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Minimum Health Program for a March Calving Beef Cow Herd

Michigan State University Extension Service

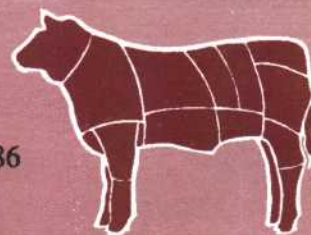
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Introduction

This fact sheet outlines a minimum herd health program for beef cow-calf producers. The schedule is based on a March calving situation. However, it can be adjusted to fit other calving times.

For a maximum herd health program, refer to Fact Sheet 3210 (Extension Bulletin E-1687).

December-January-February

(Late Gestation)

1. Check the free-choice mineral mix to be certain it provides 8% phosphorus and a minimum of 40 ppm selenium. Feed year-round to the breeding herd.
2. If lice are a problem, apply an approved pour-on.
3. Vaccinate replacement heifers when 9 to 12 months old with IBR-BVD-PI₃ killed vaccine and lepto-5 bacterin.

March-April

(Calving Season)

1. Calves at birth:
 - a. Make sure calves get colostrum within 1 to 4 hours of birth.
 - b. Dip navel in 7% iodine.
 - c. Give selenium-vitamin E injection. Repeat in 2 to 4 weeks if white muscle disease is a problem.
2. Vaccinate cow herd and replacement heifers twice the first year and annually thereafter with the following:
 - a. IBR-BVD-PI₃ killed virus vaccine.
 - b. Lepto-5 bacterin (may have to vaccinate twice a year if lepto is a severe problem).

May-June-July

(Pasture & Breeding Season)

1. Use some form of fly control (tags, pour-ons, sprays, dust bugs, back rubbers, etc.).

2. Calfhooed vaccinate replacement heifer calves for Bang's at 4 through 8 months old (varies by state).
3. Vaccinate calves for blackleg-malignant edema if it is prevalent in the area.

August-September

(Prewearing Practices)

1. Vaccinate all calves over 5 months old but no later than 3 weeks before weaning with:
 - a. IBR/PI₃ modified live vaccine if cow herd was vaccinated; if not, use either killed or intranasal vaccine.
 - b. Blackleg-malignant edema bacterin.
 - c. Haemophilus somnus bacterin.
2. Castrate and dehorn calves if not done earlier.
3. If possible, put out creep feed so calves learn to eat grain prior to weaning.

October-November

(Weaning & Sale Time)

1. Cow herd at weaning time:
 - a. Grub and lice control (observe cut-off dates).
 - b. Vaccinations, if not done before breeding season:
 - (1) IBR-BVD-PI₃ killed virus vaccine.
 - (2) Annual leptos-5 bacterin (may have to vaccinate twice a year if leptos is a severe problem).
2. Calves at weaning time:
 - a. Wean and haul sale calves directly to yards. Try to minimize stress.
 - b. Grub and lice control on calves retained as replacements.
 - c. Booster vaccinations for IBR/PI₃ and Haemophilus somnus on calves retained as replacements.



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