

ANGUS ADVISOR



Our team of Angus advisors offer regional tips for herd management for the month of November.

Southern Great Plains



by David Lalman

Oklahoma State University
david.lalman@okstate.edu

Spring-calving herds

- Dry cows grazing native rangeland or mature Bermuda grass should receive a protein supplement. One pound (lb.) of a high-protein product (30%-40%) or 2 lb. of a moderate-protein product (20%-25%) will increase forage intake and digestibility, allowing the cattle to harvest 25%-50% more energy from the forage resource. Cows should gain one-half to one full body condition score before the end of the year, assuming they have access to abundant forage.
- Be diligent in monitoring health of weaned calves. Bovine respiratory disease often occurs within about four weeks of a stressful period and/or exposure to infectious agents. Similarly, the incubation period (time from ingestion of oocysts until clinical signs of diarrhea) is about two to three weeks. Consequently, just because calves are no longer bawling and have learned to come to the feed bunk or feed truck,

does not mean they are “out of the woods.”

- Work with a nutrition expert to design a balanced, cost-effective program for weaned calves to include protein, energy, vitamin and mineral supplementation. The destination for calves post-preconditioning should be a major factor in designing the preconditioning period nutritional program. For example, if they will be turned out on wheat pasture in December, there is no need to feed them to gain 3 lb. per day during preconditioning.

Fall-calving herds

- Prepare for the breeding season by purchasing semen, checking, repairing and cleaning breeding equipment and facilities.
- An excellent resource for up-to-date synchronization and artificial insemination (AI) breeding information can be found at <http://beef.unl.edu/learning/estrussynch.shtml>.
- Process calves and vaccinate according to your herd health plan. Vaccinate cows for reproductive diseases and visit with your veterinarian regarding the timing and type of product to use prebreeding in the cow herd. Evidence continues to grow suggesting

AI conception rate can decline when a modified-live product is administered within about 45 days of breeding.

- Lactating, fall-calving cows should receive approximately twice the amount of supplemental protein as the spring-calving cow herd. On native, warm-season pasture, use an escalating supplementation program, beginning with 1 lb. of 37%-40% CP supplement in September and October and increasing to 3-4 lb. by Jan. 1.

General Recommendations

1. Producers evaluating winter feeding and supplementation programs should spend some time with a simple ration-evaluation program. These decision tools can help you make informed decisions, cut out waste, and ensure optimal animal performance. Most Extension service groups offer some sort of ration evaluation program. The Oklahoma State University (OSU) Cowculator is one such tool that is made available for free at www.beefextension.com.
2. Stop feeding tetracycline for anaplasmosis control after the end of the vector season (after a hard freeze).
3. Check with your Extension office for information

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on educational meetings about livestock and forage production practices.

4. Lightly graze native hay meadows after a hard/killing frost. Remove cattle from meadows in wet conditions. Leave a minimum of 6 to 8 inches of existing regrowth to protect the soil surface.

Western Region



by Randy C. Perry

*California State University–Fresno
randyp@csufresno.edu*

Become as proficient as possible in two key areas — grazing management and low-stress animal handling — both are key to profitability for both purebred and commercial producers.

Fall-calving herds

Main Focus — Prepare for the breeding season.

- Decide on AI sires and get semen ordered early. Focus on bulls that will produce high-quality herd replacements. Devote adequate time to sire selection because from a long-term standpoint it is the most important management decision made each year in a purebred cattle operation.
- Evaluate available synchronization protocols and determine the best choice for your production situation.
- Put the extra effort into heat detection because often it is the difference maker between average and highly successful AI programs.
- Have extra AI supplies on hand and thoroughly clean and disinfect all breeding equipment (including the thaw thermos) prior to the start of breeding.
- Semen and trichomoniasis test natural service sires far enough in advance of turn-out dates so if problems arise they can be corrected in time to not affect your breeding season.
- Be sure to get cows and heifers vaccinated with prebreeding vaccinations at least 30 days prior to the start of the breeding season. At a minimum, females should be receiving at least two vaccinations: 1) the respiratory complex plus leptospirosis and possibly vibriosis and 2) either a 7- or 8-way clostridium vaccination.
- Consider deworming females at the same time they are vaccinated with an injectable, paste or pour-on product.
- Consider injecting females with Multimix at the same time vaccinations are given.
- Be sure females are receiving adequate levels of calcium, phosphorus and trace minerals that are deficient in your area. Mineral supplementation is most important during the breeding season.
- Continue to monitor body condition score (BCS) of breeding females. The target BCS is 5.0 (scale = 1 to 9) for both cows and heifers. Ideally, this level of body condition should be maintained during the breeding season.
- Avoid getting cows overconditioned during the breeding season as reproductive performance starts to decline if cows are above a BCS of 6.5 to 7.0.
- Be certain that both protein and energy requirements of females are being met. Because energy balance has a major influence on fertility, have females in a state of positive energy balance (gaining weight) during the breeding season.
- If females are grazing dry native forage, fall is the time of year when protein supplementation is most important. Price supplements on a cost per pound of protein basis.
- Treat calves for either scours or pneumonia promptly. It is well-advised to have first and second treatment options for both.

Spring-calving herds

Main Focus — Keep weaned calves healthy — cows are on cruise control.

- Weaned calves should be treated to control any internal and external parasites. Heifer calves should be Bang's vaccinated if not already done so. Both bulls and heifers should be PI-BVD tested if that is part of your animal health management program.
- Be sure both weaned bull and heifer calves are developed at adequate rates of gain so that differences in terms of genetic potential for growth can be exhibited. However, neither sex should be developed at extremely high rates as excessive fat deposition can hinder future reproductive performance and detrimentally impact foot and leg soundness.
- Our target level of performance in developing bulls is an average daily gain (ADG) of 3.0 to 3.5 lb. per head per day. A general rule of thumb concerning the level of concentrates for bulls to achieve that level of performance is 1% of body

weight (Example: 600-lb. bull calves need 6 lb. of grain or concentrates per head per day; 900-lb. bulls need 9 lb., etc.).

- Our target levels of performance in developing heifers is an ADG of 1.5 to 1.75 lb. per head per day. We prefer to develop females on pasture without them ever receiving any grain or concentrates. They must have access to good pasture resources to achieve this level of performance. For many producers, they don't have good pasture available during the fall and winter and thus they must feed their females in a lot during this time of year.
- The developmental period from weaning until yearling time, and beyond, to the start of the breeding period is critical in terms of influencing the future productivity of both bulls and heifers.
- Monitor the level of body condition of cows. The period from weaning until 50 days prior to the next calving is the least important from a nutritional standpoint. Therefore, if cows slip in terms of body condition — that is fine, provided body condition is re-deposited before the start of the next calving period.
- If late-term abortions have been a problem in the past, consider booster vaccinations for the respiratory diseases and leptospirosis at pregnancy check time.
- Cows should be pregnancy checked if not already done so. Avoid holding over open cows even if they have been excellent producers, typically the problem will reoccur.

Midwest Region



by Eric Bailey

University of Missouri
baileyeric@missouri.edu

General comments

During drought years, understanding how to allocate limited feed resources efficiently takes on increased importance. Some producers may have a variety of forage quality, from poor (corn stalk bales) to great (winter wheat). In general, nutritionists recommend feeding the highest quality feed to cattle that are still growing. A 5-year-old, 1,400-lb. cow is more adept at fermenting straw and stover than a 300-lb. calf. The reason is simple: the cow has a larger and more developed rumen, which can hold feed longer, giving the rumen microbes more opportunity to do their job.

Stockpiled cool-season forages have more than adequate nutrients until the middle of winter. The problem we run into is grazing them too short before starting to supplement. Once the average height of grass in pastures gets below 4 inches, forage intake becomes limited and cows cannot consume enough calories to maintain weight (body condition). This year might tempt producers to stretch the stockpile by delaying hay feeding, but that is not an encouraged practice.

Corn, soyhulls and other commodities are reasonably priced in Missouri this year. Even 3-5 lb. per cow per day of supplement will help fill the nutrient deficiency as stockpiled pasture forage dwindles. Remember that we are trying to get calories into these cattle. Any supplement that is marketed as a percent feed (Ex: 16% pellet) is likely intended to be used as a protein

supplement, especially if the protein content is much above 20%. You can get adequate calories from a high-protein supplement, but it is likely expensive. Also, cows cannot eat enough of a lick tub in a day to get enough calories from it and despite the marketing, there is no additive or supplement that will improve body condition if cattle are on short pastures and do not have anything else to eat.

Management calendar for November

My assumptions:

Spring-calving herd — February 1 is the beginning of calving.

Fall-calving herd — September 1 is the beginning of calving.

Spring-calving herds

Body condition management is the most important area to focus on. The ideal body condition going into winter is between 5 and 6 (Scale = 1 to 9). Each BCS represents 80-100 lb. of weight, depending on the cow size.

- Calves are 8-9 months old and should be weaned off cows. This preserves the cow's body condition and also reduces cow nutrient requirements.

Fall-calving herd

Breeding season is starting.

- Semen-test bulls if you have not already.
- Evaluate feed resources to carry cow-calf pairs through the winter. It is too late for planting, but having a feeding plan for winter is important and now is the time to do it.

Remember, cows reach peak lactation about 60 days postcalving. Peak lactation corresponds with peak nutrient requirements. Keep high quality feed in front of your cows.