

DECISION MAKING FOR WEANED CALVES – ND CATTLE BACKGROUNDING SEMINARS

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To aid cattle producers in developing marketing plans for weaned calves, a series of seminars were presented across North Dakota during early October 2002. The second annual series of the North Dakota Cattle Backgrounding Seminars was designed to provide marketing and feeding information to cattle producers and the banking industry.

The seminars are a cooperative effort between the NDSU Extension Service and the ND Department of Agriculture to support the cattle feeding industry in North Dakota. The seminars involved a morning program designed for the lending industry while an afternoon program was focused on in-depth information for cattle feeders. The 2002 seminars were presented in Lisbon, Cooperstown, Bottineau, Mandan, Killdeer and Crosby. Interactive video conferencing was used where possible to introduce producers and lenders to distance learning technology.

The seminar consisted of an introduction by the ND Department of Agriculture on Marketing in Today's Economy. The subsequent presentation was Market Outlook, Strategies and Reducing Risk for cattle feeding. Supporting materials for the market outlook presentation are available at the internet site: www.ag.ndsu.nodak.edu/aginfo/lsmkt/livestock.htm.

Nutritional and cattle management information on reducing deaths and feed costs were provided to update lenders and cattle producers. This information was used in developing a series of budgets that work for feeding calves. The budgets were calculated using the CalfWeb Internet site www.chaps2000.com/calfweb. The CalfWeb site provides an interactive budgeting process that uses current marketing information accessible from the Internet.

Banking opportunities with the Bank of North Dakota were discussed and can be found at the internet site www.banknd.com/ls/index.jsp. These lending programs can be used for facility improvement and cattle/feeding expenses upon cooperation with a local lender.

An assessment of environmental regulation and issues in North Dakota was provided by the Environmental Services Director - North Dakota Stockmen's Association. Changes in federal law are increasing the regulation of livestock feedlots.

During the past two years 105 bankers and lending professionals attended the lenders-only seminars and 256 producers attended the cattle feeder sessions.

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