



Angus Advisor

► NOVEMBER herd management tips

Southeast Region

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Spring-calving herds

- Condition score cows and separate thin cows.
- Market commercial calves at value-added sales such as state-certified feeder calf programs or through AngusSourceSM
- Background commercial calves for sale in December.
- Feed replacement heifers to gain 1.5-1.75 pounds (lb.) per day, or use the Target Weight method to calculate rate of gain.
- Cull open, old and very thin cows; check feet, legs, udders and eyes.
- Feed cull cows on stockpiled fescue until December or January to increase marketability.
- Test hay for nutrient quality.
- Move cows to stockpiled grass late this month or early December.
- Get a list of bull sales coming up early this winter.
- Submit weaning data to the Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIR) program.

Fall-calving herds

- Finish calving.
- Check cows two to four times per day, checking heifers more often. Assist early if needed.

- Keep calving area clean, and move healthy pairs out to large pastures three days after calving.
- Tag all calves at birth; castrate male calves and dehorn all calves in commercial herds.
- Give selenium (Se) and vitamin A and D injections to newborn calves.
- Feed cows extra energy after calving; stockpiled fescue will take care of most nutritional needs. Cows calving at body condition scores (BCSs) of less than 5 (on a 9-point scale) should receive special nutritional attention.
- Test hay for nutrient quality.
- Look for opportunities to secure low-cost feed supplies of bulk feeds or commodity feeds.
- Keep high-quality, high-magnesium (Mg), high-selenium minerals available.
- Move cows to stockpiled grass late this month or early December.
- Begin breeding replacement heifers late this month; try artificial insemination (AI) on heifers.
- Get breeding soundness exams (also referred to as BSEs) done on all bulls.
- This is the last chance to buy bulls at November-December bull sales.

Drought, hurricane affect cow nutritional status

- Fall usually brings increased forage supply to the Southern and Mid-Atlantic States as cool-season forages resume growth with cooler temperatures and increasing fall rains. However, droughts in the eastern- and westernmost portions of the region, and hurricane damage in the central region, have resulted in less grazable forage than usual. Cattle in hurricane-affected areas have been nutritionally stressed during and after the storm.
- Fall-calving cows will need to increase body condition before breeding in many herds. Producers should supplement cows as soon as they determine body condition has dropped below BCS 5. Spring-calving cows will enter the fall in lower body condition than normal due to poor conditions in late summer and early fall. Cows need to be managed to increase body condition to BCS 5 or 6 before winter arrives. It is essential that cows be in proper body condition before calving and breeding. Cows that calve in poor body condition or lose excessive weight between calving and breeding have a 10%-20% reduction in pregnancy rate. Corn and byproduct prices are low this year due to production and effects of the hurricane. Producers should seek economical, locally available supplements.

Midwest Region

by **Twig Marston**, Kansas State University, tmarston@oznet.ksu.edu

Herd management for spring-calving cows

1. Pregnancy-check if not already completed.
2. Finish culling. Consider feeding cull cows to increase body weight and value, and to utilize cheap feedstuffs.
3. Score cows for body condition. Provide thin cows [body condition scores (BCSs) 3 and 4] extra feed now. Take advantage of weather, stage of pregnancy, lower nutrient requirements and quality feedstuffs.
4. In late fall and early winter, start feeding supplements to mature cows grazing dry grass using these guidelines: (a) 1-2 pounds (lb.) per day of a 40% crude protein (CP) supplement; (b) 3-4 lb. per day of a 20% CP supplement; or (c) 10 lb. good nonlegume hay, no supplement needed.
5. Compare supplements on the basis of cost per pound of nutrient.
6. Utilize crop residues. Strip-graze or rotate fields to improve grazing efficiency. Cows with average body condition can be grazed at 1-2 acres per cow for 30 days, assuming normal weather. Available forage is directly related to grain production levels. Protein, phosphorus (P) and vitamin A are usually the limiting nutrients.
7. Discontinue feeding tetracycline if used for anaplasmosis control.

Calf management

1. Participate in national breed association performance programs, the Cow Herd Analysis and Performance System (CHAPS), and/or other ranch record systems.
2. Finalize plans to merchandise calves or to background through yearling or finishing programs.
3. Use Angus Information Management Software (AIMS) to record calf data.

Forage/pasture management

Plan a winter nutritional program through pasture and forage management.

General management

1. Document the cost of production by participating in Standardized Performance Analysis (SPA) programs.
2. Review management decisions, and lower your costs per unit of production.
3. Plan your marketing program, including private-treaty, consignment, test and production sales, etc.
4. A penny saved is a penny earned. Price byproducts, grains and other feedstuffs on a nutrient basis.

Midsouth Region

by **David Lalman**, Oklahoma State University, dlalman@okstate.edu

Spring-calving herds

1. Wean calves as soon as possible, if not already done. Cow milk production is at its lowest point in the lactation curve, and forage quality rapidly declines through the fall months. As a result, adjusted weaning weights generally decline for calves that are weaned late in the season. Furthermore, under most circumstances, cows will continue to lose condition until the energy demand for milk production is removed.
2. For cows grazing forage that contains less than 7% protein, begin supplementing the equivalent of about 0.4 lb. of protein per day. This is approximately equivalent to feeding 1 lb. of a 38% protein product or 2 lb. of a 20% protein product. This strategy will increase forage intake and digestibility, allowing the cattle to harvest 25%-50% more energy from the forage resource. As a result of this tremendous response, cows should gain one half to one full BCS before the end of the year, assuming they have access to abundant forage.
3. Depending on forage quality, retained heifer calves will likely require supplementation in order to achieve gains of 1-1.5 lb. per day. The most appropriate

and efficient supplementation program can only be designed with the nutritional characteristics of the forage resource in mind. For example, high-quality forage, such as wheat pasture, will not require protein or energy supplementation. In contrast, high-quality prairie hay may require up to 1.5% of body weight of supplemental feed to achieve the desired level of gain.

4. There is much interest in feeding fat to beef cattle (generally through supplements) to increase weight gain and achieve improved reproductive performance. Published experiments have failed to document consistent positive responses to fat supplementation in general. However, the research is more consistent in demonstrating that too much ruminally active fat can hinder intake, forage digestion and weight gain in general. Under most circumstances, forage-fed cattle should receive diets that contain no more than 4%-5% total fat. Many forages contain 1%-2% fat, leaving a maximum of 2%-4% supplemental fat.

Fall-calving herds

1. Lactating, fall-calving cows should receive approximately twice the amount of supplemental protein as the spring-calving cow herd. The goal for the supplementation program is to minimize weight loss through the breeding season so cows are able to

maintain moderate condition through this period. Moderate weight and condition loss after breeding will not compromise the pregnancy.

2. Brand calves and vaccinate for clostridial diseases, if not done in October. Vaccinate cows for reproductive diseases according to your herd health plan.
3. Many producers choose to begin breeding yearling heifers 20-30 days before the cows in order to maintain similar breeding/calving dates with the mature cow herd.

General recommendations

1. Discontinue feeding tetracycline for anaplasmosis control after the end of the vector season (30-50 days after a hard freeze).
2. Check with your Extension office for information on educational meetings about livestock and forage production practices.
3. Lightly graze native hay meadows after frost. Remove cattle from meadows in wet conditions.
4. Use prescribed fire every other year in dry leaf litter to control hardwood sprouts [less than 4 inches (in.)]. Fire will also reduce winter tick infestations.

