

Management Tips and Tricks

2022 Multicounty New Landowners Program

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Forage Management

- Soil test, fertilize and weed control
- Consider mixed forages
- Don't overgraze
- Consider overseeding a few acres with ryegrass in the fall
- Rotate or strip graze pastures
- Make or purchase hay (2-3 bales/cow)
- Test hay (10%)
- Feed with hay rings or roll out (burn pads in Spring)



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Facilities and Fencing

- Perimeter fence 5 strand or net wire
- Interior or cross fencing 4 strand or electric
- Gates at least 10-12'
- Water troughs in every pasture or trap
- Barn(s) for hay
- Pens and corrals large enough – wood, panel or pipe
- Chute for loading
- Squeeze chute/head gate



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Equipment

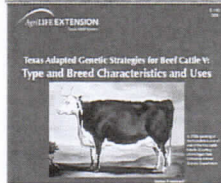
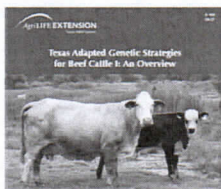
- Most equipment can be borrowed or leased
- Pickup truck and a small tractor (to move bales)
- Trailer to haul a few cows or calves
- Mineral feeder
- Feed troughs
- Hay rings
- Mower
- Disc



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Cattle Management

- Select breeds or crosses of cows and bulls that will fit your market, your management and your land
- Moderate size cows
- Gentle
- Identify them (tags and brands)
- Raise what you like



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Calf Management

- Vaccinate your calves for clostridial diseases
- Ear tag calves
- Consider castrating bull calves (under 3 months)
- Control external parasites (horn flies)
- Deworm cows and calves



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Cow Management

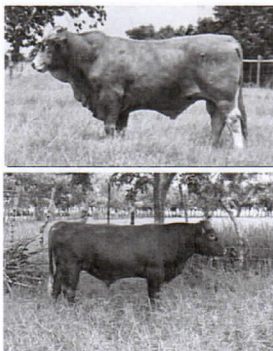
- Breed cows for a limited period (breeding season) usually 90 days
- Pregnancy test cows
- Maintain cows in good body condition
- Vaccinate cows for clostridial and reproductive diseases
- Control horn flies
- Deworm



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Bull Management

- Breeding soundness exam 60 days before breeding season (or purchase)
- Breeding ratio 1:25
- Maintain good body condition
- Vaccinate for clostridial diseases
- Control horn flies
- Deworm
- Consider leasing



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Commercial or Purebred

- With some exceptions, commercial (crossbred) cows are a better choice
- More plentiful, less expensive
- Easier to get in and out of the market



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Replacements

- Replacement females can be raised or purchased
- Heifers or cows
- Open, bred, pairs, three in ones
- Ranch or special sale
- Some breeds and crosses may not be widely available or may be more expensive



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Reproduction Management

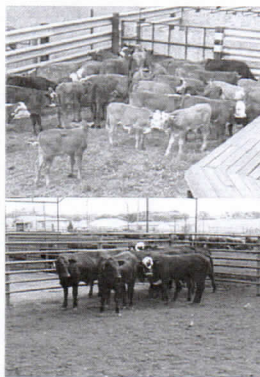
- Heifers reach puberty ~14 months of age
- Estrus cycle occurs ~21 days until bred
- Fertile young bull (2-6 years old) can breed 25-35 females
- Gestation length is 281-285 days)
- Rebreeding can occur within 35 of calving
- Body condition critical to breeding and rebreeding, successful easy calving, and a healthy calf



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Calf Marketing

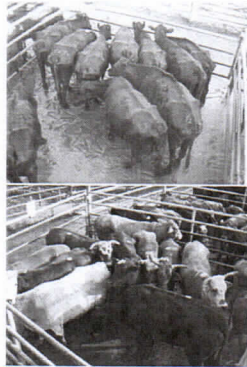
- Prices highest in the Spring, lowest in the Fall
- Wean and take calves to market or hold for a while
- Feed calves for freezer beef
- Sell to 4H or FFA



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Cull Cow and Bull Marketing

- Culls represent ~15% of gross cattle income
- Cull prices are higher in the Spring and lower in the Fall
- Cull value is higher when they are in better condition
- Sell cattle before they get severely discounted



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Nutrition Management

- Year-round forage management is the key
- Winter or drought supplementation
- Monitor with fecal pads and body condition scores
- Good mineral program
 - 2:1 Calcium to Phosphorus (4 oz./d)
 - White salt block
 - Can be in a tub



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Drought Management

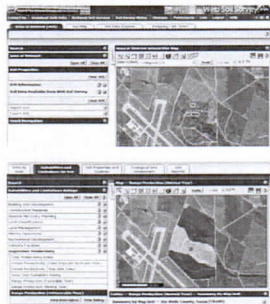
- Plan for dry weather
- Stock at 75% of carrying capacity normally
- Drought Early Warning System (3 months)
- Can supplement for a short dry spell
- Creep feed calves
- Wean and sell oldest calves first
- Sell older and open cows first



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Resources

- County Extension Agent
- Local veterinarian
- beef.tamu.edu
- Natural Resources Conservation
- Web Soil Survey
- Farm Services Agency
- Texas Animal Health Commission
- Texas Department of Agriculture



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Sources of Information

- County Extension Newsletters and Educational Events
- Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course (8/7-9/23)
- Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) Training and Handbook
- Beef 706 (Texas Beef Council)



beefcattleshortcourse.com

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