

NWLA MAKIN' BEEF NEWS



A bi-monthly newsletter for beef producers in northwest Louisiana intended to provide information that producers, regardless of herd size, can use to improve their profitability.

September - October Beef Cattle Management Tips

Below are some all-purpose management tips in an abbreviated format that cattle producers should consider for the months indicated. "General" management tips are intended to fit all situations while the "spring calving" and "fall calving" tips are for those specific calving programs.

Some producers are likely aware of each tip and have incorporated many into their management programs. Other producers may find these tips to be suggestions to consider in their future management.

Regardless, every producer will have to consider how a specific tip might be adapted to fit their individual situation, and some modification of the times provided will be expected. *Also, the severe drought that northwest Louisiana is experiencing will dictate some modification of the tips depending on the severity in each location.*

A more detailed description of management opportunities can be found in numerous AgCenter publications available in the local parish extension office or on the web. Additional scheduling and management details in a worksheet format are available on-line from the LSU AgCenter in the *Monthly Beef Cattle Management Calendar & Workbook* at: http://text.lsuagcenter.com/en/crops_livestock/livestock/beef_cattle/production_management/Workbook.

If you have questions, comments, or want more details, contact your local parish extension office or Allen Nipper using the information on the back page.

month	management	tip
September	general	1. Determine / plan / purchase winter supplementation needs
		2. Harvest remaining hay fields / pastures
		3. Determine / purchase additional forage for winter use
		4. Reduce competition before overseeding winter annuals by grazing, clipping, or using herbicides
		5. Plant / fertilize winter annuals based on rainfall potential
		6. Monitor pastures for prussic acid, nitrate poisoning, armyworm, and ergot contamination potentials
		7. Analyze hay samples
		8. Be sure hay records are up-to-day and ready for use in decisions next year
		9. Provide adequate water and shade; prevent heat-stress losses
		10. Rotate fly control program chemical classes
		11. Monitor pinkeye problems
		12. Lime pastures based on soil test
	spring calving	1. Check and update fence security and facilities in weaning areas
		2. Wean calves
		3. Begin calf preconditioning program
		4. Conduct pregnancy checks if not completed
		5. Evaluate cow body condition scores
		6. Market low performance females
		7. Begin to manage bulls for proper condition for next breeding season
		8. Consult with veterinarian on deworming needs / strategies / products
	fall calving	1. Maintain good calving records; ID, birth date and weight; dam ID, age
		2. Move cows to calving areas close to facilities and where easier to observe
		3. Check and organize calving supplies
		4. Monitor replacement weights; adjust nutrition to reach target breeding weight
		5. Consider herd sire options for next breeding season
		6. Consult with veterinarian on deworming needs / strategies / products
		7. Begin plans to separate cow herd into groups to manage calving and feeding needs
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month	management	tip
October	general	1. Plant / fertilize winter annuals based on rainfall potential
		2. Harvest remaining hay fields / pastures
		3. Purchase winter supplementation needs
		4. Repair hay equipment for next season
		5. Remove fly control ear tags
		6. Group herds based on body condition into winter feeding groups
	spring calving	1. Select replacement heifers and permanently identify them
		2. Develop a plan to get heifers to target breeding weights
		3. Consult with veterinarian on vaccinations and boosters
		4. Monitor nutritional status of weaned calves until shipped off farm
		5. Cull cows based on pregnancy status, soundness, and performance
		6. Use performance averages to make decisions on bulls to cull
	fall calving	1. Maintain good calving records
		2. Move pairs to clean pastures
		3. Separate cow herd into groups to manage calving and feeding needs
		4. Monitor replacement weights; adjust nutrition to reach target breeding weight
		5. Consult with veterinarian on vaccinations / boosters for replacements
		6. Make arrangements for bull breeding soundness exams

WEANING STRESS COULD MEAN FEWER DOLLARS

Different weaning strategies have been proposed to reduce stress on the weaned calves in the last few years. The more traditional method of total separation (more stress) has been compared to a fenceline separation (less stress) in different research trials. There is no question that fenceline weaning requires good fencing that can be easily maintained along with adequate water supplies. In one research trial, fenceline weaning for seven days resulted in fewer bawling calves and less fence walking during the first three days after weaning compared to traditional weaning. Also, fenceline weaned calves ate more often and rested more than their counterparts during those three days.

2011 Hill Farm Research Station Field Day

When: Thursday, September 15th 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.



Registration begins at 11:00 a.m. followed by lunch at noon, field tours begin at approximately 2:00 p.m.



Where: West-side of Hwy. 9 across from Hill Farm office (follow signs)

Topics to be discussed by LSU AgCenter Research and Extension faculty during the field tour include:



Forage Management Options for Warm Season Grass Pastures

The Future of Beef Cattle Research at the Hill Farm

Update on the Poultry Demonstration Houses at the Hill Farm

Preparing for a Biofuel Market: Options for Forest Landowners in North Louisiana



Keynote address by Dr. John S. Russin, Vice-Chancellor LSU AgCenter & Director, Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station



Only for two days did the fenceline weaned calves spend the majority of their time near the fence. After two weeks they weighed 23 pounds more, and after 10 weeks that weight difference persisted so the daily gain difference was about 0.3 pounds. If you have not weaned early this year due to the drought, this is a weaning strategy you might want to consider depending on forage and feed availability.

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The Louisiana State University Agricultural Center is a statewide campus of the LSU System and provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.