

Ways to Increase Your Profit in Cattle

By Marty Morgan, Wise County Ag Agent

It's that time of year for those pesky horn flies so when you're working your cattle it's worth your time to treat for flies. There are good pour-on's that will knock them off immediately, but then use fly tags for months of control. If you use a pour on de-wormer then that will knock the flies off for several days unless rain washes it off. I recommend putting in two fly tags for every head run through the chute. Some say it cost too much, but I say it cost too much- not to do it! You would be shocked at how much weight it keeps on all your cattle and in the end how much heavier your calves will weigh. Use two tags per animal and alternate the type of ear tag insecticide used each year. To avoid flies becoming resistant, Organophosphate (OP) ear tags can be used after a pyrethroid ear tag but do not use organophosphate ear tags for more than 2 successive years. Organochlorine (Avenger) or macrocyclic lactone (XP 820) ear tags are effective alternatives to pyrethroid or organophosphate ear tags and can be part of the rotation. Remove the ear tags when calves are weaned or when the cows are worked in the fall, and treat if more than 200 or so horn flies per head are present when the tags are removed, and use a spray or dust with a different mode of action to reduce overwintering flies. Removing the fly tags will help in battling resistance to that product.

Let's talk vaccinating your herd. All calves should be at least 2 months old to get the full effect of the vaccines, any younger and you might as well squirt it out on the ground because their immune system just isn't ready. While giving that blackleg shot, please remember to include a respiratory vaccine while you're at it, it only cost a couple dollars more and could save you a lot of time and money treating that calf later, or even worse it could die. A lot of folks give a Clostridia to cover blackleg, but fail to give a respiratory vaccine to cover pneumonia viruses. Use a 7 or 8 way Clostridia to cover blackleg and use a 5 way to cover respiratory disease, which includes IBR, BVD Types I and II, PI3 and BRSV. This will keep your calves healthy and putting on the pounds instead of being in the sick pen. I have always worked my cows too, and I strongly recommend it. Give them a 7 or 8 way Clostridia and a 5 or 6 way respiratory vaccine that includes Vibrio and Lepto(which protects against reproductive diseases). Vaccines are cheap insurance to keep your cattle healthy and on track to produce the most pounds possible and the buyers will definitely reward you for your efforts.

Another important aspect when working your cattle is de-worming and this time of year they have the greatest parasite load. There are several options, pour-ons, injectables and oral de-wormers so visit with your Vet to choose the right one. Worms can be profit robbers in cows and calves.

Ralgo is back so consider growth implants and add another 30 plus pounds on your calves. Keep out a good medicated mineral year round and add another 30 plus pounds on your calves.

All of these practices pays dividends come pay day!!! Producing pounds of weaned calf is the name of the game! And after all your in control because, You're the boss!!!