

25 Ideas for Keeping Feed Costs in Check



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Keeping Feed Costs in Check

22 Ideas

1. Creep Feeding

A list of situations (Ritchie, 1987) when creep feeding may be advantageous is provided:

- **Calf prices are high relative to feed prices**
- **Fall-born calves**
- **Drylot cow operations**
- **Calves from first-calf heifers**
- **Forage for cows is limited**
- **Milk production is limited**
- **Maximum weight or "bloom" is desired**
- **Male calves**
- **Large-frame, late-maturing calves**
- **Calves will be finished by the cow-calf producer on a high-grain diet**

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- On the other hand, when creep feeding may be less advantageous when:
 - Feed prices are high relative to calf prices
 - Heavy milking cows
 - Forage is abundant
 - Heifer calves
 - Smaller-framed, earlier maturing breeds
 - Spring calves
 - When calves are to be backgrounded on a high-roughage diet
 - When creep-fed calves are severely discounted

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- Creep Feeding Efficiency

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2. Co-Products

Corn Gluten Feed

Distillers Grain

Soyhulls

Condensed Distillers Solubles (CDS)

Bakery Co-Products

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Co-Products Feeds

- Always a good buy?
- Always practical?

Before Purchasing:

- Know value on a nutrient basis
- Know nutrient requirements of animals
- Know storage considerations
- Know feeding Limitations
- Weigh cost savings with other factors

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Co-Products Feeds

Sources¹

Commercial Feed Companies

NEMO GRAIN (1-888-327-8799)

Roquette (1-800-553-7080)

Cargill (1-800-317-8825)

Endres Processing, LLC (1-785-743-2820)

ADM Quincy (1-800-448-7692)

Cantril Feed (1-319-397-2215)

¹ – The information given herein is supplied with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by University of Missouri Extension is implied.

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3. Feed Waste

Hay Storage

Hay Waste

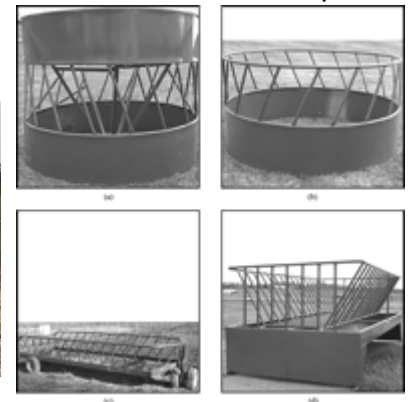
Bunk Management (or no bunks)

Feeder Design

- Dry matter hay waste was 3.5%, 6.1%, 11.4% and 14.6% for the cone, ring, trailer and cradle feeders, respectively.



Photos by Billy Cook



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4. Feed based on need / production cycle

- Lactating cows > Late gestating cows > Early gestating cows

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5. Selection for Efficient Cows

- Common Sense Approach
- Frame size research
- Recent genetic research
- Select daughters of feed efficient bulls

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6. Mineral Supplementation

- **Overfeeding (quantity)**
- **Overfeeding (specific minerals)**
- **Mineral waste (weather)**



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7. Stockpiling

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8. Feed Testing

- Hay

- Grain



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9. Buying in Bulk



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10. Forward Contracting or Seasonal Buying

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11. Ration Balancing and Mixing

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12. Grazing Efficiencies

- **Continuous vs. MIG**

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13. Hay Storage / Protection



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Effects of Storage Method on Round bale Hay Loss – University of Tennessee

Storage Type	Percent Loss
On Ground, No Cover	37
On Tires, No Cover	29
On Ground, Covered	29
On Tires, Covered	8
Net Wrap, On Ground	19
In Barn	6

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14. Feeding Ionophores

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15. Use of Growth Promotants

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16. Condition Scoring with Applied Management



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17. Cull Poor Producers

- Opens
- Poor Doers
- Bad udders
- Bad eyes
- Bad attitudes
- Late calvers



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Poor Temperament and Effect on Profit
Mississippi State University Study

1 = Non-Aggressive

5 = Very Aggressive

Net Profits

1 = 121.89

2 = 100.98

3 = 107.184

4 = 83.75

5 = 80.81

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18. Feed based on animal / production needs

- **Feeding at 95-97 percent full feed is most efficient based on some research. This assures expensive nutrients are not overfed**

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19. Purchase rather than produce feed

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20. Inter-seed Legumes

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**21. Supplemental feeding on pastures –
be careful of efficiencies**

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22. Night Time Feeding

- **Canadian Studies**
- **Truman State Study**

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23. Environmental Factors

- **Mud**
- **Shade**

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24. Don't forget value of water quality

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25. Shop Around

- For Best Feed Prices
- For Best Quality

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Do You Have Ideas to Share?