



THE MIDWEST **Cattlemans**

August 22, 2024 Volume 30 No. 7 GRASSLAND FARMING TODAY



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THE MIDWEST

August 22, 2024 Volume 30 No. 7 GRASSLAND FARMING TODAY

INDICTMENT: RANCH COUPLE FACES CRIMINAL CHARGES OVER FEDERAL PROPERTY BOUNDARY

By Carrie Stadheim, Tri-State Livestock News Editor

Charles and Heather Maude, a western South Dakota farm and ranch couple, have been indicted for theft of federal property. The summons, served June 24, 2024, charged that the Maudes, “Beginning at a time unknown, but no later than December, 2020...did knowingly steal, purloin and convert to their own use National Grasslands managed by the United States Department of Agriculture, a department and agency of the United States, namely, approximately, 25 acres of National Grasslands for cultivation and approximately 25 acres of National Grasslands for grazing



cattle, having a value in excess of \$1,000 and did aid and abet each other, all in violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 641 and 2.”

The summons, signed by Alison J. Ramsdell, United States Attorney, charges them separately, which means they must retain two attorneys, and they could each be sentenced to up

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HOW BIG IS THE U.S. CATTLE HERD?

By Jason Franken, Agricultural and Consumer Economics, University of Illinois

How big is the U.S. cattle herd? With USDA cancelling its regularly scheduled July cattle inventory report due to budget cuts, that’s a question that many would like to have answered. Fortunately, historical relationships between changes in prior and subsequent inventories and levels of cow slaughter in between or heifers’ share of cattle on feed offer some indication. These negative relationships respectively explain 30% and

50% of the variation in changes in cattle inventory from one July to the next. While the share of January cow inventory that is slaughtered by July has dropped from 8.75% in 2023 to 7.76% in 2024, suggesting a slowing of cow herd liquidation, the current level still corresponds to a reduction in the July over July total inventory, as does the proportion of feedlot cat-

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CATTLE ON FEED REPORT SHOWS NO SIGN OF HEIFER RETENTION

USDA recently released the July cattle on feed report, which revealed a decline in June for on-feed numbers and an estimated July 1 inventory of 11.3 million head. According to University of Kentucky agricultural economist Kenny Burdine, this trend is normal, as on-feed numbers tend to decline seasonally from winter to late summer. Comparatively, however, the July 2024 inventory actually was about 0.5% higher than a year ago. Burdine said, while on the surface this seems odd given the recent declines in the size of calf crops, cheaper feed and higher slaughter weights largely are the reason for this, as cattle are being fed longer.

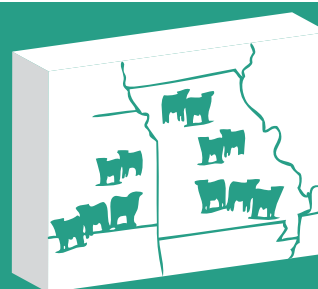
Feedlot placements have been the most interesting number to watch for Burdine in recent months. For June, placements were down almost 7% from last year. This

contrasts with placements being 4% higher year-over-year for May. He said the past two months illustrate why it sometimes is hard to look at things purely on a monthly basis, explaining that if placements were calculated for the first six months of 2024 and compared to the same time frame the year prior, the total would have been down by 3.2%. Burdine believes this likely tells the feeder cattle supply story a bit better.

With USDA not publishing a July cattle inventory report this year, the current mix of steers and heifers being placed on feed is especially important, he said, as it provides some perspective on heifer retention. Steers represented 60% of the on-feed report, with heifers making up the remaining 40%. Burdine said if retention were occurring, one would expect

the heifer percentage to be in the low to mid 30% range, so this continues to suggest that expansion is not on the near horizon.

KLA



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WHO ARE FEDERAL BUREAUCRATS HARASSING THIS TIME?

Letter from Editor

On June 20th of this year, a year in which millions of illegal intruders have been welcomed, trafficked and housed by our federal government, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of South Dakota indicted Charles and Heather Maude on charges of theft of government property related to a small piece of Forest Service land surrounded by the Maude's private land—land the Maude family has stewarded for generations. This young farm couple with small children were indicted separately by United States Attorney, Alison J. Ramsdell for theft of federal property, and each must retain their own attorney – doubling their legal costs.

NCBA President and rancher Mark Eisele put it this way... "The U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Attorney's Office have maliciously targeted and prosecuted these family ranchers, and it's clear



that if this can happen in South Dakota, government overreach can happen anywhere. The Forest Service's actions in this case—especially the deference they've given to a heavy-handed special agent with a long history of abusing permittees—is absolutely unconscionable."

Meet the Maudes

At www.maudehogandcattle.com, you can go to the tab

– "Who we are" and meet the Maudes. They are clearly the kind of people who you would want as neighbors.

As you can read in the article on page 3 the summons served to the farm couple on June 24th says: "Beginning at a time unknown," and clearly maligns the reputation of four previous generations of the Maude family. A member of the Maude family has held a U. S. Forest Ser-

vice National Grasslands grazing allotment in good standing since before the agency was created. Charles' great-great-grandparents, Thomas and Rose Maude bought the land adjacent to the USFS land in question in 1910 and a member of the Maude family has operated that land, and the USFS property adjacent it since then.

How can this happen?

Is this indictment really about a small piece of U.S. Forest Service land surrounded by the Maudes' private land, which the family has stewarded for generations, or is this a symptom of something much larger? Decades of mediocre public education, and a lack of interest in Biblical and Constitutional studies have led us here today where open and

continued on page 20



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STEP UP YOUR FARM'S PRECONDITIONING PROGRAM

Successful weaning is achieved when calves stay on feed. Here's how to focus on nutrition and make that happen.

By Sandra Stuttgen, University of Wisconsin Extension

For many producers, preconditioning is synonymous with vaccinating. However, while vaccinations are important, they take a back seat to calves' preconditioning nutrition.

Separation anxiety at weaning causes the release of cortisol, which suppresses immune response and increases susceptibility to diseases. The immune system needs energy to function properly, and proper nutrition and hydration are the biggest ingredients for maintaining calf health.

Reduce separation anxiety

Calves that know how to eat from a bunk and drink from a tank or fountain handle separation anxiety better than those that don't.

For a week or two before weaning, have the cows teach the calves to eat from a bunk by providing the group access to small amounts of highly palatable grass hay and grain

in a bunk, ideally in the location where the calves will be weaned to further aid with familiarity. Set the bunk height for calf access and provide 3 to 3.5 feet per head to help prevent calf injury. Provide clean and potable water in this location.

At weaning, separate the cows while leaving the calves in place. Keep the cows in sight; fence-line contact between calves and dams during

the first week of weaning has been shown to reduce separation anxiety.

Clean, dry calves are less likely to get sick. To decrease the need for manual cleaning, a sloped, well-drained weaning area should provide 100 square feet per head, nonslip surfaces, shade and wind protection.

Newly separated calves often pace the perimeter rather than eat and drink, so locating feed and water in their path is

especially important if calves have not been introduced to the weaning area before the separation day. Use soil or fill to raise the standing surface around bunks and waterers so smaller calves can reach both. Bunk space after weaning needs to be 1.5 to 2 feet per head. Fresh, clean water must always be available.

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EARLY THOUGHTS ON WINTER WHEAT GRAZING

The current market is anything but average and seasonal patterns may not happen.

By Derrell Peel, OSU Extension Livestock Marketing Specialist



Although it is only August, some forage-only and dual-purpose wheat producers in Oklahoma are already thinking about planting winter wheat for winter grazing. Early planted winter wheat is fraught with agronomic challenges and risks.

Soil moisture has generally been very short the last few weeks making wheat planting a bigger risk. Storms and rains in some regions of Oklahoma this past weekend may

provide moisture to facilitate early wheat planting in some areas.

In other cases, producers may “dust in” wheat into dry soil to await rain. High soil temperatures in late summer can delay germination in many years, though that seems to be less of a concern this year. Early planted wheat established in late August or September is subject to more weed and pest problems. Army worms are a particular threat to early emerging wheat in the fall. Grain-only wheat producers will not plant wheat until October and thus avoid or minimize some of these agronomic challenges.

Grazing on wheat

Assuming wheat stands are established, and wheat forage prospects develop, stocker producers will be planning purchases this fall and looking ahead to feeder market prospects next spring. Stocker production is tricky in the current market and requires careful planning. Stocker calf prices have risen farther and faster than feeder cattle prices since 2022. This means that the general buy/sell margin for stockers is narrowing.

Generally up trending feeder cattle markets have partially offset this with the time lag between stocker purchase and feeder sale allowing for feeder prices to close the gap somewhat. Risk management is important, but feeder futures are not generally offering good opportunities to protect feeder cattle value. However, put

options or LRP will provide minimum price protection from the enhanced volatility typical in current cattle markets.

In an average year, stocker calf prices would be expected to decrease seasonally from summer to a fall low. The current market is anything but average and seasonal patterns may not happen. Calf numbers will be relatively tight this fall, meaning that it may be hard to find stockers and they are likely to be expensive – especially if there is wheat pasture to keep stocker demand strong.

Feedlots

The cost of gain in feedlots has decreased this year and is expected to drop farther with

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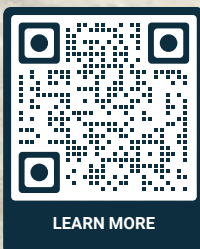
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CASHING IN ON YOUR CALF CROP

Adding even more value at the auction block.

By Jessica Sperber, University of Nebraska Extension

As we near the feedlot fall run and cow/calf producers market their calves at the highest prices received to date, every additional pound of gain has greater profit potential.

Profitability and feasibility vary from operation to operation, and producers should invest in management and nutritional strategies that will work for their specific operation. Developing a marketing plan that evaluates different management decisions, health protocols, and programs is essential to identifying what is most profitable for each independent operation.

How can cow/calf producers add additional value to their future calf crops?

Merck Animal Health, in conjunction with Superior Livestock Auction and Drs. Tonsor and Renter of Kansas State University, compiled data on 898,500 calves averaging 571 lb. at time of sale from January to December 2023, consisting of 7,612 lots with an average U.S. national price received of \$2.63/lb. The Superior Auctions data set explores the impact of genetics, health, and management factors that impact the price received on 5-weight calves at time of sale.

Steers consistently receive a higher dollar value compared to heifers, with 5-weight steers receiving an additional \$26.33/cwt. over heifers. Much of the spread in steer and heifer-calf pricing is driven by the historical reluctance of the feedyard sector to feed heifers. However, with the current tight feeder cattle supply in the U.S., heifers are receiving equal live and dressed pricing as steers in the fat cattle market.

It is evident from pricing data that cattle buyers prefer polled calves that are medium to medium-large in frame. Polled calves/no horns consistently bring a premium in the ring, returning an additional value of \$17.00/head over calves with horns present. Medium to medium-large frame calves returned \$22.00/head over calves with small frame.

Genetic merit impacts cattle buyers' willingness to pay. For example, for 5-weight calves marketed through Superior Livestock Auctions, calves that were marketed with the Superior Progressive Genetics Program claim returned \$20.00/head more than calves marketed without the claim.

The Superior Progressive Genetics program identifies load lots of calves that are sired by top genetics in the US beef industry.

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| 10 | 3 | 106 | 171 | 30 | 146 | 100 |



210L ASA# 4297867 1/2 SM
SIRE: 4M ACE

| CE | BW | WW | YW | MILK | SAPI | STI |
|----|----|----|-----|------|------|-----|
| 13 | 1 | 92 | 155 | 26 | 130 | 88 |



716L ASA# 4343976 1/2 SM
SIRE: KBHR HONOR

| CE | BW | WW | YW | MILK | SAPI | STI |
|----|----|----|-----|------|------|-----|
| 16 | -2 | 82 | 135 | 27 | 176 | 97 |



719L ASA# 4343981 1/2 SM
SIRE: LBRS GENESIS

| CE | BW | WW | YW | MILK | SAPI | STI |
|----|----|----|-----|------|------|-----|
| 13 | 0 | 93 | 148 | 24 | 183 | 105 |



5L ASA# 4297759 1/2 SM
SIRE: TEHAMA PATRIARCH

| CE | BW | WW | YW | MILK | SAPI | STI |
|----|----|----|-----|------|------|-----|
| 14 | 0 | 95 | 161 | 30 | 142 | 95 |



703L ASA# 4343964 1/2 SM
SIRE: KBHR DUALLY

| CE | BW | WW | YW | MILK | SAPI | STI |
|----|----|----|-----|------|------|-----|
| 14 | -1 | 89 | 143 | 28 | 168 | 103 |



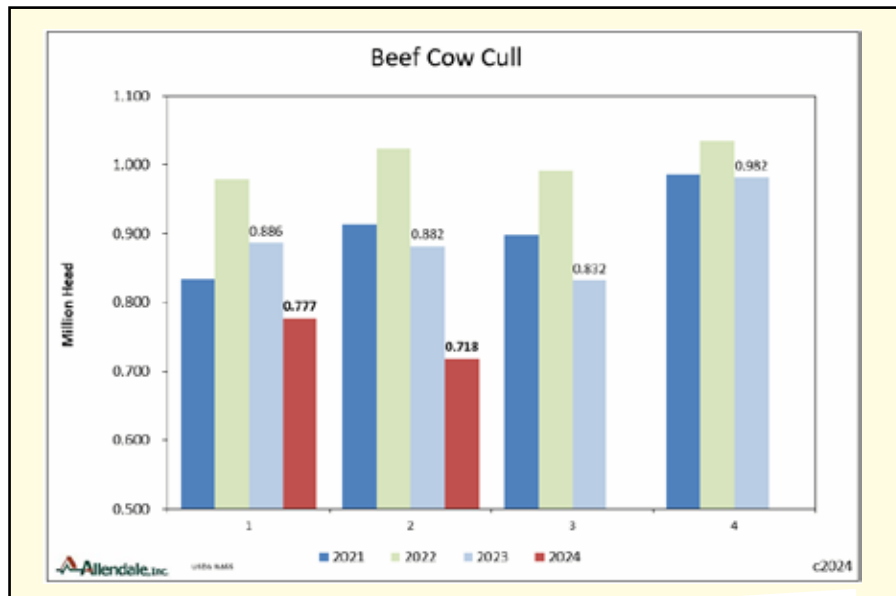
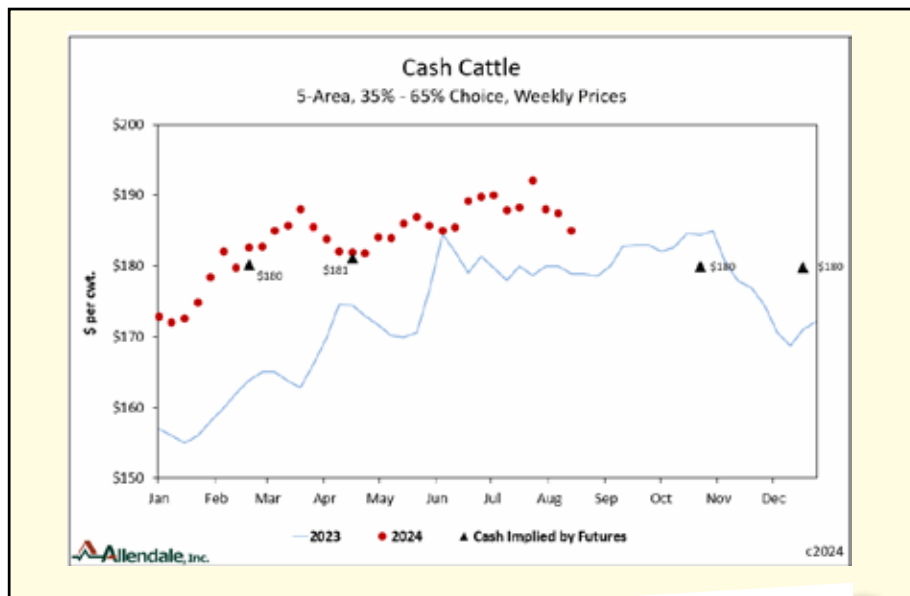
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Live Cattle:

The common understanding is that beef, the premium protein, is quite susceptible to sways in consumer financial health. In the prior recession, cash cattle pricing fell 10%. For the 2024 story in particular, we are more similar to 2023. At this time, a light recession concern also coincides with a light decline in cattle supply offered. The next phase of supply declines is set for Q4 and 2025.

This year's fed cattle price peaks in Texas were \$192, Kansas \$197. So far, we have seen a drop for both states to \$185. It could be argued that the recent run was due for a correction. But is the market's pricing into 2025 correct? Futures imply cash will fall to \$180 this fall then \$180/\$181 through April 2025. That Q4 period into 2025 is where the question shows. The market is implying steady/lower cash cattle pricing at the exact same time as a drop in offered supply. The other factor ahead for bulls is that live pricing will garner a greater share of the wholesale beef dollar over the next 12 months. We'll have packer processing capacity increases coinciding with lower cattle offered.

Feeder Cattle:

Beef cow slaughter has certainly stepped back in 2024. The first six months saw 1.5 million culls, -15% from first half 2023. And this was -25% from the first half cull two years ago. The next key for a discussion over expansion is heifer retention. We have yet to see that really start. When that does begin, perhaps next year, a year and a half of higher prices past that point would be seen as those females are held from the feedlot. Feeders in the sale barn have slipped to -1% from last year. Calves are still holding a 10% premium.

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What Does this Report Mean to Me?

Q: Has corn finally bottomed?

A: Corn has hit our long term goal of sub-\$4.00 futures as USDA is now using a +1.2% premium over trend yield. Current futures are perhaps a little undervalued with their view of final yields +3% vs. trend. This Aug – Sep period is the time to start procurement for needs through Dec via basis and call options. We are also suggesting feeder prices are in a long term procurement zone. Cattle feeders are encouraged to procure all replacement needs through next March via purchased appropriate futures.

Q: What are your thoughts about a recession?

A: For now, we simply suggest a continued slow-growth economy is the likely path. The separate issue is whether it will hit beef demand. As you know 2021 – current hold a separate demand story than the prior 10 years. US consumers could cut back in many areas of spending but still hold a special place in their heart for beef. Through July we have yet to see a pushback on beef specifically.

DECIDING WHEN TO REMOVE THE BULLS FROM THE BREEDING PASTURES

K-State Beef Cattle Institute beef cattle experts share the reasons why a bull may need to leave the breeding pasture before the end of the summer.

In agriculture, whether it is farming or ranching, there is a seasonal shift to the daily operations. And for spring-calving commercial herds, summer often means that the cows, calves and bulls are out grazing on summer pastures while the cows are also conceiving next spring's calf crop.

For many producers, a 50- to 70-day calving season is ideal, said the experts at Kansas State University's Beef Cattle Institute, who addressed this topic in a recent Cattle Chat podcast.

"Even though a short calving season is the goal, bred cows are worth more than open cows (ones who haven't conceived) and so if we take the bulls away then we reduce the number of cows that will become pregnant," K-State veterinarian Bob Larson said. "So, I'd keep

the bulls out in the breeding pastures longer than 60 days but plan on culling the females that got bred late in the breeding season."

However, there are times when bulls need to leave

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GENETIC Fly Resistance



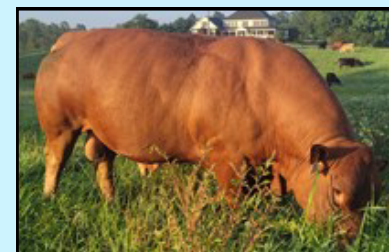
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TWO SCENARIOS FOR BEEF HERD EXPANSION: SLOW; AND EVEN SLOWER

There are still no signs of the nation's beef herd expanding.

By Derrell Peel, OSU Extension Livestock Marketing Specialist

Coming into 2024, the beef cow herd is at a 63-year low – the smallest beef cow inventory since 1961. This has pushed cattle prices to record levels through 2023 and 2024. And yet, there are no indications that any beef herd rebuilding is underway. The question of rebuilding the beef cow inventory is fundamental for cattle markets in the next few years.

A review of historical herd expansions is instructive. Figure 1 shows the path of beef cow herd increase for the past two complete cyclical expansions. From 1990-1997, the beef cow herd increased by 2.864 million head. From 2014-2020, the beef cow herd increased less – by 2.734 million head – in one less year but faster. The beef cow herd increased by 1.2 million in just two years from 2014-2016.

One of the keys to herd expansion is heifer retention. Figure 2 shows the changes in beef replacement heifer inventories leading to and

during herd expansion. Beef replacement inventories increased three of four years prior to the beginning of herd expansion in 1991 and for three years prior to herd expansion in 2015. Both expansions included one year of very large heifer retention (year 3 in 1993 and year 2 in 2015) with smaller increases before and after.

History provides some insight into what to expect in the next few years. First, is the fact we do not yet have a zero year (low inventory) from which herd rebuilding can begin. Beef cow slaughter is sharply lower, down nearly 16 percent year over year thus far in 2024. However, that level of beef cow slaughter, combined with the low beef replacement heifer inventory in 2024 (Figure 3) implies that the beef cow herd continues to liquidate by another 0.5 – 1.0 percent in 2024. Beef cow slaughter would have to drop by rough-

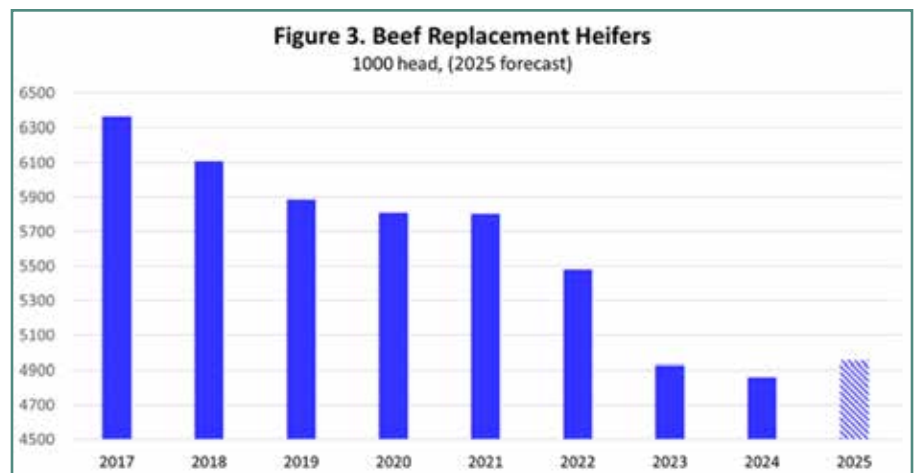
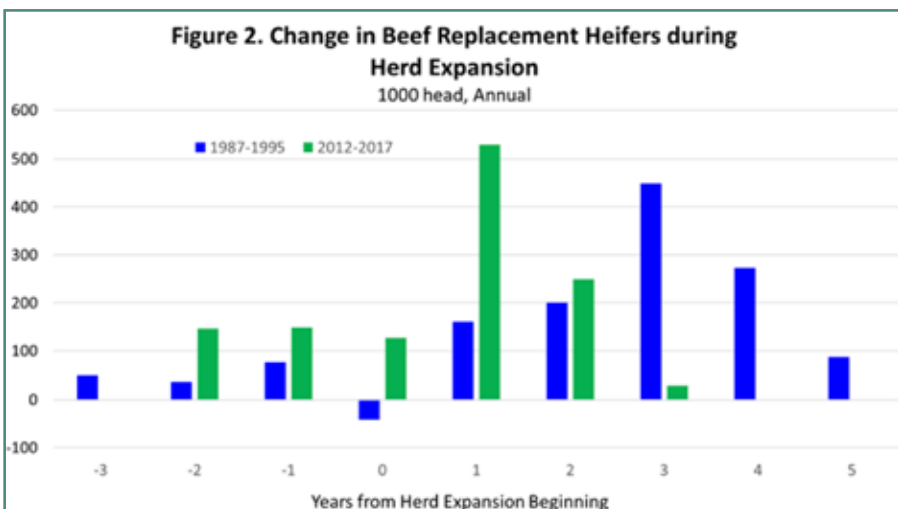
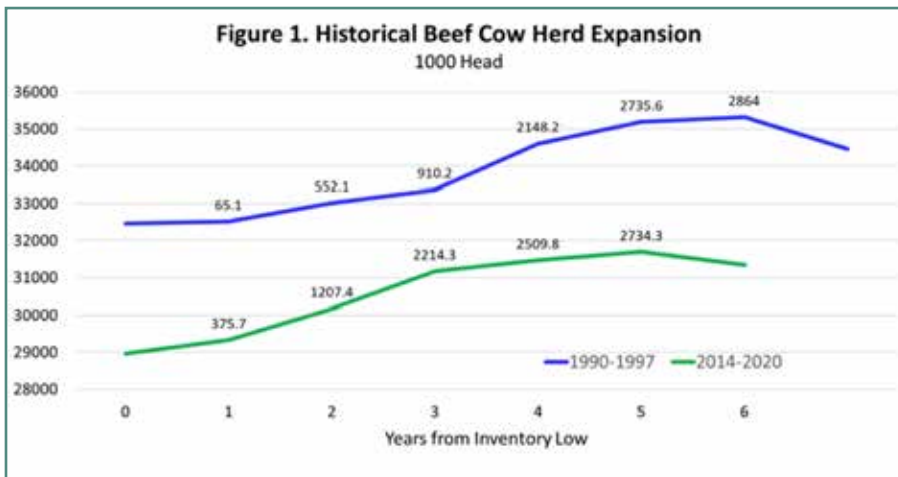


ly 22 percent year over year to avoid additional liquidation this year. The current rate of beef cow slaughter indicates a herd culling rate in excess of 10 percent this year. The culling rate is expected to drop below 10 percent during herd expansion. Thus, 2025 is the earliest zero year for the next expansion to begin. There is no certainty that additional liquidation will not occur in 2025.

Figure 3 shows the level of beef replacement heifer inventories since the cyclical peak in 2017. Liquidation of beef replacement heifer inventories in recent years means that there is no pipeline or momentum for herd expansion compared to previous expansions. Moreover, the level of heifer slaughter and heifers in feedlots in 2024 suggests that the replacement heifer inventory in 2025 is likely to show modest growth at best. Figure 3 shows a projected 2.0 percent year over year increase in beef replacement heifers in 2025. At that level, the beef

cow herd is limited to stable numbers or very minimal increase in 2025. Beyond 2025, heifer retention could increase more and accelerate herd expansion beginning in 2026. Current conditions do not suggest a high likelihood of sharply accelerating heifer retention anytime soon.

The threat of continuing/redeveloping drought is one of the factors limiting the beginning of herd expansion at the current time. Should developing drought conditions become a reality in the coming months with the return of La Niña, additional herd liquidation is likely, and any herd rebuilding could be pushed off further into the future. The beef cattle industry is smaller than needed and signals for rebuilding will continue and grow in coming months. However, herd rebuilding is likely to be slow to start and proceed quite slowly initially.



STEP UP

continued from page 5

Watch closely during weaning

Feed calves twice daily for the first 10 days after weaning so you can observe their behavior and health. Who is not coming to the bunk or not eating? Compare calves to each other: Are respiratory efforts or rates different? Are their feces different? Be prepared to restrain calves for a physical exam and possible treatment. Discuss and plan health protocols with your veterinarian ahead of time so you will have treatments on hand.

Balance the ration to provide 75% to 85% total digestible nutrients, and gradually transition feeding protocol to minimize digestive upset. At weaning, calves often eat about 1% of their body weight. Typical rations are 50-50 concentrate-hay, but actual percentages depend upon the quality of forage used. An example of a feed management plan for weaning is as follows:

At weaning. Weigh calves at weaning to start with accurate weight data.

Day 1. Begin by offering 0.5% body weight of concentrate (grain or starter mixed with minerals and possibly a coccidiostat) and 0.5% to 1% body weight in highly palatable grass hay, preferably that which you fed preweaning. For a 575-pound calf, this is 2.8 pounds of concentrate (575×0.005) and 5.75 pounds of hay (575×0.01). Put the hay on top of the concentrate, as the calves are probably most familiar with it.

Day 2. Increase concentrate to 0.7% body weight on the second day while keeping the hay amount the same.

Days 3 to 7. Incrementally increase concentrate while keeping the hay consistent, so that by day seven to 10 post-weaning, the calf is eating 2% to 2.2% body weight (dry-matter basis) for the total daily ration consumed.

Calves may shrink 3% to 5% because of weaning but will gain 30 to 50 pounds during the first month of a well-managed weaning and preconditioning plan. Target daily gains to 1.8 to 2.4 pounds per day during the preconditioning period. Gains much higher

than this may result in overly fleshy calves at sale time, and research has shown that fleshy calves are often discounted

Successful weaning is achieved when calves stay on feed and realize a moderate rate of gain despite being separated from their dams. Don't give anxious calves additional excuses for not eating and drinking by not providing appropriate bunk space and clean water. House them in a well-drained area so they remain clean and comfortable. Watch for disease symptoms and promptly treat them if needed.



EARLY THOUGHTS

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corn prices remaining low in the coming months. This gives feedlots more ability to bid for feeder cattle and outcompete stocker producers for limited feeder cattle supplies.

Feedlots are expected to place some feeder cattle that are lighter weight than usual as they attempt to maintain feedlot inventories. In the current market environment, prices across the spectrum of feeder cattle prices by weight generally suggest that stocker produc-

ers are increasingly relegated to the small end of feeder cattle – the basic signal is for stocker producers to purchase lighter cattle and turn them over more quickly. In general, the market signals are to move limited feeder cattle supplies through the system more intensively to keep beef production as high as possible with fewer cattle. This does not mean that other stocker programs, e.g. owning cattle longer and putting on more weight, will not work but will require careful planning at the outset.



Mark your calendar!

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to 10 years in prison and fined up to \$250,000.

At issue is a property boundary between the Maudes and the U.S. Forest Service. The fence in question and the management practices the USFS is alleging are “theft” have been in place for generations.

MAUDE FAMILY HISTORY

According to longtime neighbor Scott Edoff, Charles’ great-great-grandparents, Thomas and Rose Maude bought the land adjacent to the USFS land in question in 1910 and a member of the Maude family has operated that land, and the USFS property adjacent, since then.

A member of the Maude family has held a U. S. Forest Service National Grasslands grazing allotment in good standing since the inception of that agency, he said.

“This is just crazy,” said Edoff, who is also a past-president of the South Dakota Stockgrowers Association and past-president of the state Public Lands Council organization.

Edoff said Charles and Heather Maude own the land on three sides of the property in question and that the Cheyenne River is the fourth boundary of the two lots in question. Part of Maudes’ property bordering the southern lot in question has been fenced in and managed by the USFS for decades, he said.

“Charles’ great grandfather had an irrigation ditch for about a mile crossing that property. They allowed him to put that ditch in and irrigate that bottom,” said Edoff.

“They lost so much water through the years from it going into the ground that they started pumping it out of the river,” he said, explaining that Charles and Heather updated the water system from a big gun irrigation system to a pivot in 2020, the date the indictment indicates the “theft” occurred. The permanent components of the pivot are all on private property, with the outermost portion passing over some of the acres in question.

Edoff said he understands that Charles’ great grandfather offered to purchase the lots in question in the 1950s.

“The Maude family has signed grazing agreements with the Forest Service every year since the Forest Service came into existence,” said Edoff. “The Forest Service never once told them to cease and desist on how they were using that land. They never have gotten a letter from the Forest Service telling them not to farm it,” said Edoff.

ANOTHER RANCHER SURVEYED

USFS special agent Travis Lunders, a law enforcement officer with USFS who initially contacted the Maudes about the property at issue, also approached rancher Frank Bloom, who shares a fenceline with the Maude family.

Bloom said the agent just completed what he assumes was a four-day survey near his house. “They trespassed all over my land,” said Bloom.

Bloom said he will not be surprised if he is indicted as Charles and Heather were. The fence along Bloom’s property that appears to be in question was replaced in 2003 with USFS approval, said Bloom.

Lunders did not tell Bloom why they were surveying his property.

Bloom said he would like to visit with the USFS about resolutions. “We could sit down and resolve this easily,” he said. Bloom said he has 11 acres of Buffalo Gap National Grasslands fenced into his private land, but 40 acres of his private land is fenced into the Buffalo Gap National Grasslands.

Timeline of Events

South Dakota Senator Rounds, in a letter to U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, outlines a timeline of events since Lunders first contacted the Maudes.

Rounds said the following is his understanding of the Maudes’ interaction with the USFS:

•March 29, 2024 – The Maudes were notified of a complaint received by USDA saying a fence between their property and adjacent Buffalo Gap National Grasslands property blocked access to Buffalo Gap National Grasslands.

•May 1, 2024 – The Maudes met with USFS District Ranger Julie Wheeler to discuss a boundary discrepancy regarding the fenceline. USFS special agent Travis Lunders was also present. The USFS and Maudes agreed a survey should be completed, which could take up to a year, but following the survey completion there were three possible administrative steps that could be taken.

•May 6, 2024 – Special Agent Lunders escorted a crew to perform a survey of the land. The Maudes did not participate in the survey and have not received survey results.

•June 24, 2024 – The Maudes were summoned to appear in U.S. District Court, having been indicted for theft of government property.

“This action represents a direct conflict to an agreed upon plan, wherein the landowners were working cooperatively with the USFS to resolve the issue,” said the Rounds letter.

SOLUTIONS EXIST

Public Lands Council executive director Kaitlynn Glover said the criminal charges against the Maudes are “out of line with any other conflict resolution that the USFS has undertaken in boundary cases.”

The Rounds letter references the Small Tracts Act, which allows the USFS to trade or sell tracts less than 40 acres under certain circumstances.

The Association of National Grasslands President Ty Checketts, a rural Newcastle, Wyoming rancher also mentioned the Small Tracts Act as a possible resolution.

The ANG is made up of members that include grazing associations and also direct permittees.

“My biggest concern when I heard of Charles and Heather being indicted was, they didn’t

have a chance to work this out,” said Checketts.

“I was sick to my stomach, I had no idea the Forest Service special investigation unit would do this to anyone,” he said.

“This is uncharacteristic of the Forest Service. It’s very strange, very scary to everyone.”

Checketts said that he believes this could have been handled in a much more peaceful and resolution-driven manner. “Their district ranger could have come and said, ‘Hey, we have an issue, let’s get together and talk this out.’”

“Both Charles Maude and Heather Maude are willing to work this out. Also, the Forest Service has the Small Tracts Act, they could have used that to resolve this issue,” he said.

The Small Tracts Act was updated in 2020:

“The rule amends agency regulations to allow use of changes to the Small Tracts Act. Amendments include the authority to sell, exchange, or interchange small parcels of land that are 40 acres or less, and that are physically isolated, inaccessible or lack national forest characteristics. The amendments also grant the Forest Service authority to convey parcels of land that are 10 acres or less where landowners have made permanent, habitable improvements, and where the encroachment was neither intentional nor negligent,” explains the U.S. Forest Service website.

“The Maudes should not have been indicted over century old boundary issues,” said Checketts.

“Most of the time the Forest Service is good to work with. They sit down and work things out,” he said.

“There has never been a greater need than right now to be united as ranchers to protect long term grazing rights,” said Checketts.

INDUSTRY-WIDE SUPPORT

Edoff said many other individuals and groups have or will

Red Angus Association Strengthens Team with New Hires

The Red Angus Association of America is pleased to announce several strategic additions to its team: a membership and receivables specialist, an office receptionist, a digital media specialist and a written content specialist.

"We are excited to welcome these talented individuals to the Red Angus Association," said Tom Brink, RAAA CEO. "Their combined experience and expertise will be instrumental in supporting our members, enhancing our digital presence and effectively communicating the value of Red Angus cattle to a wider audience."

Christi Mangusso, a Colorado native from Arvada, joins RAAA as the membership and receivables specialist. Leveraging 18 years of office management experience and a Bachelor of Business Administration from Colorado Mesa University, Mangusso will manage member accounts and ensure exceptional customer service. She is also actively involved in agriculture, volunteering as a 4-H leader and raising livestock with her daughters.

"I'm ecstatic to become part of the amazing RAAA team and I look forward to contributing to the collective success of our members," shared Mangusso.

Tabitha Romero, from Brighton, Colorado, brings more than 20 years of experience in office administration and will serve as the RAAA office receptionist. Romero is enthusiastic about contributing to the member experience and said, "I'm so excited to join the RAAA team and to have a hand in this positive experience for our valued members."

Trisha Klement Glassinger, Aledo, Texas, is a 2000 graduate of Oklahoma State University with a double major in agricultural communications and animal science. With more than 23 years of experience in digital media marketing, Glassinger joins RAAA as the digital media specialist after assisting

RAAA since August 2023 as a part-time contractor. In her new role, she will be responsible for creating engaging content and expanding RAAA's digital reach to promote the Red Angus breed and the association's mission.

"I've grown up with cattle and love promoting the beef industry at every opportunity," said Glassinger.

"I'm excited to help promote the Red Angus breed and RAAA to a new generation of cattle producers."

Maclaine Shults-Mauney, from Lubbock, Texas, joins the team as the written content specialist. She attended Texas Tech University where she was a member of the 2016 National Champion Livestock Judging Team and

received a bachelor's degree in agricultural communications with a minor in animal science. With experience from the International Brangus Breeders Association and her own creative agency, Shults-Mauney will develop compelling material that effectively communicates the benefits of Red Angus cattle.

continued on page 20

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send a letter to Vilsack, urging him to find a quick resolution to this issue. Those groups include National Cattlemen's Beef Association, Rancher's Cattlemen Legal Action Fund-United Stockgrowers of America, United States Cattlemen's Association, Public Lands Council, Association of National Grasslands, South Dakota Farm Bureau, South Dakota Stockgrowers Association, South Dakota Cattlemen's Association, South Dakota Farmers Union, South Dakota Public Lands Council, Wyoming Farm Bureau, Wyoming House of Representatives Majority Floor Leader Chip Neiman, Pennington County Fire administrator, many South Dakota and Wyoming County Commissions, and others.

"Maudes have done something we could never do," said Edoff. "They have brought us all together on one issue. I'm kind of proud of everyone who has put their political differences aside to stand up for this salt-of-the-earth, hardworking farm and ranch family."

NCBA president and Wyoming rancher Mark Eisele said in a joint press release with the Public Lands Council, "The Maude family has been ranching in South Dakota for five generations and Charles and Heather have spent their lives protecting natural resources, investing in their land, and raising their children. The U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Attorney's Office have maliciously targeted and pros-

ecuted these family ranchers, and it's clear that if this can happen in South Dakota, government overreach can happen anywhere."

Glover said the situation is not a call to arms, but a cautionary tale and this should be treated as an isolated instance.

"When you have something that shakes the faith of permittees and shakes the faith, frankly, of range cons in the institutional structure of the Forest Service, it can feel like this is your fight to take up, too," Glover said. "This is one law enforcement official acting outside their bounds, this is one case where this behavior must not continue, this is one case that must not be repeated. And so, this family, this community, they're rallying around to support the (Maudes) and they're working the appropriate channels using the tools at their disposal through local government, state government, national associations to fix this problem and if it is to be fixed, it will be through those channels."

Lane said many elected officials in DC are displeased with investigator's aggressive strategy that sidelined the Maudes' efforts to peacefully resolve the issue.

"It didn't take us long to go through the paces to get to the bottom of what was happening in South Dakota and that conversation was received in exactly the same kind of anger we received it when we took it up to Capitol Hill and started talking to folks on the Natural

Resources Committee," Lane said. "Chairman (Bruce) Westerman (R-Ark.) and his staff are acutely aware of this long history of abuse by the Forest Service in this part of the world."

"They're digging into this making sure they have their facts straight, making sure they have the whole scope of the issue," Lane said. "We're hopeful that will bear some fruit in the next few weeks as far as a larger conversation outside of the dark corners of the U.S. Forest Service as far as just what the hell they're doing up there and why they think it's appropriate to threaten a husband and wife, mother and father, with federal prison over a fence line that has ostensibly been in the same spot since 1950."

"It's absolutely unconscionable, but unfortunately it was not a big education job to explain to folks on Capitol Hill what the Forest Service is up to here because they've heard too much of this in the past," Lane said.

R-CALF USA Property Rights Committee Chairman Shad Sullivan and President Brett Kenzy made a joint statement in a letter to Secretary Vilsack. "Secretary Vilsack, the Maude family are generational community members and upstanding citizens focused on land stewardship and food production. We encourage the USDA, USFS and the DOJ to effectively communicate with the Maude family to find a common-sense

solution to what has become a nation-wide issue. We urge your agencies to restrain from overreach and from exercising abusive power in their duties. I respectfully ask that you immediately drop all charges against Charles and Heather Maude."

The R-CALF letter also expressed concern over the USFS "lack of common sense regarding the fact that dated and primitive survey boundaries are often imperfect," and "the lack of communication by USFS employees after Mrs. Maude politely requested to be personally informed when USFS employees cross onto their private property when navigating to the Maude-owned allotment....and the manner in which each individual received personal indictments, unannounced by armed USFS Special Agent Travis Lunders, seems incredibly nefarious and retaliatory."

Edoff said he continues to hope for a positive resolution.

"I don't think Charles has ever so much as had a speeding ticket," said Edoff. "He is a good, hard-working American. He volunteers as one of our county fire chiefs. He is dedicated to his family and community, the kind of neighbor everyone wants," said Edoff.

USFS special agent Travis Lunders declined to comment. The U.S. District Court attorney and Troy Heithecker, Rocky Mountain Regional Forester did not respond to interview requests.



NCBA, PLC CALL OUT TARGETED PERSECUTION OF FAMILY RANCHERS

The U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of South Dakota has indicted Charles and Heather Maude on charges of theft of government property. The charges are related to a small piece of U.S. Forest Service land surrounded by the Maudes' private land, which the family has stewarded for generations.

"The Maude family has been ranching in South Dakota for five generations and Charles and Heather have spent their lives protecting natural resources, investing in their land

and raising their children," said NCBA President and rancher Mark Eisele. "The U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Attorney's Office have maliciously targeted and prosecuted these family ranchers, and it's clear that if this can happen in South Dakota, government overreach can happen anywhere."

The Maudes own a diversified operation in western South Dakota where they raise cattle, hogs and crops. They also are public land permittees in good standing. According to NCBA, the Forest Service law

enforcement officer who targeted the family and the U.S. Attorney's Office both have acted far beyond their scope in pursuing the family. Both NCBA and the Public Lands Council (PLC) are engaged in protecting the rights of these ranchers.

"The Forest Service's actions in this case—especially the deference they've given to a heavy-handed special agent with a long history of abusing permittees—is absolutely unconscionable," said NCBA Vice President of Government Af-

fairs Ethan Lane. "NCBA is actively engaged with Congress to address this situation and find an outcome that protects this family."

Lane said the Forest Service has a history of creating conflict with South Dakota ranchers and their escalation to imprisonment over a century-old fence line has shaken the confidence of permittees nationwide.

KLA



HOW BIG IS
continued from page 3

tle that are heifers, currently at 39.6% compared to 39.9% last July. A model incorporating both variables explains 61% of inventory changes and estimates the July 1 U.S. cattle inventory to be 94.2 million head or 1.2% lower than in July 2023. Hence, it appears the U.S. cattle industry overall remains in a contractionary phase, even if there may be regional pockets of expansion.

The USDA's most recent Cattle on Feed report indicates that feedlots placed 1.56 million head on-feed and marketed 1.79 million last June or about 7% fewer placements and 9% fewer marketings than in the prior June, bringing the July 1 total number of cattle on feed to 11.3 million head or just about 1% more than last July. With a 0.8% increase in steers on-feed relative to last July and a nearly unchanged (0.1% increase) number of heifers, the latter's share of cattle on feed, as already mentioned, also remains similar to a year ago at nearly 40%, as compared to only 31%-33% during much of the last expansion. Such a statistic typically indicates a reduction in replacement heifers, as producers remain reluctant to rebuild the breeding herd.

Given the low inventory and cattle on feed numbers, beef production is anticipated to be 1.1% lower in 2024 than last year and then drop another 4.5% in 2025. Accordingly, per capita beef consumption is expected to remain near 58 pounds per person in 2024 and then decrease 3.26% to 56.3 pounds per person in 2025. Based on stronger than anticipated global demand, the USDA in its Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry Outlook revised projections of beef exports upward, now just 4.3% lower this year than the last and left unchanged a further 14.0% projected decline for 2025. Following records in 2021 and again in 2022, beef exports dropped about 14.3%

lower in 2023, and the 2024 projection returns to within 1.5% of the 2020 level, while projected declines for 2025 bring beef exports down to levels not seen since 2016. Still, as a result of currently strong demand and declining production, cold stocks of beef are already fairly low. According to the USDA's June Cold Storage Report beef stocks on May 31 are down 3.4% from a month earlier and 0.5% from last year.

All things considered, prices are likely to remain above year ago levels. Quarterly prices for slaughter steers are forecast to average about \$191.48/cwt and \$199.08/cwt for the last two quarters of 2024, and \$204.60/cwt and \$209.12/cwt for the first two quarters of 2025. For 600-700 pound feeder steers, prices are forecast to average about \$286.38/cwt and \$277.88/cwt for the last two quarters of 2024, and \$293.31/cwt and

\$301.50/cwt for the first two quarters of 2025. These projections reflect tight supplies and declining but resilient domestic consumption and export demand. If demand declines even more than anticipated or a larger herd exists than indicated by this analysis, then lower prices may result.



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The Cow Makes the *Difference*

by Lilly Platts

Oval F Ranch, located in the rolling fescue hills of northwest Missouri, started breeding Simmental in 1971 with the purchase of seven halfblood daughters by Parisien. These heifers were bred to Bismark and laid the foundation for generations of Simmental genetics to come.

Today, the Fischer family — Don and Marilyn, their son, Matt, and his wife, Andrea, and their daughters, Ella and Kate — are continually improving their cow herd, with a special focus on breeding strong females. Oval F bulls are primarily marketed by private treaty and select females are sold through Missouri Simmental Association (MSA) sales. Matt was involved with the AJSA, and later worked in the AI industry for over 20 years; both experiences continue to inform his role at Oval F.

Simmental Since the 70s

Don Fischer explains that their start in the Simmental business was somewhat by chance. “Marilyn and I were getting into a partnership commercial herd at the time and were on a cow buying trip to the Sandhills of Nebraska. We bought quite a few Hereford cows, but this guy also had some halfblood Simmental he had bred. We had heard of Simmental and studied it quite a bit. Long story short, we ended up with those halfblood heifers.”

They bred these heifers to a Simmental bull, and con-

tinued breeding up until they had a group of purebred Simmental females. “From our research in the beginning, we looked to Simmental to get the traits they were being used for in Europe, which are meat and milk. They were a good combination, and it didn’t take long having some Simmental blood in our herd for us to figure out that they are good at raising a calf,” Don continues.

The Oval F cow herd has evolved significantly over the years, from the original brown and white cattle to being mostly homozygous black and polled today. Don recalls that their herd was red in the 1980s, with only a few white spots appearing occasionally. They soon realized that black-hided cattle were going to dominate the industry and began the process of transitioning their cow herd. Changing this took time and care, since they had built several generations of their own genetics and wanted to maintain the traits they had worked hard for. Through careful selection, they added black genetics through homozygous black bulls.

Oval F also endured other changes in the breed, like

frame size. “We kept our feet on the ground and tried to keep the productivity in our cattle. That kept us in check,” Don shares.

Strong Females Make Reliable Bulls

Oval F places a high priority on breeding productive, sound, big-bodied, fertile females. “I feel my number one goal is to make my next generation of replacement females,” Matt shares. “I want to make cows that will stay with me. The cow makes the difference, and we’ve been able to identify cow families that really shine for us year after year.”

Northeast Missouri is fescue country, which the Simmental breed is especially adaptable to. The Fischers manage their cow herd in the same manner as their commercial customers, and don’t use supplements like creep feed. “We make a cow earn her keep,” Matt explains.

With a strong female foundation, Oval F is able to breed bulls that work for their commercial customers. “We want to make commercial bulls that our customers and neighbors can use to improve their program and thrive in

their business,” Matt says.

Many Oval F customers live in the same area, and many are neighbors. This has allowed the Fischers to see firsthand how their bulls are working. Don shares, “I’m always eager to figure out what our customers’ needs are and to see if we can help fill them. Most of the time, they are retaining heifers and putting them back in the herd. They’re concerned with calving ease and growth, but they also want maternal traits, like good feet and legs, and udders.”

To meet these needs, balance is at the heart of their genetic decisions. “To balance type and data is a never-ending task for us,” Matt shares. “We try to evaluate cattle from the ground up. Then we make sure the data fits the cattle.”

Maintaining this balance can be a challenge, especially since they want each animal to count. “We aren’t able to have many ‘throwaways,’” Matt shares. “We try to make solid judgments, which comes back to both data that we can see on paper and phenotype. We sort cattle pretty hard and figure out if anything is going to be a detriment to



Oval F Ranch is located in northeast Missouri.

us or our customers, or if it's going to lead us in the right direction. I feel fortunate that we've made a lot of strides in the right direction in the last several years."

Staying focused on the positives and negatives in the cow herd also helps them remain balanced. "We want to find the rock stars, but we also want to make sure we don't use a problematic bull too," Matt explains. "I've been able to watch our genetics change significantly for the better over the last several years. It's been evident in our bull sale pen. Customers

have been very pleased with our bulls, and I'm very proud of them."

The Fischers have also maintained a focus on the traits their commercial customers care about. "When it comes down to the nuts and bolts of it, our bull customers come here and they want to know what the bulls' birth weights are, what their growth is, and their milk numbers," Matt explains.

While the majority of the cow herd is black, Oval F continues to raise some red genetics. "We are primarily homozygous black, but we



Many years ago the Fischers focused on adding black genetics to their herd. Today, the majority are homozygous black and polled.

have some customers who are looking for red bulls," Matt says.

accounted for."

The Next Generations

Technology like DNA testing and programs like Total Herd Enrollment (THE) have helped them to balance numbers and phenotype. Through THE, Oval F is able to track the performance of every cow in the herd. "It's been a very good way for us to make sure nothing slips through the cracks," Matt explains. "Overall, it helps us do better, and make sure everything is

Don is proud to have built 20 generations of Simmental genetics, and also for several generations of the Fischer family to be involved. Matt grew up being extremely involved with the breed, participating in the AJSA, and decided to remain involved with the family business. "My very first show heifer was born in 1984, and I still remember

continued on page 23



Don (left) and Matt Fischer.

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IS IT TIME TO WEAN?

By Mark Z. Johnson

On Aug. 1, 2024, the Mesonet Oklahoma Drought Monitor indicated that over 69% of Oklahoma was abnormally dry. Of that percentage over 25% of our state is rated in moderate to severe drought. One potential management solution to dwindling forage resources in cow-calf operations is weaning calves.

The average age of beef calves weaned in the United States is a little over 7 months of age. While calves can be weaned as early as 60 days of age, this comes with quite a bit of added management. Simply weaning calves one to two months early is a cost-effective management strategy that saves body condition score (BCS) and allows thinner cows (falling below BCS of 4) to more easily recapture flesh before having their next calf. When the nutritional demands of lactation are removed by weaning

there is a significant reduction (15 – 20%) in the dietary energy needed by cows. Saving BCS on cows now comes with the potential benefit of improved cow productivity in the years that follow. Weaning earlier than normal is most beneficial in years when pasture forage is inadequate to support herd nutritional requirements. From the standpoint of range management, it reduces the risk of overgrazing and accordingly adds to the long-term health of the grazing system.

If you plan to wean earlier than normal to alleviate stress on cows and pastures, keep the following management practices in mind:

- The first two weeks post weaning are a critical time for calves to overcome weaning stress, maintain health and become nutritionally independent by learning to consume feed.
- Lower the risk of health

problems and promote calf growth by giving proper vaccinations prior to weaning. Castrate and dehorn calves when giving pre-weaning vaccinations. This permits calves to deal with the stress of these management practices while still nursing.

• Get calves accustomed to a feed bunk and water trough as quickly as possible (if not prior to weaning). Creep feeding calves for a few weeks prior to weaning will ease the transition and get calves accustomed to concentrate feed. Maintain access to good quality, clean water at all times.

• Fence line wean if possible. This eliminates stress by permitting calves to remain in the same pasture where they are familiar with feed,



water, shade, etc.

• The feed ration is critical because feed intake is initially low after weaning. It needs to be highly palatable, nutrient dense, dust free and include a complete vitamin and mineral supplement.

• After calves are over the stress of weaning, they should begin to consume approximately 3% of their body weight in high quality feed each day. Feed intake variation or depressed appetite can indicate health problems.

• Shade is important if weaning during summer heat.

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CASHING IN ON

continued from page 7

Heterosis offers value in terminal cattle, specifically when crossing British breeds (Angus, Hereford) known for their marbling ability with Continental breeds (Charolais, Limousin, Simmental) known for their growth potential and increased yield.

With reduced beef cow numbers and cattle supply tightening, every additional pound of gain on the calf at time of sale matters. The use of one suckling calf implant administered after 2 months of age results in 23 lb. of additional gain at time of sale. Using the 2023 national average price received of \$2.63/lb., implanting with one suckling calf implant that costs ~\$1.50 per dose, returns \$59.00/head or \$10.33/cwt.

If producers forgo the use of a suckling calf implant to enroll in a Non-Hormone Treated Cattle (NHTC) program or Global Animal Partnership (GAP) program, the average return for NHTC and GAP program calves, compared to calves not enrolled in either program, was \$37.00/head for NHTC and \$25.00/head for GAP.

How can producers add additional value to calves this fall?

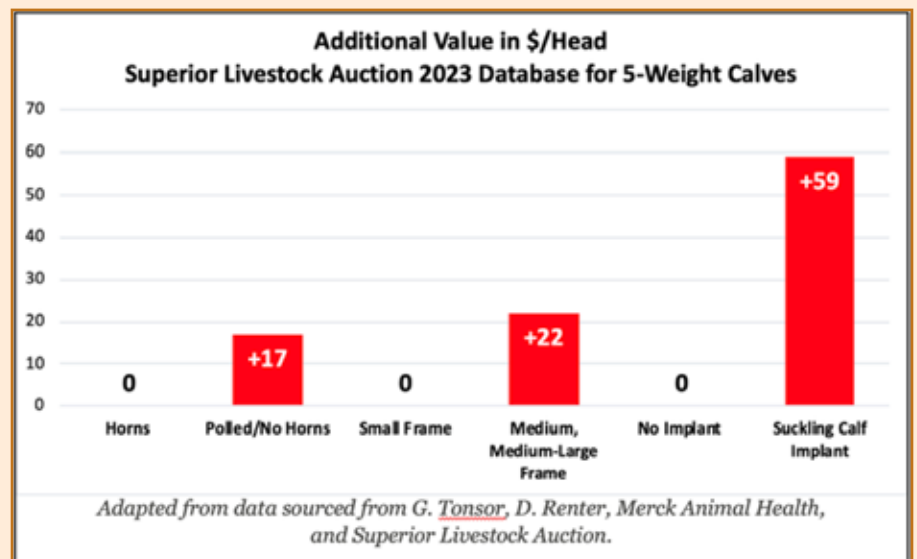
A healthy calf is a profitable calf, and proper nutrition and supplementation are important for calf performance. An additional 30 to 60 pounds can be gained prior to time of sale via creep feeding. There are various types of creep feed systems, including grain-based

high energy, limit-fed high protein, and high-quality forage creep. Producers should calculate their cost of gain when analyzing the profitability of creep feeding to ensure that the value received for additional pounds of gain overcomes the cost of the feed. Producers can utilize this resource to better understand value of gain. With calf prices being exceptionally high for the 2024 fall run, there is a greater likelihood that management strategies, like creep feeding, return

The Midwest Cattleman · August 22, 2024 · P19

a profit. Value-added health programs influence calf profitability and producers should inquire with their veterinarian about programs available. Pre-conditioned calves consistently top the market and implementing weaning prior to shipping is favored.

As feeder calf prices increase, don't forget about best management practices— every additional pound gained comes with increased value.



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RED ANGUS

continued from page 13

"I'm excited to join the RAAA team and to help promote the Red Angus breed," said Shults-Mauney. "I believe that Red Angus cattle offer a unique combination of performance and efficiency that can benefit cattle producers of all sizes."

These strategic additions to the RAAA team will further strengthen the association's ability to support its members, enhance its digital presence and communicate the value of Red Angus cattle to a wider audience.



Tabitha Romero, Brighton, Colorado, has been hired by the RAAA as office receptionist.



The RAAA has hired Trisha Klement Glassinger, Aledo, Texas, as digital media specialist.



Christi Mangusso, Arvada, Colorado, joins RAAA as membership and receivables specialist.



Maclaine Shults-Mauney, Lubbock, Texas, has been hired by the RAAA as written content specialist.



WHO ARE THE FEDERAL

continued from page 4

blatant Marxist activity in our government agencies has become the norm. This is not the ATF, FBI or Homeland Security. It's the U.S. Forest Service, and some in the agency wear guns too!

According to NCBA Vice President of Government Affairs Ethan Lane. "NCBA is actively engaged with Congress to address this situation and find an outcome that protects this family." Lane went on to say that the Forest Service has a history of creating conflict with South Dakota ranchers and their escalation to imprisonment over a century-old fence line has shaken the confidence of permittees nationwide.

Mark Roeber, who is the current PLC President, and also a public lands grazing permittee, said the Maude family is in good standing and have always been the first to step forward as constructive partners in feder-

al land management. "This case is a prime example of what can happen when federal agencies view ranchers as enemies, rather than partners. I urge the U.S. Forest Service to rethink their plan to slap handcuffs on these hardworking ranchers and instead pursue an alternative resolution to this issue."

HELP THE MAUDES

Charged separately, the Maudes both must retain legal counsel. Those wanting to help with their legal costs may donate to the Maude Legal Fund c/o First Interstate Bank, P.O. Box 98, New Underwood, S.D. 57761, or at <https://gofund.me/1819ae4a>

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STOCKPILE TALL FESCUE TO SAVE ON LABOR, COST AND TIME

Start stockpiling tall fescue in mid-August for healthier, more profitable cattle, says University of Missouri Extension field specialist in agronomy Rusty Lee.

Stockpiling fescue extends the grazing season and reduces the need to feed hay. "Winter feed costs are the cattle producer's biggest single expense," says Lee. The best way to reduce that expense is to let cattle graze longer and feed hay for a shorter time.

Fescue is Missouri's No. 1 forage. Producers favor it because of its persistence, resistance to insects and disease, and long growing season. Once growth slows in mid-October, feed value is maintained due to its waxy cuticles, which protect the leaves from weathering.

Stockpiling focuses on managing new growth of fescue plants, Lee says. Its benefits include reduced labor, lower costs and less time. Compared to other stockpiled forages, tall fescue maintains

more high crude protein and energy. Regrowth also is high in carbohydrates and least toxic in late winter.

Lee's recipe for successful stockpiling includes starting with 3-6 inches of leaf in pastures in August. Producers should remove cattle from pastures in mid-August and then topdress 40-60 pounds of nitrogen per acre.

Keep cattle off pastures to allow grass to grow. The longer plants grow, the better, says Lee.

For high-density stands, every inch of fescue is equivalent to 300-400 pounds of forage, he says. Even low-density stands yield 150-250 pounds per inch of growth per acre.

Strive for 1 acre of properly stockpiled tall fescue per cow, says Lee. This should feed a 1,200-pound cow for 60 days or more.

Stop grazing fescue while new growth accumulates until growth stops in late November or early Decem-

ber. Add supplemental feed as needed since the crude protein in stockpiled tall fescue decreases as winter progresses.

Resume grazing in December and practice strip grazing for highest utilization. Use a temporary high-tensile electric fence and step-in posts to portion off paddocks. Move fence-broke cows to a fresh paddock every one to three days to stretch forage and for best quality. Begin with the paddock closest to the water supply.

It takes about 30 minutes a day to move the fence, whether you have 20 or 100 cows, Lee says. It is time well spent because feeding costs drop from \$1.56 to 50 cents per cow per day.

Move the wire to expose two to three days' worth of grazing, he says. Figure daily herd requirement, and factor in 70% utilization if moving every two days to calculate size strip required.

If you fertilize earlier than



mid-August, forage quality is lower, and yields are not significantly higher. If you delay stockpiling, you will get higher-quality forage but lower yields, says Lee.

Stockpiling also offers an additional benefit: more even manure distribution throughout the pasture rather than clusters around feed bunks or rings.

Lee says now is the time to order seed for frost-seeding since seed is sometimes in short supply. In prior years, agronomists recommended frost-seeding in February, but Lee says changes in weather and climate now indicate that January is better.





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By William Halfman

With cattle prices at record highs and favorable feed prices, producers are likely considering creep feeding their beef calves to add additional pounds. Creep feeding provides supplemental feed to nursing beef calves, in an area where the cows can't get at the feed. It is common for creep feed to consist of grains, protein supplements, and limiters, but many other feed sources can be used as creep. The feed may be on-farm mixed, or a commercial feed of various types, usually fed using a creep feeder.

Whether creep feeding will pay off is more complex than just adding pounds to the calves and many factors come into play. Research results over the years have been mixed. It is important to evaluate numerous factors including production goals, environmental conditions, and market endpoint to determine if creep feeding will ultimately aid profitability.

Questions when considering creep feeding:

- How will the calves be managed and sold after weaning?
- What is the quantity and quality of the feed sources calves have access to?
- What is the anticipated cost of gain from creep feeding?

Some scenarios where creep feeding may not be profitable even with cur-

rent cattle and feed prices:

Pastures are well-managed- If forage quality and quantity is well managed pastures, calves may not benefit from additional nutrition. Calves that have higher milking mothers and access to high quality forage may add extra flesh (fat) that could result in discounts when marketing as feeder calves.

Forage availability and cow condition are concerns- If forage availability is low due to drought and cow condition is a concern. A common misconception is that creep feeding reduces calf milk consumption. Because calves order of preference for food is milk, creep feed, then the forage source, creep feeding doesn't result in less demand on the cow for milk. A better option both economically and for the long-term benefit of the cows, and calves, is to wean the calves early.

Heifers are being kept as replacements- Long term research has shown creep fed heifers produced less milk, weaned lighter calves and were less productive their entire lives compared to heifers that weren't creep fed.

Farm is retaining ownership of calves- If you are retaining ownership of the calves either to background or grow and then finish them. Research has shown that calves not creep fed will catch up in size to the creep



fed calves by compensatory gain.

Some scenarios where creep feeding may prove to be profitable are:

Selling as feeder calves shortly after weaning- After preconditioning for a short time and the pasture quality is low, there will be more pounds of calf to sell.

Creep feeding with higher energy creep feeds (starch and or fat)- This scenario has been shown to help with increasing marbling that is realized at harvest when calves are transitioned to finishing rations shortly after weaning. To capture this value, calves need to be sold through a channel where the producer will realize the benefits of the improved marbling, on a grid for example. Using this approach, smaller framed cattle may finish at a

lighter weight than what the market is seeking compared to putting them on a grower ration for a time. For large-framed cattle this may not be a problem. If you are direct marketing meat and can capitalize on the higher quality grades, lighter weight at finish is likely of less concern.

Summary

In summary, creep feeding beef calves is not a one size fits all management decision. The best choice may not even be the same from year to year. When making the decision to creep or not creep it is important to consider the marketing plan, the quality and quantity of forage available to the calves, and costs of gains to determine if it has strong potential for being profitable.

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driving through the pasture gate with dad the morning the heifer was born and claiming her," Matt recalls. "I have fond memories of that time. The following year was when my older brother went to his first AJSA National Classic, and my grandparents took me to my first county fair. It's the kind of memory I'll always have, and it was certainly an experience that instilled a lot of values into what I do today."

Matt continued showing competitively through the AJSA and 4-H. Today, his daughters, Ella and Kate, are coming up through the AJSA. "It's been a strong part of our family," Matt says. "It meant a lot to us, and I think it was a very positive part of my upbringing. It meant enough that it's the way we're choosing to raise our children."

Ella and Kate are a part of the everyday operation, representing the next generation to grow up in the beef industry. "Both spent a lot of hours and days in all aspects of what we do," Matt shares. It's been a great opportunity to teach my children responsibility, from 4-H projects to everything else we do. I'm

proud that they understand that there is a right way and a wrong way to handle things, and it's been a great opportunity for us to open their eyes to how things should be done in this world."

The show ring has remained a part of the Oval F program, and the Fischer family has had many successes including state fair winners and champions at the American Royal, North American International Livestock Exposition, and National Western Stock Show. Don shares, "We've been pretty active in the show ring. We have approached it as a marketing and advertising activity as much as anything. It also kept our kids active, and it helped to develop a work ethic and pride of ownership in them," he continues.

The Fischer family has remained committed to the Simmental breed and plans to continue adding generations of powerful cows to their herd.

"To carry on the legacy my parents built has honestly been a lot of fun," Matt concludes.



A special focus is placed on breeding strong females at Oval F Ranch.

DECIDING WHEN

continued from page 9

the pasture, K-State beef cattle nutritionist Phillip Lancaster said.

"As we move into mid to late summer, the forage quality starts to decline and some of the younger bulls may need to be separated off so they can be supplemented to keep them from getting too thin, especially if they are still growing," Lancaster said.

Also, for males in multi-bull pastures, there is always a risk that they will fight over the females that they hope to breed, Lancaster said.

"Bull injury is a risk that can be avoided by reducing the number of bulls in the pasture," Lancaster said. "A good option is to leave one or two older bulls out in the pasture to breed the last few open cows to add value but lessen the risk of injury."



Another consideration is labor availability to remove the bulls from the pasture, Larson said.

"Evaluate the bulls when you are moving the herd for another reason, such as to apply fly control, and then you can leverage the labor on hand," Larson said.

Larson added: "While I like a 60-day calving season, that does not mean it has to be a 60-day breeding season and there can be flexibility as to when the bulls can be removed from the pasture."



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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE STOPS PURSUIT OF LAB-GROWN MEAT PROJECTS

NCBA has confirmed that efforts to prevent ultra-processed, lab-grown protein from showing up in the diet of the American armed forces were successful, following news that the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) is no longer pursuing such projects in the Fiscal Year 2025 Defense Appropriations bill.

"NCBA was the first and only cattle group to uncover this stream of DoD funding that could go toward lab-grown protein projects, and we were the first and only group to fight back," said NCBA President and Wyoming rancher Mark Eisele. "After weeks of engaging with Congress and speaking out against this plan, we are thrilled to have DoD confirmation that lab-grown protein is not on the menu for our nation's servicemembers. These men and women make the greatest sacrifices every day in service to our country and they deserve high-quality, nutritious and wholesome food like real beef grown by American farmers

and ranchers."

NCBA has worked with agriculture allies in Congress, including Sen. Roger Marshall, to secure the introduction of several amendments to the FY25 Defense Appropriations bill, National Defense Authorization Act and FY25 Agriculture Appropriations bill, aimed at preventing lab-grown protein from ever showing up on the plates of American servicemembers.

"The Department of Defense can and should be on the cutting edge of science, and we respect their work to investigate defense applications for new tools and technology. However, there's a big difference between industrial or defense applications and the food we put in our bodies. U.S. farmers and ranchers are more than capable of meeting the military's need for high-quality protein," said NCBA Senior Director of Government Affairs Sigrid Johannes.

KLA



BEEF EXPORT VALUE CLIMBS IN JUNE

June exports of U.S. beef reached the highest value in nearly two years, according to data released by USDA and compiled by the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF). While June pork exports were lower year-over-year, shipments through the first half of the year remained ahead of the record value pace of 2023.

Japan, Taiwan, Canada lead strong June performance for beef export value. Beef exports totaled 110,155 metric tons (mt) in June, down 4% from a year ago but the second largest of 2024. Export value reached \$938.3 million, up 3% year-over-year and the highest since August 2022. Exports trended higher to Japan and were the third largest on record to Taiwan, while shipments to Canada were the largest in nearly a de-

cade. June exports to South Korea were below last year but rebounded compared to May. Through the first half of the year, beef export value climbed 5% from a year ago to \$5.22 billion, despite a 4% decline in volume (643,733 mt).

"June beef exports performed very well in Japan, which was great to see given the significant headwinds U.S. beef has faced there this year," said USMEF President and CEO Dan Halstrom. "Export value also rebounded nicely in Korea and shipments to Taiwan and Canada were outstanding. This made for another strong month in terms of export value per head slaughtered, which was nearly \$460 in June."

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K-STATE SPECIALIST OFFERS ADVICE ON HOW TO CARE FOR PONDS

By Lisa Moser, K-State Research and Extension

For many, gathering with friends and family near a pond can be a fun way to spend a summer evening, but without proper care, those opportunities may be limited, said K-State Research and Extension fisheries specialist Joe Gerken.

“Every pond in the world has a dream of being a prairie and eventually it will turn into one if we leave it alone,” Gerken said, noting that this happens when the pond fills up with sediment over time.

“As the water comes in, it carries with it fine sediment particles that make the pond become more shallow and then the nutrients build up, leading to excessive plant growth and stagnant, stinky water,” Gerken said.

He said most Kansas ponds have a lifetime of about 18 years, but with proper care, they can last much longer than that.

To help with pond longevity, Gerken recommends looking at the area right around



the ponds to make sure there are established plants that will hold back the sediment.

“When you look at the edge of the pond, it should have a slope of three feet for every one foot you go out into the pond, and that is important because if it is too shallow the sunlight will hit the bottom of the pond, causing plant growth,” Gerken said.

Gerken also suggests assessing the area away from the pond.

“Often we think about the pond itself, but by going up-

stream in the watershed, we can help the pond by establishing vegetation in the valleys, ravines and creeks flowing into the pond and limit the sediment,” Gerken said.

Gerken advises landowners to look at the water itself. If the water is brown and murky, it can indicate sediment buildup.

“A lot of times, trusting your intuition when looking at the pond is a great place to start and make adjustments if it starts looking bad,” Gerken said.



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5 THINGS TO LOOK FOR ON YOUR NEXT PASTURE CHECK

Check pastures even after “good rains” to be sure there’s enough nutrition for your cow herd.

By Jennifer M. Latzke

It’s said that “rain makes grain and gains on cattle” — but there can be too much of a good thing.

Phillip Lancaster, Kansas State beef cattle nutritionist, says cattle producers in eastern Kansas, Nebraska and South Dakota have seen abundant rainfall — even flooding — in some areas in recent weeks. And while that may be a welcome sight after multiple years of drought, it can cause a new set of challenges for beef cattle production.

“We think rain is always good — and do not get me wrong, rain is good for grass and cattle — but ultimately, too much rain is bad,” he said in a K-State Research and Extension News Service release. “The Goldilocks effect applies to this situation, too; we need the right amount to thrive.”

As cattle producers head to the pasture to check their grass and their cattle, they should monitor these five signals of pasture and herd health:

1. Maturity of forages. Excess rain, Lancaster says, can signal forage plants in the pasture to mature faster, putting up seed heads in a race to reproduce. The problem there, he says, is that forage becomes less digestible sooner than expected in the grazing season.

2. Supplemental feeding strategies. As forages mature and become less digestible, it takes more intake to keep a cow’s body condition at the optimal level. “Cattle may start getting thinner quicker than normal,” he says. “These thinner animals then wean off smaller calves and are less likely to breed back.” Consider supplemental feeding strategies, especially for those cows that are still nursing calves as they progress through lactation. Or, cattle producers may choose to wait and feed their cows more in the fall after cows wean calves at a lower body



condition score, he adds.

3. Watch for foot rot. Brad White, K-State veterinarian, says foot-rot causing bacteria is always present in a pasture’s soil. But when stemmy, mature grasses get caught between the cow’s toes — which are just soft skin — they can cut that area open, allowing that bacteria to invade. “As cattle stand in stagnant water, or flooded areas, the potential risk of foot rot greatly increases when they have those wounds,” White says.

4. Future grass stand health. Soft ground combined with hoof traffic can cause grass stands to die, Lancaster says. When grasses die, more weeds tend to enter the area and push out any remaining grass from making a comeback. Lancaster recommends waiting until the water recedes before turning cattle out. Also, as you drive through the pasture, watch for a telltale yellow tinge to grasses and plants. This is a signal of waterlogged stress to plants, and cattle producers should let that grass rest and recover before turning cattle out on it again.

5. Don’t forget your water source. On a June K-State Beef Cattle Institute “Cattle Chat” podcast, Lancaster and others discussed pasture water resources. Summer-time water consumption is about 2 gallons of water for every 100 pounds of body weight. Cattle eating dry hay will need to consume more water than if they were on fresh grass, and if the envi-

ronment is hot, they’ll drink about twice as much as they would in the winter, he says. Calves, even though still on a mostly milk diet, will need water to keep their rumen functioning at peak performance, too. To ensure top water quality for cow herd health, the K-State experts advise actually keeping cattle out of ponds, where their hoof action can disturb sediments and decrease water

quality; rather, it’s ideal to fence off the ponds and pipe water to a tank for cattle to consume. If cattle must have pond access, limit it to a 20- to 40-foot-wide gravel path for entry to the pond, they say, to keep sediment from filling the pond.

Kansas Farmer



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| Sept 2 | Autumn in the Ozarks 31st Annual Charolais Sale, Strafford, MO | Oct 19 | Angell - Thomas Charolais Bull & Female Sale, Paris, MO |
| Sept 14 | Arkansas Beefmaster Razorback Classic, Damascus, AR | Oct 19 | Blackjack Angus & Guests Female Sale, Seminole, OK |
| Sept 14 | Wild Indian Acres Sale, DeSoto, MO | Oct 19 | Bradley Cattle Bull Sale, Springfield, MO |
| Sept 14 | Soaring Eagle of the Ozarks Fall Female Sale, Springfield, MO | Oct 19 | Gerloff Angus Bull Fest, Bland, MO |
| Sept 14 | Sutphin Cattle Co, Morrilton, AR | Oct 19 | Natural State Prime Angus Sale, Scranton, AR |
| Sept 16 | Soaring Eagle of the Ozarks Bull Sale, Oklahoma City, OK | Oct 19 * | Seedstock Plus Fall Bull Sale, Carthage, MO 877-486-1160 |
| Sept 20 | Reynolds Herefords Production Sale, Huntsville, MO | Oct 19 | Shaver Angus Bull Sale, Norwood, MO |
| Sept 21 * | Central MO Pld Hereford Breeders Assoc Fall Sale, Cuba, MO 660-621-0812 | Oct 21 | Hinkle's Prime Cut Angus Fall Sale, Nevada, MO |
| Sept 21 | Fleckvieh Heritage Sale, Roland, OK | Oct 26 * | Lacy's Red Angus & Pld Herefords Sale, Drexel, MO 913-909-1912 |
| Sept 21 | Ozark Foundation Breeders Association, Mountain Home, AR | Oct 26 | Mead Angus Fall Production Sale, Versailles, MO |
| Sept 21 | Rex Ricketts Dispersal Sale, Paris, MO | Oct 26 | OHOA Fall Roundup, Mountain Grove, MO |
| Sept 22 | Brockmere Farms Angus Female Sale, Brookfield, MO | Oct 26 | OHOA Fall Roundup, Mountain Grove, MO |
| Sept 23 | Gardiner Angus Ranch Fall Production Sale, Ashland, KS | Oct 27 | Missouri Angus Ladies of Autumn Sale, Lebanon, MO |
| Sept 27 | Diamonds of the Flint Hills Sale, Paxico, KS | Oct 28 | Buck Ridge Cattle Bull Sale, Seymour, MO |
| Sept 27 | Kansas Angus Assoc Female Sale, Manhattan, KS | Oct 28 * | SW MO Performance Tested Bull Sale, Springfield, MO 417-345-8330 |
| Sept 27 | KL3 Female Sale, Poplar Bluff, MO | Nov 1 | Downy Ranch Bull Sale, Wamego, KS |
| Sept 28 | 417's Finest Hereford Sale, Fair Grove, MO | Nov 1 | Meyer Cattle Co Fall Sale, Bowling Green, MO |
| Sept 28 | Flint Hills Classic Bull Sale, Paxico, KS | Nov 1-2 * | GenePlus Brangus Sale at Chimney Rock Cattle Co, Concord, AR 877-436-3877 |
| Sept 28 | Heart of the Ozarks Angus Assoc Sale, West Plains, MO | Nov 2 | Henke Angus Farms Sale, Salisbury, MO |
| Sept 28 | Jeffries Red Angus Bull & Female Sale, Checotah, OK | Nov 2 * | Irvine Ranch Annual Production Sale, Manhattan, KS 785-313-7473 |
| Oct 2 | Halfmann-Beckton Red Angus Sale, Miles, TX | Nov 2 | Menzie Cattle Co Production Sale, Springfield, MO |
| Oct 4 | Birk Genetics Fall Production Sale, Jackson, MO | Nov 2 | Missouri Simmental Association Fall Harvest Sale, Springfield, MO |
| Oct 5 * | Lucas Cattle Co Fall Bull Sale, Cross Timbers, MO 417-998-6512 | Nov 2 * | Red Tie Event Sale, Hale, MO 660-542-4033 |
| Oct 5 | Bradley Cattle & Hankins Farms Charolais & Red Angus Sale, Republic, MO | Nov 2 * | Seedstock Plus RED REWARD Fall Sale, Osceola, MO 877-486-1160 |
| Oct 5 | JAC's Ranch Sale, Bentonville, AR | Nov 2 | The Andras Kind Red Angus Female Sale, Manchester, IL |
| Oct 5 * | Journagan Ranch/MSU Hereford Sale, Springfield, MO 417-838-1482 | Nov 2 | Ward Bros. Sale, Plattsburg, MO |
| Oct 8 | Cantrell Creek Angus, Marshfield, MO | Nov 2 * | Worthington Angus Bull & Comm Female Sale, Dadeville, MO 417-844-2601 |
| Oct 8 | R.A. Brown Ranch Elite Angus Female Sale, Throckmorton, TX | Nov 2 | Wright Charolais Annual Fall Sale, Kearney, MO |
| Oct 9 | R.A. Brown Ranch Bull Sale, Throckmorton, TX | Nov 3 * | Missouri Hereford Opportunity Sale, Sedalia, MO 660-676-3788 |
| Oct 10 | Midwest Angus Bull Coalition Bull & Female Sale, Boonville, MO | Nov 9 | Four State Shorthorn Association Sale, Diamond, MO |
| Oct 11 * | J&N Ranch Black Hereford Production Sale, Leavenworth, KS 913-727-6446 | Nov 9 * | Gibbs Farms 19th Annual Bull & Female Sale, Ranburne, AL 336-469-0489 |
| Oct 11 | Smith Valley Angus Sale, Salem, MO | Nov 9 | Valley Oaks Fall Female Sale, Warsaw, MO |
| Oct 12 * | Jim D Bellis Family Hereford Production Sale, Aurora, MO 417-466-8679 | Nov 14 | Valley View Angus Female Sale, Nelson, MO |
| Oct 12 | Angus Alliance Sale, Carthage, MO | Nov 15 | Oklahoma Select Commercial Female Sale, Vinita, OK |
| Oct 12 * | Big D Ranch Cattleman's Choice Sale, Center Ridge, AR 501-208-6119 | Nov 16 | NE Arkansas Angus Assoc Sale, Charlotte, AR |
| Oct 12 | East Central Missouri Angus Assoc Sale, Cuba, MO | Nov 16 | Pitts Angus Farms, Hermitage, MO |
| Oct 12 | Heart of the Prairie Shorthorn Production Sale, Rush Springs, OK | Nov 17 | Frank/Hazelrigg Angus Sale, New Bloomfield, MO |
| Oct 12 * | Judd Ranch 34th Annual Cow Power Sale, Pomona, KS 785-566-8371 | Nov 18 * | Green Springs Bull Test Sale, Nevada, MO 417-448-7416 |
| Oct 12 * | New Day Genetics' Fall Bull Sale, Salem, MO 417-793-3351 | Nov 19 | B&D Angus Fall Bull Sale, Claflin, KS |
| Oct 12 | Power Performance Pedigree Sale, Mountain Grove, MO | Nov 21 | Benoit Angus Ranch Female Sale, Esbon, KS |
| Oct 12 | Southern Plains Performance Beefmaster Sale, McAlester, OK | Nov 23 | Dalebanks Angus Bull Sale, Eureka, KS |
| Oct 12 | Wild Indian Acres Fall Bull Sale, Carthage, MO | Nov 23 * | Sydenstricker Genetics Sale, Mexico, MO 573-581-1225 |
| Oct 16 | Peterson Prime Angus, New Boston, MO | Nov 30 | Galaxy Beef Female Sale, Macon, MO |
| | | Dec 5 | Sydenstricker Influence Commercial Heifer Sale, Kingdom City, MO |
| | | Dec 7 | Arkansas Angus Assoc Sale, Ozark, AR |
| | | Dec 14 | Wheeler Angus Production Sale, Paris, MO |

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***Sale Dates as published earlier this season. Sales are subject to change or cancellation. Confirm directly with Breeder or Sale Management.*

STORING HAY TO MAXIMIZE USE

By Phillip Lancaster, BCI nutritionist

Hay is one of the most expensive feedstuffs available to cattle producers. Hay harvesting equipment, spoilage and wastage, and delivering hay to cattle in drylot add tremendous cost to hay. On a per pound of nutrient basis, hay is generally more expensive than bulk commodities such as corn, soybean hulls, and distillers grains. Reducing this cost can improve the bottom line for cow-calf operations.

One of the ways to reduce the cost of hay is to decrease the amount of spoilage and wastage. Spoilage occurs when hay absorbs moisture during storage and cattle avoid consuming that part of the bale thereby wasting it. Thus, anything we can do to reduce the amount of moisture absorbed by the bale during storage will reduce spoilage and wastage.

One of the most important storage considerations is to raise bales off the ground so that moisture from the ground is not absorbed into the bale. Bales sitting on the ground can result in 5 to 20% spoilage compared to 3 to 15% of bales elevated off the ground. Raising bales off the ground can be done in a variety of ways – laying down large rock (3- or 4-inch limestone rock), old tires or old pallets, etc. Moisture wicking from the ground is more important in smaller diameter round bales. In smaller bales, a greater percentage of the bale mass is in the outer layer such that spoiled hay is a greater percentage of the bale. Also, the thickness

of the outer layer impacts spoilage as a thicker outer layer constitutes a greater percentage of the bale mass. These factors are compounded where smaller bales with thicker outer layer have the greatest spoilage.

A second consideration is to store bales in a designated hay lot where vegetation can be controlled compared to along the edge of the hay field. Along the edge of the field, vegetation usually gets tall and thick, and the bales are many times under the overhang of trees. This vegetation holds moisture around the bale and increases spoilage. Storing bales in an open hay lot removes trees and allows other vegetation to be controlled so that bales can dry out after a rain or snow event. Aligning the bales in rows running north and south allows the sun to shine down between the rows and leaving a few feet between rows allows for better control of vegetation so that sunshine better dries out the bale after a rain or snow event.

The best way to reduce moisture absorption by bales is by storing them in an enclosed barn resulting in less than 2% spoilage even when stored for a very long time. However, construction of a hay barn is expensive adding to the cost of hay as a feedstuff for cattle. Less costly methods of covering bales can be used. Constructing a hay barn with only a roof and open wall generally results in similar spoilage (2-5%) as an enclosed barn. Also, stacking bales in a pyramid shape and

| Hay spoilage with different storage methods at different time frames and estimated cost at hay price of \$150 per ton. | | | |
|--|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Method | Store for 9 months | Store for 15 months | Cost per Ton |
| Uncovered | | | |
| Ground | 5 to 20% | 15 to 50% | \$7.50 to \$30.00 |
| Elevated | 3 to 15% | 12 to 35% | \$4.50 to \$22.50 |
| Covered | | | |
| Ground | 5 to 10% | 10 to 15% | \$7.50 to \$15.00 |
| Elevated | 2 to 4% | 5 to 10% | \$3.00 to \$6.00 |
| Under roof | 2 to 5% | 3 to 10% | \$3.00 to \$7.50 |
| Enclosed barn | < 2% | 2 to 5% | <\$3.00 |

Hay Spoilage Chart (Oklahoma State University)

covering them with a tarp results in 5 to 10% spoilage when on the ground and 2 to 4% spoilage when elevated off the ground.

As the value of hay increases so does the cost of spoilage. As an example, if hay is \$100 per ton, then 10% spoilage costs \$10 per ton so the hay that cows were fed actually cost \$110 per ton.

In January 2024, bluestem grass hay was ~\$180 per ton and with 10% spoilage was \$198 per ton. Thus, to feed a 1300-lb cow for 120 days, hay cost alone would be \$32 more with spoilage.



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