

## Beef Cattle Management Considerations for November

Rachael Brooke  
Phillips-Rooks District Extension Agent  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

For spring-calving cowherds - If not already done, make plans for weaning calves. Test your forages and have feedstuffs on hand prior to weaning. Check and clean waterers and prepare weaning/receiving pens. Evaluate cow body condition score (BCS) at weaning. Record scores with the BCS Record Book (<https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/Item.aspx?catId=562&pubId=19320>) from K-State Research and Extension. Use BCS to strategically supplement cows during fall, if needed. Female requirements are lowest at weaning so weight and BCS can be added more easily in early fall rather than waiting until closer to calving. Schedule pregnancy checking and fall health work if not already done. How were pregnancy rates last year? Do we need to re-think our fall/winter nutrition program? Evaluate the cost of gain relative to the value of gain when making feeding and marketing decisions for cull cows.

For fall-calving cowherds - If not already done, review your calving health protocols as needed. Have calving equipment cleaned and available to use as needed. Plan to adjust your nutrition program to match needs of lactating cows. Use the estrus synchronization planner (<https://www.iowabeefcenter.org/estrussynch.html>) to help plan fall synchronization protocols. Plan your mineral supplementation for this coming fall and winter. Record date and amount offered and calculate herd consumption. If consumption is 2X the target intake, then the cost will be too. Risk of grass tetany is greatest for lactating cows. Consider magnesium levels in mineral supplements for cows grazing cool-season forages and winter annuals this fall. Schedule breeding soundness exams for bulls used for fall and winter service. Monitor BCS, particularly on young bulls. If bulls are  $BCS \leq 5.0$ , consider supplementing to regain BCS going into winter. Consider the economic value by implanting nursing fall-born calves and weaned spring-born calves. If not already done, schedule your breeding protocols for fall replacement heifers in advance of the breeding season. If synchronizing with MGA, make sure intake is consistent at 0.5 mg of melengestrol acetate per head per day for 14 days, and remove for 19 days prior to administering prostaglandin. Take inventory of and begin sampling harvested forages for fall feed needs. Be aware of the possible presence of molds and other anti-nutritional compounds in hay harvested at higher than typical moisture levels. Test for nitrates and prussic acid when appropriate. Use the forage inventory calculator (<https://www.agmanager.info/hay-inventory-calculator>) to balance forage inventories with fall/winter grazing acres. If grazing crop residues following harvest, keep the following in mind: The bottom 1/3 of the stalk is where nitrates accumulate. Be aware of prussic acid in new regrowth of sorghum plants, and the time around frost is the greatest risk. High amounts of down grain will require a change in management. Use the Management Minder tool on KSUBeef.org (<https://www.asi.k-state.edu/extension/beef/tools.html>) to plan key management activities for your cowherd for the rest of the year. With high feeder calf prices, consider price risk management tools. Begin preparing for cold weather (i.e. tank heaters, windbreaks and bedding.)

Article written by - Jason M. Warner, Ph.D., Extension Cow-Calf Specialist

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