

Bluestem Breezes
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WHAT PRODUCERS SHOULD BE THINKING ABOUT IN AUGUST.....

It has been quite some time since I shared the “What Producers Should Be Thinking About” checklist. This list is compiled by K-State’s Dale Blasi, Extension Beef Specialist. Please read on for Dale’s management tips:

August is when forages are maturing, weaning time is approaching, and weather dictates several key management decisions.

BREEDING SEASON

- Given high feed price inputs, ruthlessly cull all unsound cows from the herd. Cull cows that do not conceive after three services by a fertile bull.
- Limit the breeding season. Remove bulls after 60 days with cows, 45 days with heifers.

These methods contribute to a more uniform calf crop, make winter feed management easier, and increase the success rate of next year’s breeding season.

COWHERD NUTRITION

- Provide ample amounts of clean, fresh drinking water.
- Conduct an inventory of forage needs for the winter feeding period.
- Plan ahead and price availability of byproducts, such as wheat-middlings, dried distillers grains, etc. prior to typical seasonal price increases.

HERD HEALTH

- If pinkeye is likely to be a problem, consider the following preventive and therapeutic measures.

Preventive:

- Make sure the herd is receiving adequate vitamins and trace mineral in their diet.
- Consider using a medicated trace mineral package.
- Consider vaccination for pinkeye and IBR (consult your local veterinarian).
- Control face flies.
- Clip pastures with tall, coarse grasses that may irritate eyes.

Therapy:

- Administer an intramuscular injection of long-acting oxytetracycline when symptoms are first noticed.
- Shut out irritating sunlight by patching eyes, shade, etc.
- Control flies.
- Consult your veterinarian.

- Consider revaccinating for the respiratory diseases any animals that will be taken to livestock shows.
- Vaccinate suckling calves for IBR, BVD, PI3, BRSV, and possibly pasteurella at least 3 weeks prior to weaning.
- Revaccinate all calves for blackleg.
- Vaccinate replacement heifers for brucellosis (4 to 10 months of age).
- Monitor and treat footrot.

FORAGE/PASTURE MANAGEMENT

- Enhance grazing distribution with mineral mixture placement away from water sources.
- Observe pasture weed problems to aid in planning control methods needed next spring.
- Monitor grazing conditions and rotate pastures if possible and(or) practical.
- If pastures will run out in late summer, get ready to provide emergency feeds. Start supplemental feeding before pastures are gone to extend grazing.
- Harvest and store forages properly. Minimize waste by reducing spoilage.
- Sample harvested forages and have them analyzed for nitrate and nutrient composition.
- Plan for sufficient standing pasture for winter grazing needs.
- For stocker cattle and replacement heifers, supplement maturing grasses with an acceptable degradable intake protein/ionophore (feed additive) type supplement.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT

- Avoid unnecessary heat stress - Don't handle and/or truck cattle during the heat of the day.
- Repair, replace and improve facilities needed for fall processing.
- Order supplies, vaccines, tags, and other products needed at weaning time.
- Consider earlier than normal weaning, but have a marketing plan in place.

For additional information, visit the Extension Office (215 Kansas, Courthouse, Alma; kamayer@ksu.edu; 765-3821). For Bluestem Breezes archives, check out wabaunsee.ksu.edu.