hundreds of farmers have proven that shortcuts don’t work, he says. “And everyone thinks of an easier way. Trouble is, none work.”

When the “spray, smother, spray” plan is followed, the new toxin-free pastures boost gains.

The flier for the schools explains: “Toxic tall fescue causes more problems than ‘fescue foot.’ Research shows reduced weight gains, poor reproductive performance, rough hair coats and diminished immune response due to impaired blood circulation caused by toxin in fescue pasture and hay.”

For years, we have managed around all those problems, Roberts says. “Now we can just get rid of the toxin problems. Novel-endophyte varieties work.”

The toxic K-31 requires high maintenance, but many pro-

ducers fail to recognize the problem. Too much toxic fescue is not managed. The losses cost beef and dairy herd owners millions in potential gains.

“The only reason K-31 has become the No. 1 grass in Missouri is it survives without care,” Roberts says.

The schools are held at MU research centers of the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources. Each MU farm has plots being grazed for demonstrations.

Dates, places and local contacts are:

March 30. Southwest Center, 145148 Highway H, Mount Vernon; Carla Rathmann, 417-466-2148.

March 31. Wurdack Farm, 164 Bales Road, Cook Station; Will McClain, 573-775-2135.

April 1. Beef Research and Teaching Farm (South Farm), 5151 Old Millers Road, Columbia; Lena Johnson, 573-882-7327.

April 2. Forage Systems Research Center, 21262 Genoa Road, Linneus; FSRC, 660-895-5121.

All start at 9 a.m. and end at 5 p.m. Enrollment is limited at each site. Call early. The fee includes lunch and breaks.

The schools are organized by the Alliance for Grassland Renewal. The group, formed in Missouri, involves all interested in growing fescue. That includes all companies with new varieties, MU Extension, seed testers, farmers and government.

Novel endophyte has been known and used for years. “Now seed is widely available and tested,” Roberts says. “Successful changes can be made.”

School topics range from the economic loss statewide to how to set a no-till drill. The replacement requires a yearlong plan. It not only kills the growing K-31 fescue but also new seedlings emerging from the soil seed bank after the cover is killed.

**CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE**

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**BUSINESS  
BEAT**

## FCS Returns Cash Patronage to Members

FCS Financial's Board of Directors announces they will return more than \$10 million to their member-owners in cash patronage for the 2014 calendar year.

"FCS Financial finished 2014 with record earnings and is pleased that as a cooperative our customers will benefit from that success through patronage," says David Janish, FCS Financial CEO. "Since 2006, FCS Financial has returned more than \$48 million to our customers."

After the financial results are known at the end of each year, the board reviews the cooperative's financial situation and the business plan projections to determine if patronage will be paid or if earnings will be retained for capital.

To kick off the distribution of patronage checks to customers, each FCS Financial office will host a Customer Appreciation Day from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on March 18 in conjunction with National Ag Day. Attendance is not required for FCS Financial members to receive their check. Those checks not distributed by the end of business on April 3 will be mailed.

Patronage payments are based on a member's loan business activity with the association. All eligible members will receive a minimum of \$20. Each eligible member's patronage check will be available March 18 through April 3 at the FCS Financial office where his or her loan is serviced.

For more information, contact your local FCS Financial office at 1-800-444-3276 or visit [www.myfcsfinancial.com](http://www.myfcsfinancial.com) where you will find a link to the 2014 Patronage Program under "How We're Different."

—Source: FCS Financial Release.

### TOXIC FESCUE FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

If the plan is not followed, the old seed emerges and crowds out the new varieties, Roberts says. "Plowing does not work. One spray does not work. Those who do it right are big winners."

The biggest winners are farmers who use the new high-production grass.

Darrel Franson, Mount Vernon beef farmer, has been on the road speaking to farmers. He moved to southwestern Missouri from Minnesota. Immediately his cattle faltered. They were naïve to the toxic fescue.

No one had told Franson of the No. 1 grazing hazard in Missouri. Now he tells all who will listen. He found that replacement costs were paid off in just over two years, with reduced losses.

He took 10 years to replace fescue, pasture by pasture, on his farm.

He and farmer Curtis Schallert, Purdy, will speak, in addition to others from the industry.

—Source: University of Missouri Extension

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# Replacement Cow & Bull Sale

5 p.m. | Sat. | March 21, 2015

Joplin Regional Stockyards | I-44 & Exit 22 | Carthage, Missouri

Expecting **1000** head with these early consignments

## 45 Black and Black Whiteface Cow/Calf Pairs

Cows are 4 years old to SS. Calves weigh 250 lbs. +

Cows running back with Angus and Horned Hereford bulls from Mead Ranch.

## 30 Braford Heifers

Bred to LBW Simmental bull.

## 50 Beefmaster Heifers

Bred to black Angus bulls. Start calving March 1.

## 30 Black Angus Cow/Calf Pairs

4-7 years old. Fall-born calves. Bred back to Angus bulls.

## 50 Black Angus Cow/Calf Pairs

4-7 years old. Cows should be calved out by sale date.

## 40 Black & Red Angus Cows

Bred to Charolais and black Angus bulls. Spring calvers. Due late Feb. and early March.

## 80 Charolais Cross Cows

Complete Dispersal. Running ages. Cow/calf pairs & springers. Bred to Charolais bulls.

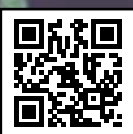
## 35 Black Angus Cows

3-5 years old. Spring and fall calvers. Bred to Angus bulls.

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417.825.0948

JRS Office  
417.548.2333

## EVENT ROUNDUP

### March

- 9 Grazing Cattle Special  
Joplin Regional Stockyards, Carthage, Missouri  
PH: 417-548-2333
- 11 Bull Breeding Soundness Exams  
Dake Veterinary Service, Miller, Missouri  
FMI: 417-452-3301
- 14 Jacs Ranch Angus Bull Sale  
Bentonville, Arkansas  
FMI: 479-273-3030
- 14 Heart of the Ozarks Angus Sale  
Ozark Regional Stockyards, West Plains, Missouri  
FMI: 417-995-3000
- 14 Wright Charolais Bull Sale  
Kearney, Missouri  
FMI: 816-776-3512
- 16 Greene County Soils and Crops Conference  
Spfd Livestock Marketing Center, Springfield, Missouri  
FMI: 417-881-8909, ext. 311
- 20 Bull Breeding Soundness Exams  
Countryside Veterinary Clinic, Aurora, Missouri  
FMI: 417-678-4011
- 20 Sunflower Genetics Production Sale  
Maple Hill, Kansas  
FMI: 785-256-6461
- 21 Aschermann Charolais Bull Sale  
at the farm, Carthage, Missouri  
FMI: 417-793-2855
- 21 Circle A Angus Bull Sale  
Iberia, Missouri  
FMI: 1-800-CIRCLEA
- 21 Flying H Genetics Bull Sale  
Lowry City, Missouri  
FMI: 417-300-0062
- 21 Falling Timber Hereford Bull & Female Sale  
Marthasville, Missouri  
FMI: 636-358-4161
- 21 5 p.m. Replacement Cow & Bull Sale  
Joplin Regional Stockyards, Carthage, Missouri  
FMI: 417-548-2333
- 23 Green Springs Bull Sale  
Mo-Kan Livestock, Butler, Missouri  
FMI: 417-448-4416
- 23 O'Leen Brothers Hereford & Angus Bull & Female Sale  
Dwight, Kansas  
FMI: 785-466-1422
- 24 Bull Breeding Soundness Exams  
Animal Clinic of Diamond, Diamond, Missouri  
FMI: 417-325-4136
- 24 Genetrust Brangus & Ultrablack Bull Sale  
Eurkea, Kansas  
FMI: 877-436-3877
- 28 Seedstock Plus South Missouri Bull Sale  
Joplin Regional Stockyards, Carthage, Missouri  
FMI: 1-877-486-1160
- 28 Professional Beef Genetics Bull Sale  
Windsor, Missouri  
FMI: 1-800-PBG-BULL
- 30 Southwest Missouri All Breed Bull Sale  
Springfield Livestock Marketing Center  
Springfield, Missouri  
FMI: 417-345-8330
- 31 KW Cattle Bull Sale  
Fort Scott, Kansas  
FMI: 620-224-7305

CONTINUED ON PAGE 54



# MARKET WATCH

## Joplin Regional Stockyards Market Recap | February 2015

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

Feeder Cattle & Calf Auction | February Receipts 12,512 • Last Month 34,016 • Last Year 19,236

Video Markets from • February Total Video Receipts 1,956

Date:	South Central States	Texas, Okla.,	New Mexico, Kansas, Mo.	Offering: 595							
2/3/15											
	FEEDER STEERS		MED & LG 1				North Central States	Colo., Wyo	Neb., Mont., No.	& So. Dakota	& Iowa
HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY		FEEDER HEIFERS		MED & LG 1-2		
240	850	850	\$192.00	\$192.00	Current	HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY
	FEEDER STEERS		MED & LG 1-2			185	775	775	\$183.00	\$183.00	Current
HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY						
170	600	600	\$241.50-\$242.00	\$241.75	Current						

Date:	South Central States	Texas, Okla.,	New Mexico, Kansas, Mo.	Offering: 988							
2/9/15											
	FEEDER STEERS		MED & LG 1				Eastern States	All States	East of the Miss.,	La., & Ark.	
HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY		FEEDER STEERS		MED & LG 1-2		
61	825	825	\$195.75	\$195.75	Current	HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY
358	850	850	\$193.00-\$194.00	\$193.16	Current	58	850	850	\$194.50	\$194.50	Current
	FEEDER STEERS		MED & LG 1-2			60	825	825	\$202.00	\$202.00	June
HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY		FEEDER HEIFERS		MED & LG 1-2		
120	750	750	\$198.35	\$198.35	Current	HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY
60	800	800	\$196.00	\$196.00	Current	190	750	750	\$203.00	\$203.00	June
	FEEDER HEIFERS		MED & LG 1								
HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY						
81	610	610	216.00	216.00	Current						

Date:	South Central States	Texas, Okla.,	New Mexico, Kansas, Mo.	Offering: 373							
2/16/15											
	FEEDER STEERS		MED & LG 1-2				Eastern States	All States	East of the Miss.,	La., & Ark.	
HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY		FEEDER STEERS		MED & LG 1		
180	850	850	\$193.00	\$193.00	Current	HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY
	FEEDER STEERS		MED & LG 1-2			58	850	850	\$207.00	\$207.00	Aug-Sep
HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY		FEEDER HEIFERS		MED & LG 1		
						HEAD	WT RANGE	AVG WT	PRICE RANGE	AVG PRICE	DELIVERY
						65	775	775	\$200.00	\$200.00	Aug-Sep
						70	700	700	\$202.00	\$202.00	October

## Tune in to the JRS Market Report



Monday 11:38 a.m.  
 Wednesday 11:38 a.m.



Monday 12:15 p.m.  
 Wednesday 12:15 p.m.



Monday 12:40 p.m.  
 Wednesday 12:40 p.m.



M-F 9:55-10:05 a.m.  
 (during break before AgriTalk)  
 M/W/F Noon Hour  
 (during Farming in the Four States)  
 T/Th Noon Hour (after news block)



Monday 12:50 p.m. & 4:45 p.m.  
 Wednesday 12:50 p.m. & 4:45 p.m.

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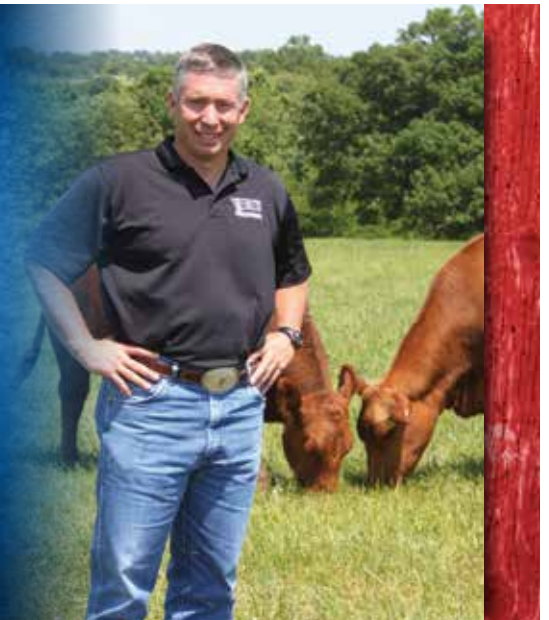


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## EVENT ROUNDUP

FROM PAGE 52

### April

- 4 Four State Angus Association Bull & Female Sale  
Springfield Livestock Marketing Center  
Springfield, Missouri  
FMI: 417-844-2601
- 10-12 Spring Ag & Urban Fest  
Ozark Empire Fairgrounds, Springfield, Missouri  
FMI: 417-833-2660
- 18 Seedstock Plus Bull Sale  
Kingsville Livestock Auction, Kingsville, Missouri  
FMI: 877-486-1160
- 23 Heartland Highland Cattle Auction  
Norwood Producers Auction Yards, Norwood, Missouri  
FMI: 417-345-0575

### May

- 24-25 Best of the Best Calf Roping  
Risen Ranch Cowboy Church Arena, Carthage, Missouri  
FMI: 417-548-2333

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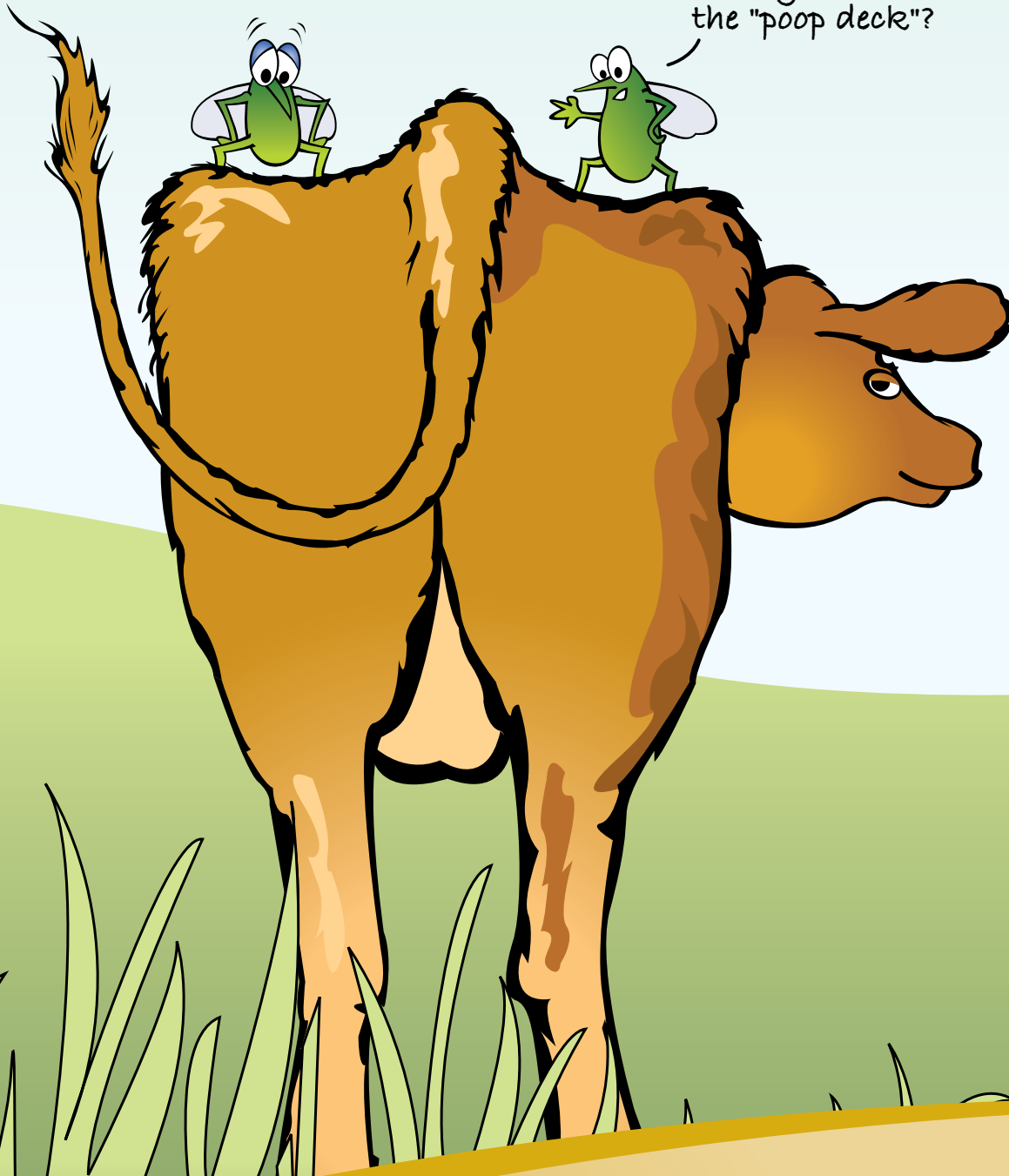
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