



SMALL ACREAGE SERIES: CATTLE

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OVERVIEW

- Sale Barn
- Holding pens
- Animal Health
- Feeding Strategies
- Growing/finishing steer heifer
 - Breeding Cattle
- Grass management
 - Hay
 - Rotational Grazing
- Question/Answer Time

SALE BARN: PURCHASING

- How it works
 - By the head or by CWT (hundred wt.)
 - Auctioneer will often call out the method.
 - Bottle calves and bred cows/heifers often by the head
 - Stocker cattle 400-900 lb. by the CWT
 - Light cattle cost more per cwt than heavier
 - Current light cattle 4 wts \$200.00/cwt (~\$800/head)
 - Current heavy stocker cattle 9 wts \$134/cwt (\$1,200/head)
 - Fed cattle (1300-1500) by the CWT (1450 choice steer: \$108/cwt live)
 - Cull cows/bulls by CWT (Current cows: \$50-65/cwt; bulls \$75-90/cwt)

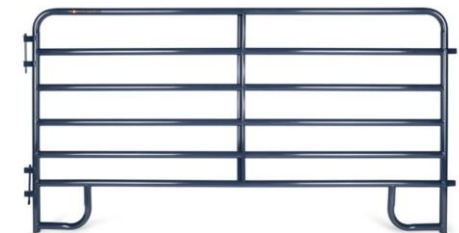
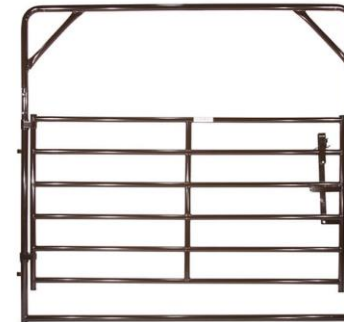


SALE BARN: SELLING

- Make sure cattle are in appropriate condition for class
 - Green or less fleshy calves bring more than fat calves
 - Cull cows (moderate flesh sells for more than thin cows)
 - Bulls lean bulls sell higher than fat bulls
- Small lots get discounted
- Horns get discounted
- Intact males get discounted
- Blacktop weaned calves get discounted (manage shrink)
- Odd colors get discounted (buyers prefer solid colored)
- Unvaccinated calves get discounted
- Sell as big and as uniform group as you can
- As a small producer don't be surprised (i.e. plan for it) if your calves sell \$5-15/cwt behind big/well managed groups

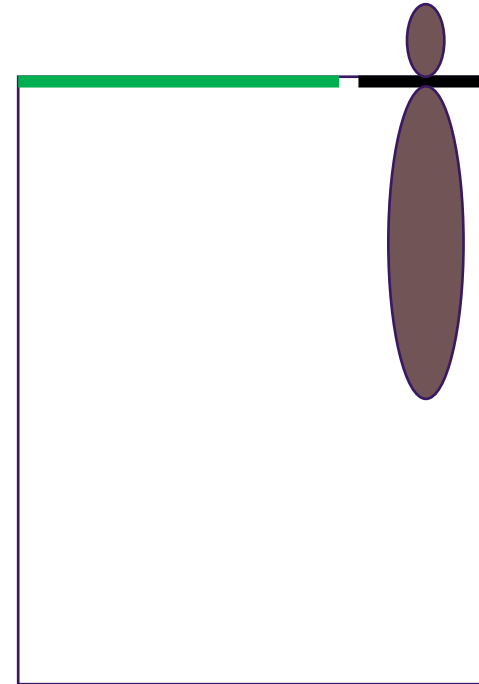
CATTLE HANDLING

- Designing a bud box
 - [MF3349 Designing a Bud Box for Cattle Handling \(ksu.edu\)](#)
- Don't spend thousands on a chute and alleyway and permanent
- Often well designed wood or portable pens can work well.
 - Get help
 - A head-catch ***really, really, really*** helps.
 - Bow gate and three panels (not wire mesh cattle panels)



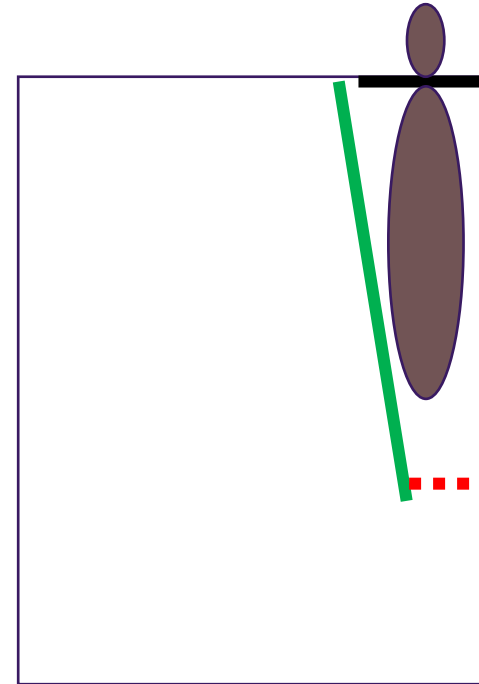
CATTLE HANDLING

- Simple but effective for most needs
 - Treatment
 - Breeding
 - Diagnosis/inspection
- Calving stall works good too
- Take Beef Quality Assurance program
- Lots of online resources on 'Stockmanship'



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FEEDING STRATEGIES

- Cows:
 - 1 cow/6-8 acres
 - Rotationally graze
 - Buy Hay
 - Supplement Protein August – green grass 8 in tall
 - Hand fed ‘cubes or cake’
 - Lick tub
 - Consult Extension specialist



FEEDING STRATEGIES

- Growing calves/replacement heifers
 - Free choice good quality hay or adequate pasture
 - 1-1.5% of BW in high protein supplement (14-16% CP)
 - 4 cwt gets 4-6 lb per head per day
 - 6 cwt gets 6-8 lb per head per day
 - Expect gain of ~2 lb/head/day (60 lb/month)
 - Coop brand 'complete feed' 14% CP ~\$8-9/50 lb.
 - Purina Pre-Con as example (pelleted complete feed, forage friendly)

FEEDING STRATEGIES

- Growing calves/replacement heifers
 - Free choice salt and mineral (don't skimp on this)
 - If hand feeding put 2-4 oz in feed each day to make sure they get it
 - Work cattle up gradually start at half of target, increase $\frac{1}{2}$ per day
 - Cheap digital platform scale from Amazon or Walmart is excellent
 - (scoops or cans is a bad way to measure)



FEEDING STRATEGIES

- Finishing (900-1500)
 - 12% CP
 - Work up to 2% of BW
 - Feed twice a day; ~12 hours apart
 - Free choice hay
 - Salt and Mineral
 - Bloat is issue if not careful
 - Target ~3-3.5 lbs gain per day---
 - Conversion of 6:1 means 18-20lbs of concentrate when on full feed per DAY

GRASS MANAGEMENT

- Land is limiting resource for small land holders
- Explore cool season tame grasses
 - Fescue is a good one; takes lots of abuse
- Interseed warm season (millet, sudan)
- Rotationally graze
- Work with Ag Agent on planning; lots of options/ideas
- Water system and location important consideration

- Buy Hay, may need to put some out during summer



HERD HEALTH

- Get to know a good vet!
- Use them frequently
- See advice!!





THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS

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