

Bluestem Breezes
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“What Producers Should Be Thinking About in December”

It's been quite a while since I shared a “What Producers Should Be Thinking About” list from K-State's Extension Beef Specialist Dale Blasi. Each month, Dale builds a checklist for cattlemen.

Hopefully, you don't find any surprises. Nonetheless, it is helpful to scan the list and see how your operation is stacking up. Is there something on the list you normally accomplish a little later or a little earlier? Does this listing offer a new way to try the same ol' task?

I know, you're saying this is only October! We are early, but we are forced to be planners. Reading the list now allows ample time to tweak, if you need. But, before you get too worried this is not a set-in-stone checklist. Merely use it as a place to start. As you are well aware, every operation is different!

Cow herd management for spring-calving cows

- In late fall and early winter, start feeding supplement to mature cows using these guidelines:
 - Dry grass — 1-2 pounds (lb.) per day of a 40% crude protein (CP) supplement
 - Dry grass — 3-4 lb. per day of a 20% CP supplement
 - Dry grass — 10 lb. good non-legume hay, no supplement needed
- Compare supplements based on cost per pound of nutrient.
- Utilize crop residues.
- Strip-graze or rotate cattle to improve grazing efficiency.
- Cows in average body condition can be grazed at 1-2 acres per cow for 30 days, assuming normal weather. Available forage is directly related to grain production levels.
- Limiting nutrients are usually rumen degradable protein, trace minerals and vitamin A.
- Control lice.

General management

- Document your cost of production by participating in Standardized Performance Analysis (SPA) programs.
- Review management decisions; lower your costs per unit of production.
- Check your financial management plan and make appropriate adjustments before the end of the year.

Further information on beef management may be accessed by visiting the K-State Research and Extension Animal Science webpage (<http://www.asi.k-state.edu/research-and-extension/>), or by visiting the Extension Office (215 Kansas, Courthouse, Alma; kamayer@ksu.edu; 765-3821). For Bluestem Breezes archives, check out wabaunsee.ksu.edu.