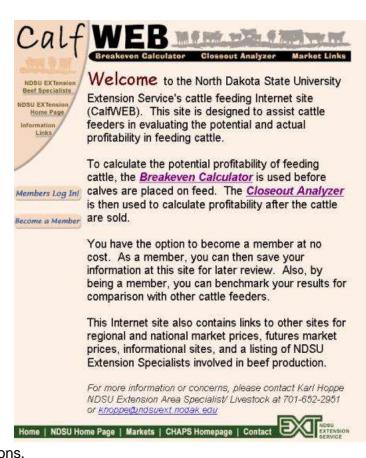# Internet Sites for Cattle Feeding

K.F. Hoppe

Cattle feeding in North Dakota has great potential due to low cost feedstuffs and excellent husbandry from cow calf producers. Limitations to additional cattle feeding include capital for financing cattle and feeding costs. Improving budgeting skills with the addition of a uniform budget for breakevens and closeouts should aid profitability and encourage more finance capital.

The CalfWeb web site was developed to provide interactive budgeting to internet users. Through better pre-feeding and post-feeding performance evaluation, cattle feeders can use breakeven and closeout records to improve feeding skills. Benchmarking production and costs of feeding is a powerful tool for management improvement.

The CalfWeb site is comprised of a home page with links to two main pages and links to other sites of interest. The main pages are the Breakeven Calculator and the Closeout Analyzer. These pages are composed of a series of fill-in-the-blank questions dealing with financial and production estimates or actual values. After completing the question page, the user must click on the submit icon and immediately receives the calculated response, including cost of gain, total profit and return on investment. Clicking on the back key and keying changes can easily accomplish reiterations.

The CalfWeb site contains links to several other pages and sites including information pages at the NDSU Extension site, a listing of NDSU Extension Beef Specialists, market information and the CHAPS 2000 site. CalfWeb also contains a member's only section. This password-protected section allows the storage and retrieval of breakevens and closeouts. In addition, this saved information can be used to create a one-month rolling average benchmark for certain performance and economic criteria.

Better-informed decisions are crucial to maintaining profitability in buying or retaining ownership of calves for feeding. The CalfWeb site is one part of the complex business of feeding cattle.