PRODUCER TIPS

As temperatures rise and the snow begins to melt up north, thoughts on breeding season preparations appear in the back of our minds. As most spring calving herds are half-way through their calving season, now is the time to begin thinking about steps to consider in preparing for the breeding season. First, decide when your breeding season will begin, the length of the or estrus synchronization and AI will be used. Second, if breeding replacement heifers this year is part of your plans, plan to breed your heifers 15 to 20 days prior to weigh and condition score your breeding season. Make sure your replacement weight by the time you breed to 6.5. Fourth, monitor the condition of your cows to ensure they have adequate nutrition to recover from postpartum anestrus. Cows, especially first calf heifers, should be at a condition score of 5 to 6 prior to breeding. Fifth, Make sure your herd bulls have passed a breeding soundness exam to ensure their fertility is satisfactory. Whether satisfactory fertility will produce you very low pregnancy rates, along with a poor calving rate. These steps will help assist you in having a successful breeding and future calving season.

REPORTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

1. 2005 Minnesota State Cattlemen’s Summer Tour & Trade Show
The MN Beef Team is hosting the MSCA Summer Tour & Trade Show July 13, 2005 at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds in St. Paul, MN. Seven tour stops will highlight the tour representing this year’s theme, “Pasture to Plate”. Pre-register by July 6 ($25/person) with Denise Plonis at 218-327-4490. For more information on the summer tour, visit the website at: www.extension.umn.edu/beef/

2. 2005 Minnesota Beef Cow/Calf Days Report
This year’s Beef Cow/Calf Days was a success. With 680 producers representing over 21,000 head of cattle, the magnitude of topics presented greatly impacted the knowledge gained from this program. For a full report on the Cow/Calf Days, visit the website at: www.extension.umn.edu/beef/

For more information on upcoming events, contact Denise Plonis at (218) 327-4490 or visit the beef team website at: www.extension.umn.edu/beef/. If you have any comments or would no longer like to receive this newsletter, please e-mail your request to Ryon Walker at: walke375@umn.edu

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3. 2005 Beef Home Study Course
The home study course will be offered again in May ($40) featuring seven lessons: Nutrition, Health and Grazing Management, Preconditioning, Economics, Facilities, Equipment & Labor and Animal ID. For more information on how to register, contact Gene Krause at 888-241-4546 or visit the website at: www.extension.umn.edu/beef/components/publications/BrochureHomeStudyMay2005.pdf

Watch for our monthly articles on topics in cow/calf management in the MN Farm Guide Magazine. Previous topics from February and March include:
- Managing your Calving Season, Dr. Cliff Lamb
- Feeding Distiller’s Grains to Beef Cattle, Dr. Alfredo DiCostanzo
- Benefits of Making Beef Part of a Healthy Diet and Lifestyle, Dr. Deb Roeber
Upcoming articles for April and May include:
- Are Your Heifers Ready, Dr. Ryon Walker
- Cattle Conditioning Prior to Breeding, Lori Weddle-Schott
- Natural Service vs Estrus Synchronization and AI, Dr. Ryon Walker
- Are your Bulls Ready for the Breeding Season, Dr. Bethany Lovaas
To view these and future articles, visit the website at: www.extension.umn.edu/beef/components/mediareleases.htm

5. New Exciting Programs Available!!!
   **Estrous Synchronization Planner** - the Estrus Synch Planner is an excel spreadsheet in a CD format designed to customize your breeding schedule utilizing estrus synchronization and AI. To purchase the planner, contact Denise Plonis at 218-327-4490. The CD is available for $35.

   **The Cow/Calf Planner** - the planner is a management calendar that offers timely information and tips on managing your herd utilizing five different management categories. The planner is offered in two formats: An Interactive Cow/Calf Planner Excel Worksheet provides you topics under each category relevant to the time of year and gives you pertinent information for each topic by touching the cell for that topic where a window will appear. The Cow/Calf Planner Print Sheet allows you to print each calendar month with all the pertinent information for each topic. To access the planner, visit the website at: www.extension.umn.edu/beef/components/cowcalfcalendar.htm

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