

Hoofprints
February, 2005
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THE COST TO RAISE A REPLACEMENT HEIFER

A demonstration project conducted by SE Missouri State University helps to identify the cost of raising a replacement heifer from weaning till birth of 1st calf. Costs included pasture, harvested and purchased feeds labor, vaccinations, prebreeding exam, estrus synchronization, AI, clean up bull, pregnancy exam, and the value of weaned heifer calf. Production costs of raising a heifer were \$400 per heifer. Total cost of 1st calf heifer at time of calving was \$889, including value of weaned heifer calf.

Source Beef Cattle Research Update, Winter 2005, Michigan State University (Ellis, 2004, J Anim, Sci,(suppl. 1) : 288)

Carl's comments: Don't underestimate the "costs" to get a weaned heifer to become a producing cow in your herd. This cost also merits a little more TLC for that first calf heifer to keep her producing in your herd.

Culling cows based on 1 years production / performance?

The University of Arkansas used performance from 20 herds to determine cow performance predictability over time (measured as adjusted 205 day weights). Of the cows that ranked in the bottom 1/3 in year one, 27% ranked in the bottom 1/3 for the next 2 consecutive years. And 63% ranked in the bottom 1/3 at least one year in the next consecutive years.

The authors say these results indicate that most cows ranking in the bottom 1/3 of herd for adjusted 205 day weights are likely to consistently rank in the bottom 1/3 in subsequent years. This supports culling cows that rank in the bottom 1/3 of herd based on one years performance.

Source: Beef Cattle Research Update, Winter 2005, Michigan State University. (Funston and Deutscher, 2004 J Anim. Sci. 82: 3094)

Carl's comments: The above is good food for thought, especially for 3 year olds and older. It costs the same to keep a poor producer as it does to keep a good producer.

FINAL ISSUE

This will be my final Hoofprints. I will be retiring from ISU Extension effective 3-1-05. It's been a great run, and I've enjoyed providing information and assistance to you and your fellow producers.

If you have livestock questions, contact your local Extension Office for the livestock Field Specialist who will be serving your county.

Carl