

Pounds of calf, percentages, and p.m. feeding

A six-year study by Melvin D. Griffeth, a faculty member in the department of biology at Ricks College in Rexburg, Idaho, reveals out of 734 cows calved from 1982 to 1987, 67 percent of the calves saw the daylight when they were born. As indicated by the following chart, in 1982, 161 cows were calved; in 1983, 198 cows calved; in 1984, 113 cows calved; in 1985, 109 cows calved; in 1986, 78 cows calved; in 1987, 76 cows calved, which makes a total of 734 cows over six years.

The key to the daylight calving seems to be the time of day the cows are fed.

"I feed my cows once a day after school, approximately 5 p.m.," says Griffeth. "This is a definite advantage in this country because our nights are usually 20 to 30 degrees colder than the daytime, and when temperatures drop into the sub-zero weather January, February, and March, this surely gives the calves a better chance of survival.

"We used different feed rations on different years. Some years, more hay and less straw; other years, less hay and more straw. We also used ammoniated straw for a couple of years, and it doesn't seem that different feed rations have much impact upon calving time. I've heard several people say they've tried it for a few days and it doesn't work, and they have gone back to feeding in the mornings or twice a day. It seems to me that 30 to 40 days lead time gives the best results. We usually start calving around the middle of February and start our feeding once a day about the first of January."

SIX-YEAR CALVING TIME STUDY by Melvin D. Griffeth

TIME	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	TOTAL	%CALVING
12 a.m.	3	3	5	6	8	5	30	4.10%
1 a.m.	5	5	2	4	1	3	20	2.70%
2 a.m.	2	6	1		1	1	11	1.50%
3 a.m.		3	1	1		2	7	1.00%
4 a.m.	1	5	4	7		1	18	2.40%
5 a.m.	4	12	8	9	6	2	41	5.60%
6 a.m.	8	11	2	4	6	6	37	5.00%
7 a.m.	4	4		2	4	2	16	2.20%
8 a.m.	3	3	5	1		3	15	2.00%
9 a.m.	5	5	1	2	1	1	15	2.00%
10 a.m.	7	7	8	2	3	3	30	4.10%
11 a.m.	6	20	5	13	3	4	51	7.00%
12 p.m.	12	18	7	8	8	9	62	8.40%
1 p.m.	24	15	18	7	6	8	79	10.80%
2 p.m.	8	9	7	11	8	9	52	7.10%
3 p.m.	12	5	9	6	3	4	39	5.30%
4 p.m.	17	4	2	5	3	1	32	4.40%
5 p.m.	3	12	2	5	11		33	4.50%
6 p.m.	9	10	6	4	1	3	33	4.50%
7 p.m.	4	7	2	5	1	1	20	2.70%
8 p.m.	6	11	9	2	1	2	31	4.20%
9 p.m.	6	12	7	4	1	2	32	4.40%
10 p.m.	8	6	2			1	17	2.30%
11 p.m.	4	4		1	2	2	13	1.80%
TOTAL COWS CALVED	161	198	113	109	78	75	734	100%

82.8%
67%

It's the percent that counts

She is known just as number 9 on Griffeth's Mel-O-Rama Ranch located west of Rexburg, Idaho. Lady G 1230, out of Freeman's Black Revolution, sire was pasture bred to Yankees Ebony Enforcer 3R in May, 1986.

On February 20, 1987, at 1:05 a.m., number 9 had twin heifer calves. One weighed 50 pounds. The other weighed 60 pounds. "We planned on splitting the calves so they would amount to something," said Griffeth, "but the opportunity just didn't present itself. We decided to let number 9 take care of both of them. Just like most Angus cows, she was a good

mother. There always seemed to be plenty of tender loving care by the mother and plenty of milk. We didn't even have to suckle the calves as she just knew what she was doing. It was not long until both calves were doing very well."

The calves were registered "Mel-O-Rama Yankees 101" and "Mel-O-Rama Yankees 102." The weaning date was December 20, which made the twins ten months old. At this time, number 9 weighed 1,450 pounds, number 101 weighed 600 pounds, and number 102 weighed 630 pounds. This meant that number 9 produced 84.8 percent of her body weight in 1987.

"It is percent that counts. I like those cows with high cow/calf weight percentages." In 1987, several Mel-O-Rama Ranch cows produced these percentages:



COW NO.	COW WEIGHT	CALF WEIGHT	COW/CALF WEIGHT RATIO
90	915 pounds	675 pounds	73%
76	915 pounds	605 pounds	66%
79	1,065 pounds	615 pounds	57%
65	1,115 pounds	665 pounds	57%
67	1,115 pounds	635 pounds	56%
87	1,080 pounds	620 pounds	57%
13	1,010 pounds	720 pounds	64%
42	1,050 pounds	610 pounds	58%