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Fall health program can get your calves ready

As summer ends and fall begins, there are more than kids going off to school. For most beef producers fall is a time for weaning calves and sending them off to a feedyard. Just like children, calves need to be properly immunized and have all of their "school" supplies ahead of time.

Pre-weaning vaccinations

Most vaccination programs recommend two doses of a vaccine against viral and bacterial respiratory pathogens. These programs have demonstrated increased price premiums and improved health for calves.

Depending upon whether you are selling your calves at weaning, pre-conditioning for 30-45 days, or retaining ownership of your calves, certain combinations of vaccines may be more appropriate for your situation. Talk to your veterinarian about your plans and develop the best vaccination program for you.

If you will be pre-conditioning, back-grounding or finishing your calves, then deworming calves will be beneficial. Typically, calves have fairly high worm loads coming off pasture that will decrease their performance on feed.

Although there can be some benefit to deworming calves pre-weaning while they are still nursing, they will likely need to be dewormed again if they are left on pasture. Besides decreasing weight gain performance, parasites can also impair the immune function of the calf. Therefore to get optimum vaccine response, deworming should be included in a calf health program.

Watch vitamin levels

Typically, calves' vitamin status is in good shape as they come off pasture. However, the extreme Vitamin A deficiency that was experienced by many cattle this spring is still having impacts on calf health. Calves should have consumed enough carotene in green grass to have abundant Vitamin A levels.

However, the ISU Veterinary Diagnostic

Laboratory is still identifying liver and serum Vitamin A and E levels below normal in calves. Since Vitamin A is important in immune function it may be warranted to include an injectable Vitamin A and E product as part of this fall's calf health program.

If you are going to feed your calves for any time at all this fall prior to marketing, then calves should also be provided with a coccidiostat such as corrid, deccox or rumensin.

Dry lotted calves are susceptible to coccidia as they have not established sufficient immunity. Coccidia can cause diarrhea, poor performance and impact immune function. Providing an anti-coccidia in the calves' feed will be beneficial to starting calves on feed properly.

Taking care of your calves now will help them adjust to the next phase of production properly.

Preconditioned sales dates

The dates of the Northwest Iowa Preconditioned Sales are being set. Preconditioning, when properly done, is the best program to help the animals adapt quickly to feedlot rations and environment.

The Northwest Iowa sales adhere to two protocols that qualify calves to be either gold or green-tagged for sales. Following those IVMA-approved protocols prepares young cattle to best withstand the stresses of adjustment as they move to new locations.

Dates that have been established at the listed auction barns are:

Spencer Livestock Sales - Dec. 11, Jan. 8, Feb. 5.

Algona Livestock Auction - Dec. 13, Jan. 3, Jan. 24 and Feb. 14.

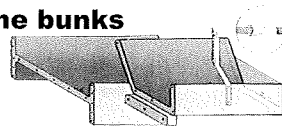
Sheldon Livestock - Dec. 14, Jan. 11, Feb. 8.

Information on times will be available in next month's *Iowa Cattleman*, and there could be additional dates added, too.

Huber Slats

1497 - 170th St. • Wellman, IA 52356
 Bill Huber • Ph. 319-646-2907

Fenceline bunks



Key Benefits

- Acts as both a feeder & a fence for human protection
- Rounded interiors reduce feed waste
- Camphor edges reduce neck abrasions
- Bunks align to form any length
- Bunks are poured with 7,500 psi concrete
- Reinforced with solid rebar frame welded in place
- Optional concrete ends with drain holes available
- Features recessed post to prevent cattle from rubbing on post or cable
- Cable shim reduces wear & lengthens the life of cable
- Concrete step poured in the end of each bunk provides support for adjacent bunk
- Optional end steps are also available

Yard bunks

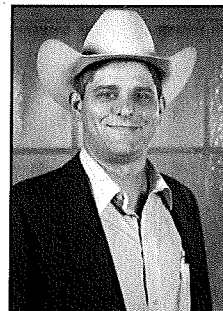


Key Benefits

- Allows livestock to feed from both sides and ends.
- Rounded interiors reduce feed waste and prevent damage from freezing.
- Rounded camphor edges reduce neck abrasions.
- Solid concrete ends feature drain holes. Drain holes may be plugged for use as a waterer.
- Concrete footing poured on the end of each bunk keeps feed at the appropriate height.
- Bunks are poured with 7,500 psi concrete using 3/8-inch aggregate reinforced with solid 1/2" rebar on 6"x 6" wire mesh squares.

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