

Angus Advisor

September Beef Cow Herd Management Tips

Rocky Mountain West Region

by Doug Hixon, Extension Beef Specialist
University of Wyoming

Note: These management considerations are based on a spring calving season for commercial cows. If you calve at times other than February through April, the timing of many of these management considerations would need to be appropriately adjusted. Although most management tips would be similar for registered cows, additional considerations may sometimes be necessary.

1. As suggested last month, August and early September are usually good times to market salvage cows. The market is typically stronger now than in October and November when it's saturated with open cows following pregnancy checks.
2. If you haven't already done so, give consideration to your calf marketing plan by evaluating alternatives. Contact your local Extension office for information on management practices to minimize shrink and its associated effects.
3. Administer vaccines to all calves, offering them protection against infectious bovine rhinotracheitis (IBR), parainfluenza-3 virus (PI₃), bovine viral diarrhea (BVD), seven strains of clostridial disease, bovine respiratory syncytial virus (BRSV), five strains of leptospirosis and *Haemophilus somnus*. Their first vaccination should be three to four weeks prior to weaning. Consult your local veterinarian about specific vaccination needs in your area, as well as types (killed vs. modified-live) of vaccines. Be sure to follow label instructions on proper storage and routes of administration of vaccines.
4. A series of booster vaccinations might be given at weaning or shortly thereafter. At least three weeks should separate initial and booster vaccinations.
5. If you are short on pasture, weaning earlier than normal will reduce the cows' energy and protein needs by 25%

and 30%, respectively. An alternative source of nutrition for the weaned calves might be to put them on meadow regrowth. This is a high-quality source of nutrition on which the calves will perform well. This also allows the dry cow to utilize available forage to enhance body condition prior to the onset of winter weather. This is a particularly important management consideration for 2- and 3-year-old cows.

Midwest Region

by Twig Marston, Extension Beef Specialist
Kansas State University

Note: These management tips are for spring-calving cow herds.

1. September is when forages are maturing, weaning time is approaching and weather dictates several key management decisions.
2. Wean calves earlier than normal. This allows cows to flesh up on a forage-based diet prior to grazing crop residue. First-calf heifers and older, thin cows will benefit the most from this management decision.
3. Prepare facilities for fall work schedules.
4. Pregnancy check earlier than normal. Open cows can be culled prior to seasonal price decline. Open yearling heifers can be fed finishing diets and sold as slaughter heifers.
5. Consider preconditioning calves. Research indicates increased immune response from vaccines administered three weeks prior to weaning as compared to later vaccination schedules, and that minimizes weaning stress.
6. Vaccinate replacement heifer calves for brucellosis (Bang's disease) if within the proper age range (4-10 months).
7. Inventory forage supplies and sample for nutrient and nitrate analysis.
8. Plan the winter feed supply for the cow herd, bred heifers and weaned calves.

9. Prepurchase bulk-rate winter supplementation needs prior to seasonal price increases.
10. Plant cereal grains that will be used for grazing cattle.
11. Formulate plans to merchandise calves.
12. Make plans to weigh calves for participation in cow herd appraisal of performance software or national breed-association performance programs.
13. Document cost of production by participating in Standardized Performance Analysis (SPA) programs.
14. Attend local, state and national beef events.

Upper Midwest Region

by Harlan Ritchie, Extension Beef Specialist
Michigan State University

1. Line up supplies and pharmaceuticals for fall roundup and weaning. Consider the following items:
 - ✓ Ear tags to replace lost identification tags.
 - ✓ Deworming products.
 - ✓ Grub and lice products.
 - ✓ Vaccines (IBR, PI₃, BVD, haemophilus, 7-way clostridial, BRSV, 5-strain leptospirosis, vibriosis, pasteurilla toxoid).
 - ✓ Note that several of the above vaccines are available in combinations, requiring fewer injections.
 - ✓ Schedule veterinarian to vaccinate replacement heifer calves for brucellosis if necessary (laws vary from state to state).
 - ✓ Get ready to castrate calves that were missed earlier.
2. Performing as many of these practices as possible while the calves are still on the cow will minimize stress when they are weaned. One month prior to weaning is a near-ideal time.
3. Unless your calves already have been on creep feed, start putting out some grain in an area where they can start learning to eat out of a bunk. It may reduce stress at weaning time.
4. Get facility ready for working cattle. If yours is not adequate, contact your county Extension office for a corral plan; or purchase "Beef Housing and Equipment Handbook," Midwest Plan Service, 122 Davidson Hall, Iowa State

University, Ames, IA 50011; phone:
(515) 294-4337.

5. Plan your marketing program — private treaty, consignment sales, test stations or production sale.
6. Prepare to have your calf crop weighed and analyzed through your state, regional, or breed performance-testing program. A good software package (CHAPS) may be purchased by contacting Kris Ringwall, North Dakota State University, Hettinger, ND 58639.

Southern Region

*by R.S. Sand, Extension Beef Specialist
University of Florida*

1. Cut hay.
2. Heavily graze pastures to be interplanted to cool-season pastures.
3. Check mineral feeder.
4. Check for mole crickets and spittlebugs. Treat if necessary.
5. Check dust bags.
6. Wean calves and cull cow herd if not already done. Remove open, unsound, poor-producing or over-age cows.
7. Train herdsmen to observe normal and abnormal behavior in cattle and signs of disease.
8. Be sure any replacement purchases are healthy and are calfhooed vaccinated for brucellosis.
9. September or October is a good time to deworm the cow herd if internal parasites are a problem.
10. When replacement heifers are weaned, give them required vaccinations and teach them to eat — then put them on a good nutrition program.
11. Determine bull replacement needs, develop selection criteria, and start checking availability of quality animals.
12. Review winter feed supply and feeding plans so that needed adjustments can be made before supplies tighten and prices rise.

