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## Fall Run

Many associate fall with running. For athletes, fall is cross country season and many organizations sponsor benefits around a 5k run. Others are busy running children around to various fall activities and beginning Christmas planning and shopping. For most Iowa feedlots the fall run pertains to the annual influx of spring born calves into the feedlot. This is a busy time as many of us are still finishing up harvesting corn or getting ready for winter. However, this is not a time to put feedlot calves on the back burner. For new cattle, getting started right in the feedyard will be critical to their overall success. As dire as feedyard profitability has been, starting calves wrong will be a no win situation.

### Receiving programs

Calves that have traveled a long distance or spent the day in an auction market will need time to rest after arriving at the feedlot. For calves to properly rest they will need a clean dry place to lay down. Corn stalk bedding will encourage calves to lay down and if it is cold or muddy it will provide a comfortable environment. Bedding pens is extra work but tired calves will benefit from your labor.

Calves will also need access to clean water and hay as they adapt to new feed ingredients. Water tanks should be cleaned prior to calf arrival in the pen and regularly after that. The longer the calf spent in auction markets or trucks, the more these calves will need some long stem grass hay to allow the rumen to recover and be ready to start eating a feedlot diet.

There is starting to be evidence that acclimating cattle into the feedyard can be beneficial to calves. Acclimation is a process where calves are worked in the pen to get the calves used to the feedlot and the caregivers. Calves are grouped together and then moved around the pen in an orderly fashion. Some acclimation programs include walking the calves through the processing facility without catching the calves in the squeeze chute. Acclimation accomplishes two primary benefits to the calf. First, acclimation desensitizes the calves to new experiences such as people walking through pens or processing facilities. The second benefit is to re-establish the herd structure that was disrupted when calves were weaned, sorted and sold. Encouraging calves to group up and walk around the pen instead of random aimless movement will help calves establish a new herd structure that will decrease stress in the long run.

### Processing program

Once calves have successfully made the transition into the feedlot they can be processed. Depending upon the history of the calves the specific processing procedures can be adjusted to fit the cattle. Generally, calves should be vaccinated for respiratory pathogens and dewormed. Discuss the various options with your veterinarian to develop the best program that fits your operation. Growth implants are advisable if marketing programs do not restrict usage. Your extension specialist or nutritionist can assist in developing implant programs and rations that meet your management needs and feed resources. Finally, keep alert of changes in weather and adjust management accordingly. Keeping calves healthy and on feed will be crucial to the overall success of feeding cattle.

## Northwest Iowa Preconditioned Sale Dates

The Northwest Iowa Preconditioned Green & Gold Tag sale dates have been set for this winter, so think ahead about getting your calves ready for the sales.

The sales will be held at three locations from December through February.

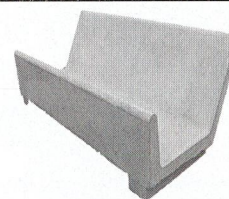
### Locations and tentative dates are:

**Algona Livestock:** Sales are Fridays and start at 11 a.m. - Dec. 9, Jan. 6, Jan. 27, Feb. 17.

**Spencer Livestock Sales:** Sales are Wednesdays and start at 1 p.m. - Dec. 14, Jan. 4, Jan. 18, Feb. 8.

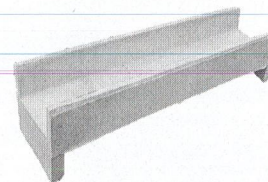
**Sheldon Livestock:** Sales are Saturdays at noon - Dec. 17, Jan. 14, Feb. 4.

For more information on the Green and Gold Tag Preconditioning Programs, call the ICA office at 515-296-2266.



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