

Management Calendar

Some basic but timely tips concerning health, nutrition and management are highlighted here. Although the outline is designed for a spring (March and April) calving season, the information can be easily adapted to your own schedule. April, May and June are included in this issue. Check the January Journal for January, February and March tips, and future issues for more information.

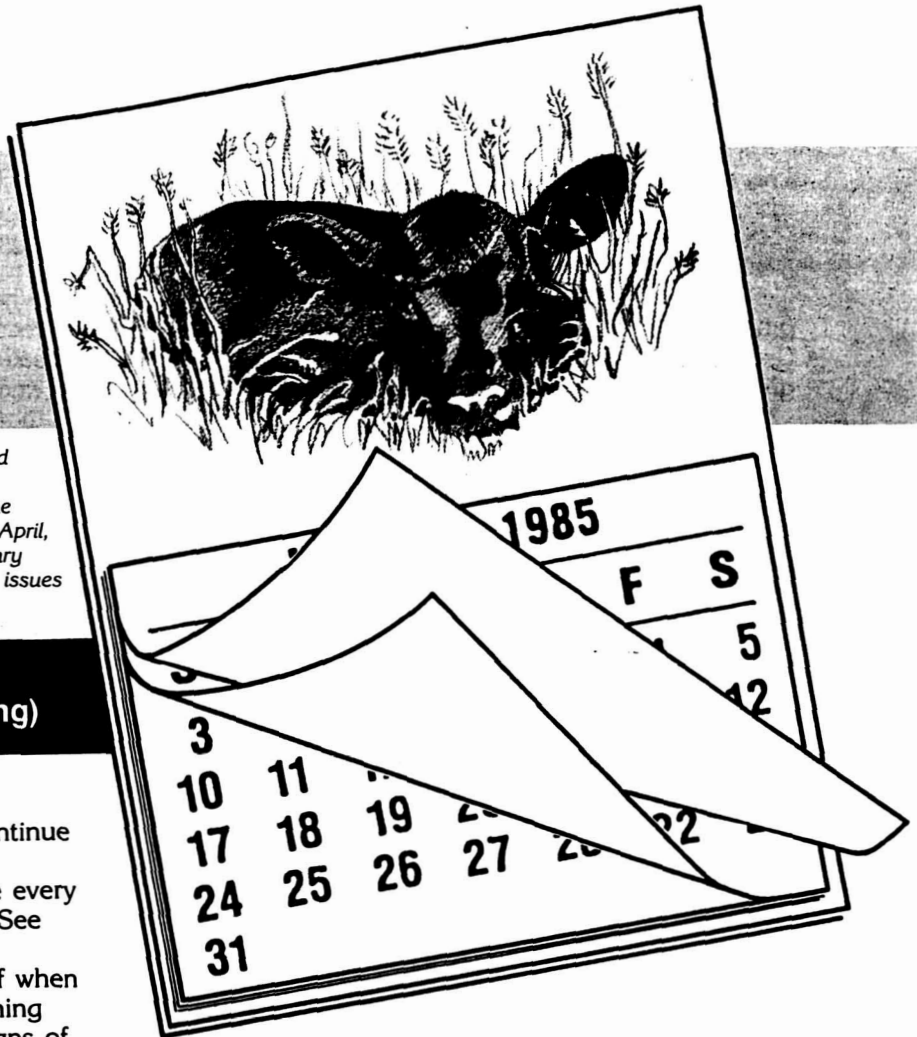
APRIL (October if fall calving)

Observe cows carefully.

- Calving season is still in full swing, so continue to check cows frequently. Be prepared to provide assistance. Most importantly, save every calf. Check, record and weigh each calf. (See the January issue for more details.)
- Check condition of cows and take note of when they start to recycle. Cows should be gaining .75 lb. per day and will normally show signs of heat three to four weeks after calving. Body condition of cows affects length of postpartum interval. (Research indicates that about half the number of cows in "thin" condition will be cycling 60 days after calving as compared to cows in "good" condition. Extreme calving difficulty will also extend the postpartum interval.) Heifers tend to have a longer postpartum interval than cows.
- Pay special attention to needs and condition of replacement heifers to ensure maximum number cycling at start of breeding season.
- Watch for signs of lameness in the cow herd, especially foot rot.

Plan pasture program.

- Continue feeding program until ample grass is available. Early pastures may help on protein, but generally are low on energy.
- Beware of grass tetany. Provide supplemental magnesium if it is a problem in your area.
- Provide ample salt free choice, plus supplemental phosphorus (important for maximum fertility), calcium and trace minerals as dictated by your feeding program and known deficiencies in your area. Consult your local extension service for details.
- Plan fly-control program early. Control flies before they are a problem. Consider insecticidal ear tags, back rubbers, dust bags, special mineral blocks, sprays and other alternatives.



Flies can rob you of up to 50 lb. per calf.

- Permanently identify calves with tattoos or brands. Brand replacement heifers if they were not branded as calves. (Use ear tags for quick, easy identification.)
- Take care of general repairs, such as pasture fences and gates. Check condition of water supplies, mineral feeders, etc.

Improve pasture management.

- Consider rotational grazing, when possible. Effective pasture rotation can increase carrying capacity and improve pasture condition. Turn cattle in when legumes and tall grasses are 10 to 12 inches tall, and bluegrass is 4 inches tall. Remove cattle when grasses are down to about 2 inches. Clip pastures at least once per summer to control brush and weeds, and to encourage regrowth. Allow 25 to 30 days recovery between grazing periods for grasses and 35 to 45 days recovery for alfalfa.
- To take advantage of early summer grass, graze one-third to one-half the pasture intensely for six to eight weeks and make hay on remainder. Then graze entire acreage.
- When possible, include legumes (50 percent) in pasture seedings to allow for nitrogen fixation.

- Inseminate about 12 hours after heat is first observed. Breeding should be done by an experienced A.I. technician.
- Use proper semen handling and insemination techniques.
- Work cows gently.
- Make positive identification of cows as bred and keep accurate records.
- Check to see cows have had a 60-day postpartum rest before breeding.
- Consider an estrus synchronization program. (See the March 1984 issue of the Journal.)
- Well-designed handling facilities reduce time and labor needs (and expenses). They can also enhance an A.I. program's success, as well as your attitude.

Care for calves. Healthy calves grow better.

- Vaccinate all calves over 3 months of age for Clostridial infections. (Use multiple bacterins for blackleg, malignant edema, leptospirosis, PI₃ and pasteurized.)
- Vaccinate heifer calves (3 to 4 months old) for brucellosis (Bangs), if necessary. Consult your veterinarian regarding specific state regulations.
- Castrate calves in advance of fly season. Watch them carefully for infection. (Dehorn by using Angus!)
- Consider implanting calves at approximately 45 days of age or older with an approved growth stimulant. (Restrictions differ for cattle intended for breeding purposes.)

Watch condition of cows.

- Turn cows with calves out to pasture. Check to see they are recycling and in good body condition for breeding.
- Determine percent of cows cycling prior to the onset of the breeding season. Review feeding program if a high percentage of cows are not recycling within 3 to 4 weeks after calving.
- Pay particular attention to first-calf heifers. If they are in poor condition and not showing signs of estrus (heat), supplement their feeding program with grain or silage.
- Beware of bloat on heavy alfalfa or ladino pasture stands; blocks with poloxalene can help prevent bloat.
- Beware of grass tetany on lush grass stands fertilized with nitrogen; supplement magnesium in free choice mineral mix if grass tetany has been a problem.
- Feed free choice mineral to supplement pastures.

Prepare for hay season.

- Be sure equipment is working properly. Order necessary supplies and repair parts.
- Cut hay early before plants become too mature and fibrous. Harvesting forage early is the key

to nutritional quality. Don't wait too long!

JUNE (December if fall calving)

Concentrate on breeding season.

- Check natural service breeding bulls daily.
- Review tips for a successful A.I. program. Observe cows for signs of heat often and regularly.
- Keep records of natural service as well as A.I. breeding dates when possible.
- If too many females return to heat, consider: 1) bull or semen; 2) nutritional levels; 3) reproductive disorders such as IBR, vibriosis, leptospirosis or infections. Consult your veterinarian.
- Remember, a 45-day breeding season for heifers will help you cull sub-fertile heifers before they ever enter your herd.

Check pastures regularly.

- Furnish adequate water, shade, mineral and salt to all cattle.
- Check fly population and start a fly control program. Use a program that suits your herd size, concentration of cattle and facilities, while providing adequate fly control.
- Continue to watch for signs of lameness, pinkeye, or other ailments. Treat promptly.
- Rotate pastures for maximum carrying capacity. Don't over graze pastures; it slows recovery.
- Consider a creep-feeding program for calves only if they need supplemental feed because of inadequate milk production of dams due to extremely short pastures or in the case of first-calf heifers. If you creep feed, stick to an economical mix; protein supplement is not necessary.
- Clip pastures if necessary. Seed heads and weeds may increase eye irritation and pinkeye. Mowing encourages uniform regrowth.

Maximize forage harvest.

- Harvest forages at peak quality. This will increase production in your herd and reduce supplemental winter feed costs.

Effects of Date of Harvest on the TDN and Digestible Protein Content of Dry Hay*

Harvest Date	Grasses		Legumes	
	TDN (%)	Protein (%)	TDN (%)	Protein (%)
June 1	63	12.2	63	16.8
June 15	57	9.0	57	13.1
July 1	50	6.0	50	9.2
July 15	44	3.3	44	5.9

*Data from J.T. Reid, Cornell University, based on first cutting hay.

- Consider fertilizing after first hay cutting to maximize second cutting.

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