

Inside this issue:

Drought Conditions and Your Pastures	2
Observe Withdrawal Periods and Prevent Drug Residues	3, 7
Beef Cow Winter Feeding Strategies Seminar	4
Summary of Idaho BVD Survey	5
Adding Value to Bred Heifers	6-7
Annie's Project Financial Risk Management Course	7

Culling the Right Cows

K. Scott Jensen
UI Extension Educator, Owyhee County

Culling the right cows is a management tactic that requires several considerations. Deciding which cows are the "right ones" to send down the road will affect your bottom line for not only this year but also potentially for several years to come.

Some might ask how a culling decision can affect the bottom line for years to come. Well, experience and observation repeatedly show that a cow that comes up dry and/or open once will likely do the same thing again a few years down the road. If you want to make excuses for why she did not do her job and give her a second chance, she will likely cost you money again (feed and other annual expenses) with no return. Just think about it. If she comes up dry, it she won't wean a calf for another 1 ½ years. If she is open at preg check, it will be 2 years before she generates any revenue. Cows who fall into either of these categories should be easy candidates for culling.

Additionally, cows that are lame, have bad eyes, or bad udders should also make the cull list. These are cows that you could maybe squeeze another year's production out of however you should also consider the risks. Lame cows may be at risk to become downer cows. These cows give the industry a black eye and there is no salvage

value to a downer cow. Cows with bad eyes can be sold for slaughter with no discounts if caught early. Stage 4 or 5 cancer eyed cows again hurt the public perception and are at risk of being condemned at slaughter. These cows should be marketed much sooner to maximize both salvage value and avoid public perception pitfalls.

Cows that require calving assistance, need doctoring, calve late, or wean a poor calf possibly should also make the culling list. These cows have a negative effect on net returns.

Sometimes it helps also to look at each cow as a ranch employee. The job description might read something like this: deliver a live calf unassisted each year; raise it to weaning without a need to be doctored (cow or calf) each year; breed back within 83 days after calving (to maintain a 365 day calving interval); maintain reasonable body condition on the feedstuffs available. Then maybe insert any other specific requirements of your own. No excuse, consistent culling over several years will help reduce problems within your herd.

This newsletter is provided as a public service to producers and others in beef industry related fields. If you do not have an interest in receiving the Cattlemen's Corner Beef Newsletter in the future, please contact the Extension Office and we will remove your name from our mailing list. Likewise, if you know of someone who would like to receive the newsletter, please let us know. <http://www.extension.uidaho.edu/owyhee> 208-896-4104



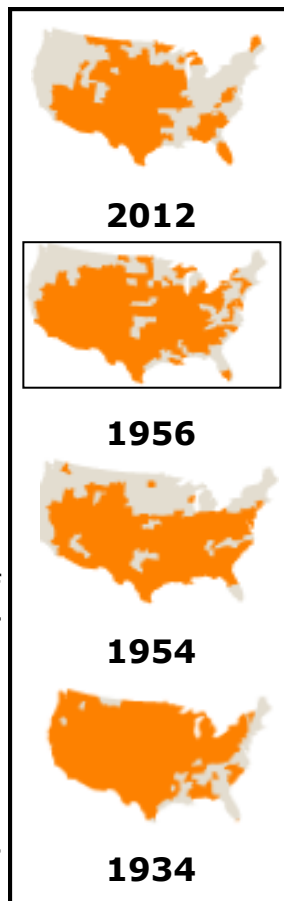
Drought Conditions and Your Pasture

Shanna Hamilton
UI Extension Educator, Adams County

Fall is near, warm weather is still here and grazing has been rough. Many may have not been able to get the most out of their fields this year due to drought conditions. Fires, higher prices of food, fuel and the necessities are continuing to cost dearly. Studies of drought since 1896 have been documented and put in front of our faces once again. In 2012, drought is as bad as it has been in nearly 60 years. In July, the New York times published an article that stated, "Fifty-five percent of the continental United States — from California to Arkansas, Texas to North Dakota — is under moderate to extreme drought, according to the government, the largest such area since December 1956." This information doesn't take into consideration how the hot temperatures of August have furthered drought conditions in our area. The years of 2012, 1956, 1954 and 1934 are shown on the right, the shaded areas being the drought stricken areas.

Here are a few suggestions to 'help' this fall in trying to use the most out of what is available on our farms and ranches.

Glenn Shewmaker, an Extension Forage Specialist at the University of Idaho suggests allowing your pastures to get plenty of reserves for the winter, "pastures coming out of drought dormancy are also low in non-structural carbohydrates, since they are using the reserves stored in the lower stem bases. Grasses should be allowed to grow to 8-10 inches, depending on the species, to replenish the reserves for fall-winter before being grazed." Then, they should be grazed to leave a 3-4 inch residual to insure sufficient reserves



for the next growing season.

The logic behind the information: if leaves are removed by grazing before plant energy reserves are replaced, the plant will try to mobilize stored energy to restart the process. This time of year the plant needs to increase energy reserves in the lower stem bases for winter survival. If grazing prevents this, plants will go into winter in a much weakened condition. Those that survive to next spring will grow slowly until they have recovered from the multiple stresses of drought, winter, and untimely grazing.

If hay is a must for your operation, try not to buy weed-infested hay. The future cost of feeding weed-infested hay far outweighs its feed value in the short-run. If weedy hay must be fed, feed in an area or holding pasture that is removed from streams, riparian areas, and wooded areas. Be sure to keep your stock confined for several days after feeding the lower grade hay to prevent them from spreading viable seed through their digestive tract. Observe holding pastures and feeding areas closely, and treat weed infestations as necessary.

Retaining a rotational grazing system during drought is recommended over continuous grazing. Periodic rests help plants maintain vigor. Plants are not able to regrow sufficiently to replenish plant energy reserves if grazed repeatedly.

Finally, the take-home message than needs to be remembered: do not restock until you are certain that your pasture/range has recovered.



Observe Withdrawal Periods and Prevent Drug Residues

J. Benton Glaze, Jr., Ph.D., Extension Beef Cattle Specialist
Department of Animal & Veterinary Science, University of Idaho

Most beef cattle producers are aware of, and familiar with, beef quality assurance (BQA) and BQA's role in building consumer confidence in beef and beef products and maintaining beef demand. Beef quality assurance was started in the early to mid 1980's as the beef industry was dealing with concerns of illegal drug residues. Since that time, BQA programs have reminded beef producers of the need and value of producing safe, wholesome, high quality beef and beef products and have shown beef producers how various beef management practices may or may not further the effort. Today, illegal drug residues are not an issue in fed cattle, are a very minor issue in market (non-fed) cows and bulls, and are somewhat of a larger problem in cull dairy cows and bulls. While the news on illegal drug residues in the beef industry is relatively good, the potential exists for problems to arise. Every beef producer (both beef and dairy) has a responsibility and role to play in preventing illegal drug residues.

Room for Improvement

In 1991 (updated in 1995, 1999, 2005, and 2011) beef industry leaders initiated the National Beef Quality Audit (NBQA). These audits have been designed to evaluate the beef industry and provide benchmark data identifying areas of non-conformity and quality shortfalls in fed steers and heifers. Through the years, these audits have provided the beef industry with several recommendations aimed at addressing and managing product inconsistencies and non-conformities, and gave the industry some direction in improving beef's position in the marketplace. The 2011 NBQA sheds some light on the record keeping practices of beef producers and how those records are being used in tracking animal health product withdrawal periods.

During the strategy workshop portion of the 2011 National Beef Quality Audit (NBQA), participants identified a low level of written protocols in the beef industry as a barrier to continued success. Many beef cattle producers rely on routines or memory when it comes to animal treatments. Results of the 2011 NBQA Phase III survey show

that only 31% of all respondents rely on written protocols. When asked if records were used to track drug withdrawal periods in beef cattle, 47% of respondents said records were always used, 27% of respondents said records usually were used, 15% of respondents said records were sometimes used, and 11% of respondents said records were never used. Clearly, improvements can be made when it comes to record keeping and using records to track animal drug withdrawal periods.

Steps for Improvement

Keep Proper Records. Maintaining a permanent record of all animal health product use is essential to preventing drug residues and maintaining consumer confidence in beef. Treatment records may be kept on individual animals, or on entire groups of cattle that were worked and treated at the same time and in a similar fashion. Whether the records are for individuals, or for groups, they should: (1) identify the animal(s) treated, (2) specify the date(s) of treatment, (3) list the drug administered, (4) record drug lot numbers, (5) list the dosage given, (6) provide the route of administration, (7) identify the injection site, (8) identify the person who administered the drug, (9) show the withdrawal period for the drug administered, and (10) list date that treated animals can safely be marketed/slaughtered. Personnel associated with beef cattle enterprises should be provided with treatment records, and should familiarize themselves with the documents. This will help prevent treated animals from being prematurely marketed, prior to them clearing their drug withdrawal

Beef Cow Winter Feeding Strategies Seminars

Presented by University of Idaho Extension and
Department of Animal and Veterinary Science

Keynote Speakers



Steve Paisley, Ph.D.
University of Wyoming
Tim DelCurto, Ph.D.
Oregon State University
Mary Drewnoski, Ph.D.
University of Idaho



Top strategies to reduce winter feed costs

- ⇒ Winter Range Grazing
- ⇒ Crop Residue Options
- ⇒ Preventing Tetany
- ⇒ Mineral Supplementation
- ⇒ Matching Animals to the Environment
- ⇒ Nutrition for Better Reproduction
- ⇒ Using Feed Analyses to Reduce Costs
 - ⇒ Hands-on Ration Balancing
 - ⇒ Using Alternative Feeds

October 2012

23rd- Salmon
24th- Pocatello
29th- Burley
30th- Caldwell

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT YOUR LOCAL
EXTENSION EDUCATOR OR KARA KRAICH AT (208)
454-7655, OR KKRAICH@UIDAHO.EDU

University of Idaho
Extension

Summary of BVD Survey Conducted in Idaho in 2010

Dr. Jim England
University of Idaho, Caine Veterinary Teaching Center

Copies of the KSU, College of Veterinary Medicine, Production Medicine BVD Risk Analysis questionnaire were presented to beef producers attending local winter beef schools in 2010. Completed questionnaires were returned through September 30, 2010. The information was transferred to the on-line form and analyzed. Risk summaries were prepared for each submitted questionnaire. The assessment determined the likely hood of a herd becoming infected with BVD in the next 10 years based on the management program of each operation. The 15 questions utilized in the on-line analyses included number of animals, animals (and types such as cows, heifers, etc,) purchased/year, were purchased animals from BVD negative herds, and various co-mingling possibilities. Vaccination programs were not considered in the assessment.

**THE RESULTS OF
THE SURVEY
REVEALED THAT
IDAHO BEEF
PRODUCERS HAVE
GOOD LONG-TERM
VACCINATION
PROGRAMS IN PLACE**

Because the KSU Analysis did not utilize vaccination programs as part of the assessment, we added the following questions regarding the vaccination programs of the ranches to the questionnaire. Do you: 1) currently have a vaccination program utilizing modified live virus? 2) vaccinate all calves? 3) annually vaccinate all cows? 4) Has your herd ever been tested for BVD? 5) Have you ever had a persistently infected calf? The vaccination information was not utilized in the KSU on-line analysis.

Eighty-five (85) completed questionnaires were received. 25,000 head of cattle from 13 Idaho Counties were represented. The KSU Risk Analysis was as follows: 10/85 had 0% risk, 6/85 had 41% risk, 62/85 had 62-99 % risk, and 16/85 had 100% risk of (re) infection within 10 years. Increased risk was associated with co-mingling of herds via grazing associations and fence line contact with other herds and adding new animals to the herd from non-negative BVD sources.

The results of the survey revealed that Idaho beef producers have a good long-term vaccination programs in place. Eighty-nine percent (89%), 76/85 respondents, indicated complete, annual vaccination of their herd. Three did not vaccinate annually and only 6 did not vaccinate. Ten (10) operations had done some BVD testing, six identified having a positive animal while 4 did not know the results of the testing. The 1 non-vaccinated herd with 0% risk purchased from known BVD negative sources, had no contact with outside animals and represented only 49 animals.

In the proposal, herds with a risk >50% were to be offered the opportunity to conduct whole herd testing at a reduced cost. Recent research results suggest that the low US herd prevalence (<10%) alters the test cost to PI diagnosis return on investment. The low prevalence mandates considerations of a herd's production and management prior to investing in whole herd testing. In the identified herds, the majority report extensive BVD vaccination programs in place. BVD vaccination will reduce the production/reproduction effects of PI animals within the herd. Consequently, as part of determining the necessity and the value of whole herd testing, we should evaluate the production/reproduction parameters. Three questions are: 1) abortions/year, 2) open cows previously diagnosed as pregnant, and, if known, 3) feedlot performance (ADG and morbidity/mortality).

It is recommended that producers discuss the options/value of herd testing for BVD PI animals with their veterinarian before instituting a testing program.



Adding Value to Bred Heifers

Ron Torell
Long-Standing Educator and Advocate of Agriculture

As we enter the rebuilding phase of our national brood cow herd market analyzers are predicting high demand and record prices for bred females. Last year we saw commercial bred heifers sell anywhere from \$1200 to \$1800. These pay outs were disappointing given the record high prices paid for calves, yearlings and market ready cows. It is anticipated that bred female prices will adjust in 2012 and trade in the range of \$1500 to \$2300. So why the disparity and huge price range associated with this class of cattle? Could it be that some sellers are producing what the buyer wants?

Genetic quality and uniformity are undoubtedly the top two factors to consider when determining the value of bred heifers. To bring top dollar in the bred heifer market start with quality heifer calves that are uniform in age, frame size, muscle, color and weight. The majority of sellers keep the best and sell the rest. Buyers know this and bid accordingly. Don't expect to receive top dollar when using the bottom end of heifer calves to put together a load of bred heifers.

Uniformity of the entire load cannot be over-emphasized. Do not try to slide late calving heifers, one or two reds with a load of blacks, or a few young and smaller framed heifers with the opposite. This takes away from the value of the load. Pull the outliers even if this results in a lighter load with freight adjustment.

Minimum base weights for heifers of 1000 lbs. seem to sell the best. This heavier weight suggests that the heifers are properly developed and have growth potential. There is a market for smaller framed heifers that weigh 900 lbs. provided the heifer has a body condition of six. This signifies that the heifer is developed for her genetically smaller frame.

Having extra heifers to pick from is a great option for adding value. If a seller describes 50 heifers with a base weight of 1000 lbs. and can offer the buyer his/her pick from sixty or even a hundred head, value is added.

Vaccinations and health protocol is clear-cut. Heifers should be vaccinated according to label

with a minimum of a MLV 4-way, two shots of Trichomoniasis (in the western states), vibriosis, leptospirosis, two shots of 7 or 8-way, and dewormed. Certain lots of bred heifers are sold guaranteed BVD free. This has the potential to add value. Bangs vaccination and visible USDA tags are imperative to enter many western states.

Bred heifer sellers who have a reputation for buying and using top-end bulls do reasonably well in the bred heifer market. Using artificial insemination to name recognizable high accuracy calving-ease bulls will demand top dollar provided all other value-added criteria are met. Keep in mind that A.I. programs carry additional input costs which may or may not surpass any added value.

Strategic timing is key when selling. Listing the lot too early will remove potential buyers that have not yet assessed their replacement needs after pregnancy testing. Listing too late may remove those buyers that have already filled their replacement requirements. In many areas a 45-day calving interval starting in late February to early March commands the best price. Spring calving bred heifers delivered December 1 or later seem to be in higher demand than heifers delivered at an earlier date. This is primarily due to the associated winter feeding costs up to calving. It's important to note that there are those producers who calve heifers in April while in other areas of the country fall calving is the primary market.

When selling there is no guarantee that all inputs will result in a return on your investment. Pelvic measurements, ultrasound pregnancy testing, sexed fetuses, and age and source verification are management practices

... continued on page 7

Observe Withdrawal Periods. . . continued from page 3

period.

Strictly Adhere to Drug Withdrawal Times. Every federally approved drug (animal health product) has a withdrawal period printed on the label or package insert. Withdrawal periods represent the amount of time it takes for an animal to metabolize an administered animal health product and the amount of time it takes for the product concentration level in the tissues to decrease to a safe, acceptable level [(as set by the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)]. In terms of marketing beef cattle, a withdrawal period is the time from the last administration of the drug (animal health product), during which beef and beef products should not be marketed into the food supply. Prior to using an animal health product, producers should refer to the label and package insert, determine the proper withdrawal period, and calculate a safe marketing date. All persons involved in marketing cattle on a farm or ranch should be made aware of animals that have been treated and should know the withdrawal period for the treatments. Withdrawal periods may be extended when combinations of drugs are used or when drugs are used in an extra-label (off-label) manner. In these situations or at any time a producer is uncertain



Adding Value to Bred Heifers. . . continued from page 6

that have the potential of adding value but also may add unrecoverable input costs. One iron cattle that are hip branded only, cattle having no waddles or ear marks, and good disposition cattle generally have a tendency to add value to the load.

Most buyers take into consideration the reputation and integrity of a seller in their dealings. It takes just one unpleasant or misleading deal to brand you with a bad reputation. When selling it is paramount to represent cattle accurately in their sale description. There should be no surprises come delivery time. Be honest in the portrayal of your cattle and live up to the terms of the agreement. A reputation built upon honesty, reliability, ethics, morals and principles will serve you well.



Annie's Project Financial Risk Management Course Begins October 16

It's almost time to start preparing those financial statements and making sure your record keeping is updated. The fall is usually the time to meet with your accountants and get things in order before the end of the year arrives quickly. If you're like many of us, preparing, analyzing and understanding your finances may be a challenge. The University of Idaho Extension System is here to help! In 2011 University of Idaho Extension Educators started offering the Annie's Project course in Southwest Idaho.

Annie's Project is an Extension risk management education program based on the needs of farm/ranch women who manage or want to learn how to manage the finances of their operation. This course is developed to meet the needs of those from a variety of backgrounds and experience levels in agriculture. Class topics focus on the 5 risk management areas: human risk, financial risk, legal risk, marketing risk, production risk.

The mission of Idaho's *Annie's Project* is to empower farm women to be better business partners through networks and by managing and organizing critical information. The six-week long course is designed especially to help farm/ranch women develop their management and decision-making skills. The six different sessions include brief presentations, discussions focused on the participants questions, and computer training in enterprise budgeting and spreadsheets.

Annie's Project is named in honor of Annette Kolhagen Fleck, a woman who lived in a small town in Illinois. She spent her life learning how to become a better business partner with her husband. With her inspiration, the course was developed by the University of Illinois in 2003 and is now being taught in over 25 states across the U.S.

University of Idaho Extension will offer *Annie's Project* again this fall starting October 16 through November 20 on Tuesday evenings from 6:00 - 9:00 pm. The class will be held at the University of Idaho Research Center in Parma. The cost of this six-week course is \$50, which includes a notebook, computer program, and resources. If you are interested in registering for the Annie's Project course, or would like more information, please call Rikki Ruiz at the Gem County Extension office at 208-365-6363 or by email at rikkiw@uidaho.edu. Course size is limited, so register today!

University of Idaho
Extension

Owyhee County

238 8th Ave. W., P.O. Box 400
Marsing, ID 83639
(208) 896-4104 FAX (208) 896-4105
Owyhee@uidaho.edu

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

U.S. POSTAGE PAID

MARSING, IDAHO
PERMIT NO. 11

To enrich education through diversity the University of Idaho is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer and educational institution.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**2012 Owyhee County Junior Livestock Sale
Sets Record of \$278,833**

	No. Sold	Average/lb.	Average	Sale	Add-on's
Beef	29	\$1.79	\$2,278	\$66,075	\$15,056
Goat	9	\$9.63	\$667	\$6,000	\$2,486
Sheep	56	\$6.16	\$801	\$44,875	\$27,635
Swine	89	\$3.47	\$928	\$82,575	\$34,130
TOTAL	183			\$199,525	\$79,308

