

Protect Cattle Investment During Price Crunch

Cash flow and profit are still the bottom line of the beef business. Spending money on practices that return significantly more than their cost is always a good plan. Now, it's even more critical to be sure each practice is a money maker. If you can spend \$1 to \$2 and get a return of \$17, wouldn't it be worthwhile?

Estimates on costs and returns from various beef herd management practices are listed in Table 1 below. The economic values may vary in your region, but the response will be about the same. Take a good look and determine how they would fit your situation.

Consult with your local veterinarian to develop and carry out a herd health program. It's time and money well spent. A healthy animal performs more efficiently and will be more profitable than those that have even low-level health problems.

Not every vaccine needs to be used in every herd. A veterinarian who works with your herd and knows the problems in neighboring herds is the best source of information on vaccine usage.

It's much more cost effective and profitable to continue doing things that increase weight gain and keep costs at a minimum, especially with a depressed cattle market. It's wise to stick with proven practices and regular use of a veterinarian, rather than jump on a "fad bandwagon."

Millions of dollars are spent each year on worthless tonics, shotgun treatments and so-called cures. Producers looking for quick fixes are often prime targets for these situations.

-Hugh S. McCampbell
University of Tennessee
Extension Veterinarian

TABLE 1

RECOMMENDED PRACTICE	COSTS	RETURNS	NET VALUE
Control flies, lice & grubs	\$24-78/head per month	1/8-1/4 lb. increase ADG	\$24.10
Control internal parasites	\$1.10-2.60/500 lb.	1/8 lb. increase ADG	\$17.00
Castrating	\$.50-1.50/hd.	\$3-7 per cwt. at sale time	\$23.50
Implanting	\$1-2.85/hd.	20-50 lb. increase weaning wt.	\$23.95
Pregnancy check & cull open cows	\$1-2.50/cow	\$175-300/year	\$235.00
Vaccination program	\$4.30-5.60/hd	Reduced sickness, death loss	\$?

Source: University of Maryland Extension

Kent Safe-Guard® Cattle Mineral Medicated

Kent Safe-Guard Cattle Mineral Medicated is used to control nine major worms in cattle and contains 13 percent calcium and 6 percent phosphorus. The product is designed to be fed free-choice to stocker cattle, cow-calf herds, and dairy replacement heifers to control certain internal parasites. Kent Safe-Guard Cattle Mineral is very palatable and allows producers a convenient method of deworming their cattle.

For more information, contact your nearest Kent Feeds dealer or call (319) 264-4593 (collect).

Texas leads Drop In Bangs Infected Herds

In the last quarter of 1994, the National Brucellosis Eradication Program took another step toward its goal of wiping out the disease in cattle by 1998. Nationally, the number of infected herds fell from 147 on Sept. 30 to 137 on New Year's Eve.

The drop was fueled by Texas, the state with the most brucellosis-infected cattle. The number of infected herds in Texas declined from 80 to 66 during the quarter.

The rest of the nation had a net increase of four infected herds, but Dr. Granville Frye of the cattle diseases and surveillance staff of the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service was pleased by the overall drop.

"Texas has made great progress," he said. "We would like to have the numbers continue to go down. We're hoping to get down to 100 by the end of the year."

"But when you get down this low, the numbers can go up and down pretty easily. You find new infected herds, then you might find another one or two nearby."

That was evident in the last quarter, when Alabama jumped from zero herds to four.

Source: Livestock Conservation Institute

The Herd Count

No. of brucellosis-infected herds

State	3-94	12-94	Trend
Alabama	1	4	t4
Arkansas	6	2	-1
California	0	4	t2
Colorado	0	0	—
Florida	13	11	+2
Georgia	7	2	-2
Iowa	0	0	—
Kansas	26	18	-1
Kentucky	2	0	-1
Louisiana	15	10	+1
Mississippi	7	2	-1
Missouri	10	10	-1
Nebraska	0	0	—
New Mexico	3	2	-1
Oklahoma	4	4	+1
South Dakota	1	1*	—
Tennessee	2	1	—
Texas	134	66	-14
Totals	231	137	-10

*South Dakota's one infected herd is a bison herd.