



# BeefTalk: Tips for Marketing Cows and Bulls

**When producers band together, industry weak points can be identified and eliminated.**

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Every year, beef operators need to make decisions on how many cows and bulls will remain on the production inventory sheet and how many will shift to the market column. In preparation for that shift, as well as management during the marketing process, beef producers need to recap the year's production and review their marketing strategies.

The "Executive Summary of the 2007 National Market Cow and Bull Beef Quality Audit" published by the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and funded by the beef check off is an excellent document to review and ponder. The publication recognizes and highlights the need for producers to "recognize and optimize cattle value, monitor health, market cattle in a timely and appropriate manner, prevent quality defects and be proactive to ensure beef safety and integrity."

The beef cattle industry monitors and provides opportunities for producers to continue improvement within their own herds and improve the industry. An industry only can be as good as its weakest point.

When producers band together, industry weak points can be identified and eliminated. Education can encourage the implementation of managerial improvements that can benefit individual producers and the industry.

The publication highlights points that could streamline the process of marketing cows and bulls. The new process could increase the value of market cows and bulls.

The publication lists nine main improvement points:

- Reduce the use of electric prods and other aggressive driving aids when moving cattle.
- Improve footing so cattle don't slip and injure themselves.
- Follow the guidelines for animal care and handling.
- Market your cattle before they become too thin or too lame for transport.
- Maintain recordkeeping systems to verify your "best" management practices and reduce or eliminate the potential for liability surrounding issues of food safety.
- Recognize and optimize the value of your market cows and bulls. Cows and bulls comprise a significant portion of your farm or ranch income, so they need to be managed and marketed in ways that add value, not subtract from it.
- Ensure the safety of your product. Cows and bulls must be free of chemical, pathogenic and physical hazards when you ship them for harvest.
- Continuously monitor herd health. It's in your best interest to observe the health of your cowherd and to ensure your cows and bulls are marketed in a timely and appropriate manner.
- Prevent quality defects. Things like bruises, injection-site lesions, improperly placed brands, dark cutters, or cattle that are too thin or fat, have inadequate muscling caused by emaciation, are

## Images



**Key Points:  
Executive  
Summary of  
the 2007  
National  
Market Cow  
and Bull Beef  
Quality Audit**

preventable.

This publication is readily available. If one is having trouble obtaining it, contact me at [kris.ringwall@ndsu.edu](mailto:kris.ringwall@ndsu.edu). My address is 1041 State Ave., Dickinson, ND 58601. Producers also can contact Lisa Pederson, beef quality assurance specialist, at [lisa.pederson@ndsu.edu](mailto:lisa.pederson@ndsu.edu) or write to her at 2718 Gateway Ave., Unit 104, Bismarck, ND 58503.

The cattle business exists to produce beef and other byproducts for human consumption. Ultimately, the value of beef determines the long-term stability of the operation.

As with any business, the first dollar spent and the first dollar earned are noteworthy events. However, the last dollar earned has to be greater than the last dollar spent.

The value of beef in the calves and young cattle that are advertised and sold is significant. Likewise, those dollars that are brought in by those cattle leaving the production inventory are critical.

Astute managers routinely monitor income from steer calves, nonreplacement heifer calves, heifers sold as replacements, heiferettes and market cows and bulls. Every dollar taken in through effective management and marketing of market cows and bulls is added income, which needs to be greater than expenses.

In summary, cattle producers need to recognize the value of market bulls and cows and strive to increase their value through proper management, recordkeeping, handling and timely marketing.

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



PDF - Key Points: Executive Summary of the 2007 National Market Cow and Bull Beef Quality

Audit 

(bt092508.pdf - 17.11 Kb)



EPS - Key Points: Executive Summary of the 2007 National Market Cow and Bull Beef Quality

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(bt092508.eps - 214.08 Kb)