



MICHIGAN BEEF PRODUCTION

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE • MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Processing Newly Arrived Feeder Cattle

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Introduction

This fact sheet outlines a herd health program for newly purchased cattle coming into the feedlot for the first time.

The authors hasten to point out that there is a variation of opinion on how feeder cattle should be processed. Procedures that work well in one area or on one farm may not be the best for another. Consult your local veterinarian when planning a processing program. This outline represents a maximum program that may be larger in scope than is needed by many cattle feeders in the Midwest. However, it is a program known to work.

For information on health programs for calves prior to sale, consult Fact Sheets 3200 and 3210.

Procedures on Arrival

Health Practices

1. IBR-PI₃ modified live virus vaccine (either intranasal or intramuscular or both).
2. BVD vaccination is optional, depending upon individual situations. Consult local veterinarian.
3. Haemophilus somnus bacterin.
4. Blackleg-malignant edema bacterin (primarily for calves rather than yearlings).
5. Vitamin A injection (1 million I.U.) depending upon previous vitamin A status.
6. De-wormer (check compatibility with pour-on for grub and lice control).
7. Implant with growth stimulant.
8. Identify with ear tag (or back tag glued on forehead) to aid in detecting sick calves.
9. Pasteurella hemolytica modified live vaccine (optional)—consult local veterinarian.
10. Lepto bacterin (optional)—if prevalent in area.
11. Enterotoxemia bacterin (optional)—if on high grain ration.
12. Castrate, dehorn and pour-on for grub and lice control (check for safe periods first) if calves are in strong, healthy condition.
13. Ivermectin may be injected for control of both external and internal parasites. As with pour-ons, be sure to check for safe period.
14. If purchased cattle were fully pre-conditioned prior to shipment, many of the above procedures may have been done on the ranch. Nevertheless, the vaccinations should be repeated upon arrival at the feedlot.
15. Try to avoid mixing calves of different origins for first 3 to 4 weeks.
16. Do not shut calves in poorly ventilated buildings. Calves have less respiratory prob-

lems if left outside with a dry bed underneath them.

17. Check cattle two to three times daily for sickness. Pull out and treat cattle that are obviously ill. If cattle are routinely checked for temperature, treat those over 104°.

Starting on Feed

1. Supply cattle with an adequate supply of fresh water. Allowing the water system to trickle will encourage the cattle to drink.
2. Start on top quality grass or mixed grass-legume hay.
3. Feed starting ration on second day by sprinkling on top of hay. Gradually decrease hay and increase starting ration over next 4 to 10 days until desired level of ration is reached.
4. For best results, the starting ration should contain 50 to 70% concentrate (grain) so that energy level is adequate. Corn silage alone contains about 50% grain on a dry basis.
5. If starting lightweight calves under 350 lbs., feed a high energy diet (70% grain, 30% roughage on a dry basis).
6. NPN-based protein supplements are not recommended for calves under 600 lbs. Natural-based protein supplements, such as those containing soy, should be fed to meet the animal's protein requirement for optimum performance.

7. After calves reach 600 lbs, NPN can be used as a sole source of supplementation.
8. If medicated feeds are fed, use for only a short period of time (3 to 4 weeks).
9. If coccidiosis is a problem, consider adding decoquinate to the starting ration or amprolium to the drinking water.

Procedures 2 to 4 Weeks After Arrival

Health Practices

1. Finish practices not accomplished on arrival such as:
 - a. Castrating.
 - b. Dehorning.
 - c. Pour-on for grub and lice control.
2. Booster shots
 - a. IBR-PIs.
 - b. BVD.
 - c. Haemophilus somnus.
 - d. Blackleg—malignant edema.
 - e. Lepto.
 - f. Enterotoxemia.

Feeding Practices

1. By now the cattle should be eating 2½ to 3% of body weight daily in dry matter (500 lb. calf = 12½ to 15 lb. dry matter per day).
2. Remove medicated feeds from ration.

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