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Beef Herd Management Calendar

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Good management is the key to a successful beef production program. A high capital requirement and a relatively low return emphasize the need for effective management to maximize the profit potential of beef cows.

Beef cow owners should establish goals for their herd output including:

1. A 95 percent calf crop weaned every 12 months based on breeding age females in the herd).
2. Genetic potential for rapid growth of calves to desirable slaughter weight and finish.
3. Heavy weaning weights consistent with feeds available and with planned calf management following weaning.

This calendar is a brief outline of management practices to be followed at various stages of the cow's reproductive cycle or at various times of the year. Detailed information about most practices are given in other fact sheets. The calendar is listed for a spring calving schedule or by months of the cow's cycle beginning with the month cows start calving as month 1 of the calendar.

The most important difference between the spring calving program and calving at other seasons is the winter feeding program, particularly if the cow is in lactation during the winter months.

BEEF HERD MANAGEMENT CALENDAR

For Late March

Calving Cows

<i>*Month</i>		<i>General Management</i>	<i>Feeding</i>	<i>Health</i>
JANUARY	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Increase your knowledge of beef herd management — plan your yearly management, feeding & marketing program.- Provide ample water (ice-free in winter).- Prepare calving quarters — clean sodded area; calving shed for emergency use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Start cows on ration designed for last 1/3 of pregnancy — include 20,000 IU Vitamin A/day.- Feed bulls same ration as cows but feed to appetite — if too thin, feed some grain.- Provide high phosphorus-salt mix, free choice, until turned to pasture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Replenish equipment and supplies needed for calving season.- 1-15th vaccinate pregnant yearling heifers:<ul style="list-style-type: none">..with enterotoxemia C & D toxoid if enterotoxemia has been a problem and..with Scours vaccine if virus diarrhea has been a problem.
FEBRUARY	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Purchase additional bulls.- Move bred heifers to calving area 10 days before calving expected (about the 20th).- Provide small area for "close" heifers.- Observe heifers every 3-4 hrs. after calvings starts — assist delivery.- Eartag calves & keep appropriate records.- Move pairs to clean pastures as soon as possible after calving.- Dehorn (& castrate) calves shortly after birth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Inject 2,500,000 IU Vitamin A if it is not included in feed.- Help calf nurse, if needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 15th-25th revaccinate pregnant heifers not yet calved;<ul style="list-style-type: none">...enterotoxemia C & D toxoid...Scours vaccine- Dip navel of newborn calves in iodine solution.- Treat calves with scour vac Reo orally at birth if viral scours a problem.- Drench calves dehydrated by scours with prescribed solution.

*Month = Month cow calving begins.

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Calving Cows

	<i>*Month</i>	<i>General Management</i>	<i>Feeding</i>	<i>Health</i>
MARCH	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Move "close" cows to calving area about 10 days before expected calving. - Observe closely every 3-4 hrs. after calving starts. - Follow calving season management practices as for heifers previous month. - Mark cows having calving difficulty or other problems for early culling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Switch heifers to lactation ration by 15-30 days after calving - include at least 50,000 IU Vitamin A daily. - Plant pasture management & feeding program: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Temporary pastures, rotation, etc. 2. Early weaning, drylot, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observe calves for scours & respiratory problems. - 15th-25th vaccinate cows within 3-4 weeks of calving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ..enterotoxemia C & D toxoid booster - Scours vaccine, - Observe cows for prolapse & retained placenta.
APRIL	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continued calving management procedures. - Cull replacement heifers. - Watch closely for grass tetany. - Evaluate profit potential for creep feeding & use of hormone implant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feed magnesium oxide in mineral or protein supplement if in grass tetany prone area- - Switch cows to lactation ration by 15-30 days after calving. - Hold off pasture until adequate growth for adequate nutrition. - Plan for winter feed supply. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check bulls for breeding soundness & fertility. - Vaccinate replacement heifers for vibriosis, leptospirosis, IBR, BVD (optional; MLV - consult veterinarian, killed vaccine - safe when given anytime). - 15th-25th vaccinate all pregnant cows not yet calved w/Scours vaccine.
MAY	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue calving. - Breed yearling heifers beginning 20 days before cows. - Plan fly control program. - Watch for grass tetany. - Brand if in brand area. - Implant steer calves? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold off grass until adequate-if necessary to turn out on short grass -feed grain until grass is adequate. - Continue feeding magnesium oxide. - Provide salt, free choice - locate away from water. - Be sure water supply is adequate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vaccinate open cows for vibriosis, leptospirosis, IBR, BVD (optional; MLV-consult veterinarian, killed vaccine-safe when given anytime) if not vaccinated as replacement heifers. - Vaccinate calves for blackleg & malignant edema.
JUNE	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Start fly control program. - Breed cows beginning 10th-15th. - Remove bulls from heifers after 45-50 days. - Plan weaning program. - Sell all dry cows. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be sure water supply & salt are adequate. - Rotate young bulls & feed some grain while not with cows. 	
JULY	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Control flies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be sure water supply & salt are adequate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Treat pinkeye early.
AUGUST	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Control flies. - Plan calf weaning management. - 15th to 31st remove bulls from cow herd. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be sure water supply is adequate. - Feed high phosphorus-salt mix. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Treat pinkeye.
SEPTEMBER	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pregnancy check heifers - sell open heifers. - Wean calves off cows marked for culling. - Market call cows. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turn early weaned calves to good pasture or feed early weaning ration in dry lot. - Feed high phosphorus-salt mix. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vaccinate calves for IBR, leptospirosis. - Vaccinate heifer calves for brucellosis (2-6 months of age).
OCTOBER	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify low producing cows. - Wean calves. - Pregnancy check cows. - Market open cows, and poor stubble & corn producers when herd reduction is needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feed weaned calves for 1 lb (.45 kg) for more daily gain. - Turn cows to crop residue or winter range (strip grate milo stalks). - Feed high phosphorus-salt mix. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check for cancer eye & other health problems. - Vaccinate calves with 7-way clostridium. - Vaccinate for IBR, leptospirosis, BVD, (optional) somnugen (optional), BRSV (optional) & Pasteurella (optional) if not yet done. - Grub treat cattle to be slaughtered during grub emergence (others optional).
NOVEMBER	9		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rotate cows in stubble & stalk fields. - Feed high phosphorus-salt mix. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spray for lice if not grub treated.
DECEMBER	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Separate 1st & 2nd calf heifers from cows (old or thin cows may be included with heifers). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feed alfalfa hay as a supplement to range, stalks or stubble when most nutritious part is consumed or when snow covers ground. - Start heifers on ration designed for last 1/3 of pregnancy (include 20,000 IU Vitamin A daily). 	

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