



Timely Beef Cattle Management Tips

- Prepare for calving. Ensure maternity pens are ready, all equipment is in good working order and that all calving supplies are on hand. Check the expiry dates on medications and supplements carried over from last year.
- Ensure cows are on an increasing plane of nutrition as most fetal growth is occurring now, along with lactation after calving. This is also critical for successful rebreeding results. It may be necessary to re-evaluate your feeding plans and inventories.
- If white muscle disease is a problem in your area, inject cows with Selenium. Inject also with vitamins A, D and E when processing, if you are not providing them in your feed. Injections need to take place every 60 to 90 days.
- Calves need to be up and sucking within the first six hours of life to make sure they receive adequate colostrum. Ideally, the calf should receive the colostrum within the first two hours. This is the most essential thing you can do for the health of your calves.
- As the weather can change quickly in the upcoming months, pay attention to calf health and watch closely for signs of sickness. Vaccinate cows for calf scours according to drug label in consultation with your local veterinarian.
- Do some planning on how you will manage summer and fall grazing. Have you figured out your annual and perennial forage seed needs? Extended grazing options include second or third cut hay, swath grazing, chaff piles, stubble grazing, corn stover, standing corn or bale grazing. Are you going to do more cross-fencing or water development for the upcoming grazing season?
- Assess the body condition score of your bulls and adjust the ration accordingly.
- Complete the breeding soundness examination and semen test early to ensure you have sufficient bull power for this year's breeding season. This will allow time to purchase replacement bulls if necessary.
- A proper bull to cow ratio is important to achieve good conception rates. Yearling bull - 15 to 20 cows, two year old bull - 20 to 30 cows, mature bull - 30 to 40 cows



Whether you're growing high quality hay or baling the edges of marshland, Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation (MASC) Forage Insurance has you covered. Flexible and affordable, Forage Insurance includes Select Hay Insurance and Basic Hay Insurance, additional coverage options for specific situations, and extra benefits available to producers at no additional premium cost. Sign up for Forage Insurance by March 31 and you're automatically qualified for the Hay Disaster Benefit and the Forage Restoration Benefit. For more information, contact your local MASC Service Centre at 1-833-206-0459.

Farm Business Management Tools and Resources



As the economic risks of farming increase, the need to calculate a farm's cost of production rises exponentially. We have seen dramatic increases in costs - land values, interest rates, equipment, fertilizer, fuel, and many other operating costs.

The Farm Business Management team has completed the 2024 cost of production (COP) updates for cow-calf, backgrounders, replacement heifers, and finishers. The cow-calf budget now covers 300 and 150 cowherd sizes. There are eight preset balanced rations included in the winter feed so producers can compare the economics of different feeding strategies. The cow-calf budget also has a full cost analysis on five different pasture options, including owned versus rented pasture. The principal and interest payments for fixed costs have been added, and now there is the ability to calculate the total debt per cow and the debt servicing payment requirements. All of these budgets are designed to have producers put in their own values to generate a very producer-specific cost of production. The Beef Cattle Research Council's (BCRC) five per cent rule for profitability is included in the COP worksheet to help identify the impact of management changes on certain aspects of production.

Silage and hay budgets now have full analysis on AgrilInsurance. The risk management section helps producers understand what AgrilInsurance coverage they have in their own area and will calculate what payments could be with their own specific yields in the event of reduced production. These budgets also have details on the economics of when to use custom harvesters versus harvesting the feed yourself, and identifying equipment cost per acre. All the COP budgets are online at <https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/farm-management/production-economics/cost-of-production.html>.

There are also several calculators available to help you make quick decisions on many other farm management issues on forage and livestock operations. FeedPlan looks at 20 different feedstuffs and calculates all feeds on a dry matter basis as well as protein and energy. This calculator helps producers decide on the most economical feed purchases for their circumstances. This tool can calculate cost difference of straw versus corn silage versus dry hay.

What is the most economical feed purchase? It will depend on what nutrients are intending to be supplemented and what feeds are readily available. This calculator makes that decision easy.

Is it economical to purchase lick tubs versus alfalfa hay as a supplement? Let this calculator do the math.

A number of these calculators are now available in an online version where the calculation can be done on mobile devices like an iPhone or iPad. These can be found at the following link: <https://calculators.masc.mb.ca/>.

DID YOU KNOW?

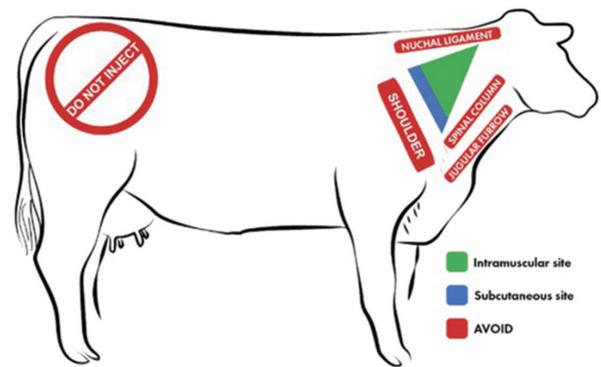
That Manitoba Agriculture has a YouTube Channel featuring all of the past presentations and informational videos on livestock and forage management, such as animal welfare, grazing management and beef herd health?



Understanding the Five W's of Cattle Injections: Who, What, When, Where and Why?

Over the last two decades, great strides have been made in standardizing beef cattle injection techniques and methods. Today, there are animal injection best practices that have become widely known in the beef industry as “just the right thing to do.” These cattle injection techniques are recommended to help farmers produce safe beef for the consumer and maintain Canada’s high reputation for beef quality.

The recommended maximum volume per injection site is 10 ml (cc) per site. Increasing the volume of medication injected into one location will impede a beef animal’s ability to absorb and excrete the medication. An increased volume can lead to a pocket of unabsorbed medication being left in the tissue. This decreases the efficacy of the treatment and could also be detected as drug residue in the carcass of a beef animal. A lower volume injection also ensures that the tissue can effectively recover from the irritation of the medication, decreasing the chances of the animal developing an injection site lesion.



Source: Canada Beef

Only inject beef animals in the recommended safe zone on the neck, never in the rump or loin. This ensures that, if an animal has a reaction to the product and develops a lesion, it can easily be trimmed away from the less valuable chuck, rather than damaging the more valuable round cuts. Injecting outside of the safe zone in the neck can potentially cause injury and even death to the animal being treated. The nuchal ligament is responsible for supporting the head of a beef animal, and if it is damaged via an injection, that animal can suffer severe and permanent paralysis. The same result can occur if the spinal cord is inadvertently hit. The jugular furrow contains the jugular vein and carotid artery. If medications are mistakenly injected directly into the blood stream, animals may suffer severe drug reactions.

A hand-width of space between medication injections will ensure the tissue can adequately recover from the injection and prevent medications from comingling. If medications mix within the animal, they can interact and cause drug reactions, or even inactivate each other, rendering them useless.

Route of Administration (ROA): The route by which a drug is taken into the body (i.e. subcutaneous, intramuscular, oral, intravenous, topical, intranasal).

Incorrect ROA could lead to underdosing, which is an animal welfare and production concern when a therapeutic level may not be achieved. This will leave cattle vulnerable to the disease being treated or prevented. Underdosing is also a concern from an antibiotic stewardship standpoint, as chronically underdosing antimicrobial drugs can lead to resistance. The ROA also determines a beef animal’s ability to eliminate the product, affecting withdrawal recommendations, and potentially leading to drug residues being detected in meat.

Subcutaneous injections (Sub-Q or SQ) are placed just under the skin, as opposed to an intramuscular injection where the medication is placed directly into the muscle. Subcutaneous injections are generally less irritating and are the preferred ROA.

Pharmaceutical companies are continually updating products and labels, so become familiar with the current label recommendations and use the subcutaneous route whenever possible.

For even more information about injections, please go to: www.beefresearch.ca/blog/five-ws-of-beef-cattle-injections/

Stock Talk!

Manitoba Agriculture is offering a series of interesting livestock and forage presentations, packed with information and featuring innovative leading experts, aimed at helping Manitoba beef producers best manage their cattle operations. Find out the latest news on research and production for beef and forage management by participating in these virtual sessions.

Date: March 14, 2024

Time: 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Place: Your computer, smartphone or tablet

Register for StockTalk webinar:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_U6k8yuJ-QLG9eFOXVAeHKg

Please add the webinar series to your calendar once you are registered.



Agenda

March 14 **Ask the Vet: Calving tips - Dr. Marc Philippot, St. Claude Vet Clinic**
Vaccination programs - Dr. Tanya Anderson, Gladstone Vet Clinic

April 11 **Forage and Pasture Management - Poisonous Plants & Replacement**
Heifer Development and Management

Recorded Webinars

December 7 **Cattle Nutrition & Alternative Feeding Strategies**

January 12 **Manitoba Beef & Forage Conference Highlights**

February 15 **MASC Forage Insurance, Livestock Predation Prevention & Cattle Market Update**

For more information, call Manitoba Agriculture

1-844-769-6224 or email shawn.cabak@gov.mb.ca

Or visit our website at manitoba.ca/agriculture/online-resources/stock-talk.html.

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Contact us

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