

Cowherd Management Considerations for September

As September is coming, take into consideration these recommendations from Jason Warner, Extension Cow-Calf Specialist.

- For spring-calving cow herds:
 - If not already done, make plans for weaning calves.
 - Test your forages and have feedstuffs on hand prior to weaning.
 - Check and clean waterers and prepare weaning/receiving pens.
 - Evaluate cow BCS at weaning.
 - Record scores with the BCS Record Book from KSRE!
 - Use BCS to strategically supplement cows during fall, if needed.
 - Female requirements are lowest at weaning so weight and BCS can be added more easily in early fall rather than waiting until closer to calving.
 - Schedule pregnancy checking and fall health work if not already done.
 - How were pregnancy rates relative to last year?
 - Do we need to re-think our fall/winter nutrition program?
 - Evaluate the cost of gain relative to the value of gain when making feeding and marketing decisions for cull cows.
- For fall-calving cow herds:
 - The final 60 days prior to calving represents the last opportunity to add BCS economically.
 - Ensure mature cows are ≥ 5.0 and 2–4-year-old females are ≥ 6.0 at calving.
 - Review your calving health protocols as needed.
 - Have calving equipment cleaned and available to use as needed.
 - Plan to adjust your nutrition program to match needs of lactating cows.
 - Use the estrus synchronization planner (<https://www.iowabeefcenter.org/estrussynch.html>) to help plan fall synchronization protocols.
- Plan your mineral supplementation for this coming fall and winter.
 - Record date and amount offered and calculate herd consumption.
 - If consumption is 2X the target intake, then cost will be too!

- If using fly control products, continue to use them until recommended times (based on date of first frost) for your area.
- Risk of grass tetany is greatest for lactating cows. Consider magnesium levels in mineral supplements for cows grazing cool-season forages and winter annuals this fall.
- Schedule breeding soundness exams for bulls used for fall service.
 - Monitor BCS, particularly on young bulls.
 - If bulls are $BCS \leq 5.0$ after summer breeding, consider supplementing to regain BCS going into fall.

Calf Management

- If you are creep feeding spring-born calves, continue to closely monitor intake and calf condition/fleshiness going into the fall until weaning.
- Schedule any pre-weaning vaccination or processing activities if not already done.
- Consider the economic value by implanting nursing fall-born calves and weaned spring-born calves.
- If not already done, schedule your breeding protocols for fall replacement heifers in advance of the breeding season.
 - If synchronizing with MGA, make sure intake is consistent at 0.5 mg of melengestrol acetate per hd per day for 14 days, and remove for 19 days prior to administering prostaglandin.

General Management

- Employ multiple strategies, chemistries for late-season fly/insect control.
- Take inventory of and begin sampling harvested forages for fall feed needs.
 - Use the forage inventory calculator (<https://www.agmanager.info/hay-inventory-calculator>).
 - Balance forage inventories with fall/winter grazing acres.
- If you planning harvested corn or sorghum silage:
 - Test the nutrients and nitrates!
- Use the Management Minder tool on KSUBeef.org to plan key management activities for your cow herd for the rest of the year.
- With high feeder calf prices, consider price risk management tools.
- Visit with your local FSA and extension office if you plan to utilize CRP acres for emergency forage use or for information on other assistance programs.