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BeefTalk: Responsibility From Beginning To End



Now is the time to re-evaluate feed intake!

Images



Nutritionist Wanted

By Kris Ringwall, Beef Specialist NDSU Extension Service

A troubling event occurred this past week at an auction barn. There was a feeling of "not wanting," but also a feeling of "that is the way it is."

The auction barn is known as a social center and a place to sell cattle. People share stories and experiences that go along with an industry that is speckled with considerable individualism.

This past week at the auction barn, the business of selling cattle was taking place. One could observe a number of things that really involved livestock, people, perception and reality.

The effects of a long and cold winter were evident. The cattle were thin, particularly the older cattle, and it was obvious the tough winter was gaining the upper hand.

This reality pointed to the fact that now is the time to re-evaluate feed intake! Cattle need energy and a balanced ration to survive the demands of winter and pregnancy.

Thin cattle are simply underfed. These thin cows will have problems at calving and rebreeding. They will have little milk, poor colostrum and weak, emaciated calves. It is time for a simple decision to be made. Visit your cattle nutritionist today or your veterinarian tomorrow.

Back to the sale barn. The cattle were handled well and the sale was prompt and efficient.

However, one cow did stand out. The cow was the cause of my troubled feeling. It was a feeling of concern.

The cow was licking off her newborn calf that

columns

[Dairy Focus: Dairy Focus: Economic Conditions Could Get Ugly](#) (2009-02-05)

The economy likely will get worse before it gets better for dairy producers. [FULL STORY](#)

[Biofuel Economics: New Energy Economics: Japanese Consumers: What is Carbon Footprint of N.D. Grains?](#) (2009-02-12)

The grain industry is getting more questions from Japanese consumers who want to know what the carbon footprint is of the foods they are consuming. [FULL STORY](#)

[BeefTalk: BeefTalk: Feed the Cows and Feed Them Right](#) (2009-02-12)

If more time was spent discussing the nutrient requirements of beef instead of the merits of different management systems, all the cows would be better off. [FULL STORY](#)

[Hortiscope: Hortiscope](#) (2009-02-12)

Ron Smith answers questions about plants, trees and gardens. [FULL STORY](#)

[Livestock Market Advisor: Market Advisor: U.S. Sheep and Lamb Inventories Decline](#) (2009-02-12)

Current prices are being impacted by the economic meltdown and less demand for all meat, including lamb. [FULL STORY](#)

[Prairie Fare: Prairie Fare: Bake Bread, Make Friends](#) (2009-02-12)

Try your hand at baking some bread, and you will be surrounded by happy people waiting for samples. [FULL STORY](#)

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was born at the auction barn. While the pair was properly cared for, an auction barn is not the place for birthing a calf.

A cow that is nine months pregnant and due to calf should be at home, but I had the feeling "that is the way it is."

A few more pens down the line, a pregnant mare was awaiting sale. The mare looked like many mares because she was preparing for foaling when the weather warms up and spring settles in.

Mother Nature has equipped horses with a very timely reproductive system that times foaling with spring, thus limiting the number of concerns about foaling during winter storms. This is true for all wild mammals, each with its own reproductive system, well tuned to its respective environments.

However, this mare was out of place, so the feeling of "that is the way it is" came back.

However, that really is not true. Producers need to perform a self-evaluation of situations like this.

Cows or mares are the reproductive unit that forms the foundation of the herd. Management is the key to the success of any operation. The management of herds includes the evaluation and re-evaluation of production practices.

Even without records, a cow that is due to calf is noticeable. In reality, if one stays up and waits for her to calf, you may wait a couple of weeks, but sloughing her off in the market chain is inappropriate.

Likewise, why is a bred mare being sold at this time? Perhaps the stud should not have been put out.

Now, before the e-mails start flying, I do understand that plans can change and "that is the way it is." However, breeding livestock requires planning. When those plans slip, the cow calves in the auction barn.

That is reality. However, the perception is one that casts a shadow not just on one producer, but all producers. Cattle that enter the market chain enter as market beef and it is up to us as producers to evaluate ourselves to make sure we only send market beef to auction.

We should manage around cull cows. At the

same time, we are responsible for the animals we breed and we must remain responsible to the end.

May you find all your ear tags.

Your comments are always welcome at

<http://www.BeefTalk.com>.

For more information, contact the NDBCIA Office, 1041 State Ave., Dickinson, ND 58601, or go to <http://www.CHAPS2000.com> on the Internet.

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Attachments



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