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livestock specialists.....



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DATES TO

REMEMBER:

- April 18th, 19th, 20th—Beef Cattle Artificial Insemination School, Linneus—Contact Chris Zumbunnen for more info at (660)-265-4541
- May is Beef Month!...make plans with your local Cattlemen's Group for a promotion. Contact the Missouri Beef Industry Council for materials and ideas.
- May 10th—MO Steer Feedout entries due

2007 Missouri Steer Feedout (fall-born calves)

The Missouri Steer Feedout is an educational program for cattle producers. The purpose is to give cattlemen the opportunity to: 1) Evaluate the genetics and management of their calves as they influence feedlot performance and carcass characteristics. 2) See if the cattle hit the 70-70-0 target (70% Low Choice or better, 70% Yield Grade 1 & 2, 0% outs). 3) Gain experience feeding cattle and retaining ownership without the investment and risk of feeding an entire pen of cattle. 4) Improve the quality and reputation of Missouri feeder cattle. 5) Explore alternatives for marketing cattle.



The feedout will be held in cooperation with the Tri-County Steer Carcass Futurity (TCSCF) in Lewis, Iowa. Nine different feedlots participate and Iowa State University Extension personnel supervise the program. Entry deadline is May 10th, 2007 and a \$20.00 per head non-refundable entry fee is also due at that time. There is a 5 head minimum, but no maximum, on the number of steers that can be entered.

Kansas State University Focus on Feedlots Report

Kansas State University Extension just released their February 2007 close-out information in their latest Focus on Feedlots report which includes data from nine different Kansas feedlots. The 13,889 steers averaged 1,290 pounds, 162 days on feed, 3.16 average daily gain, 6.65 feed/gain dry basis, 1.36% death loss and \$73.54 average cost of gain. The 26,907 heifers averaged 1,177 pounds, 156 days on feed, 2.81 average daily gain, 6.89 feed/gain dry basis, 1.07% death loss, and \$77.30 average cost of gain.

Magnesium and Grass Tetany

Spring is upon us and when cows begin grazing the lush spring growth, grass tetany, also called grass staggers, wheat pasture poisoning and hypomagnesemia, can start showing up. Grass tetany is a nutritional disorder resulting from inadequate blood levels of magnesium. Conditions which increase the risk of grass tetany are lush green forage, prolonged cloudy weather, older cows in early lactation that are heavy milkers, and soils that are low in magnesium and calcium and high in nitrogen and available potassium. The older cows in early lactation are more prone to grass tetany, since cattle become less efficient at mobilizing body stores of magnesium as they mature.

Prevention is the best treatment; providing supplemental magnesium after the development of a problem will usually not correct the problem. To prevent grass tetany, dry cows should consume 10 grams of magnesium per day, while cows nursing calves should consume 20-25 grams of magnesium daily.

At a recent bull sale, a producer asked a question about % IMF...basically, what is it, what does it relate to, and why is it reported? % IMF is based on ultrasound images taken between the 12th and 13th ribs of a beef animal.



Computer models estimate the percent of intramuscular fat based off of the images taken. Is % IMF and marbling the same? The answer is yes, in a way, % IMF is a numerical objective measure and marbling is a subjective call by a USDA grader. Many purebred breeders publish ultrasound data in their bull sale catalogs. The table below shows how % IMF would relate to quality grade.

% IMF	Quality Grade
2.3-3.0	Select -
3.1-3.9	Select +
4.0-5.7	Choice -
5.8-7.6	Choice °
7.7-9.7	Choice +
9.8-12.1	Prime -
12.2+	Prime °

Campus Corner:

Replacement Heifer Selection in Commercial Herds
Dr. Bob Weaber, State Extension Beef Genetics Specialist
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Selection of replacement females is on the horizon for many fall calving herds. After a winter like the one this year, many producers have commented on the substantial feed resources required by their herd. Some are even saying, 'My cows are eating me out of house and home!' No doubt cold weather, mud and ice can dramatically increase energy requirements of beef cows. Large mature size and high lactation potentials can also significantly increase energy needs for both maintenance and milk production.

Commercial producers should employ several strategies to achieve the goal of reducing maintenance and lactation energy requirements. Selection of females suited to perform in your forage environment in terms of lactation potential is even more important for fall calving herds than spring herds. One reason for this is that fall calving cows may be exposed to lower feed quality and quantity. Additionally, a large portion of the forage they consume may be expensive harvested feedstuffs. A very useful online tool for assistance choosing appropriate levels of genetic merit for milk production for varying production environments is the Angus Optimal Milk Module (<http://www.angus.org/tools/optmilk/index.html>).

Increases in mature weight are associated with increases in maintenance energy requirements. Moderation or even reduction of mature size of beef cows can help to optimize or reduce input costs and may help to improve reproductive rate as energy requirements are more suitably matched to forage availability/quality. To help control increases in mature weight and height of females select replacement heifers on weight from the middle one-third of the calf crop. Weaning weight has a very strong genetic correlation with mature weight. Selecting from the middle third will also tend to select away from higher milking genetics inherited from dams of the fleshiest and heaviest heifers. An added bonus is that you get to sell more pounds of calf weight as the heaviest heifers are now in sale pen.

Next time, we'll discuss the use of Maintenance Energy EPDs.

??Question of the Week??

I am looking at alternative feeds for my beef calves. How would rice hulls work in a ration?

Rice hulls would not be a good choice to include in a ration. They are very abrasive in nature and can cause damage to the digestive system of the beef animal. In fact, they are used in some industrial systems as an abrasive cleaner for equipment.

While we are experiencing high feed costs and it is a good idea to look outside of the box toward some alternative feeds, our advice would be to not use rice hulls in cattle diets.

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