

# Angus Advisor

● JUNE herd management tips

## Guide to abbreviations and acronyms

To make the "Angus Advisor" more concise and consistent, we have used the following abbreviations or expressions:

\$Values	dollar value indexes
ADG	average daily gain
AI	artificial insemination
AIMS	Angus Information Management Software
BCS	body condition score
BLV	bovine leukemia virus
BMP	best management practices
BQA	beef quality assurance
BRD	bovine respiratory disease
BRSV	bovine respiratory syncytial virus
brucellosis	Bang's disease
BSE	bovine spongiform encephalopathy
BVD	bovine viral diarrhea
Ca	calcium
CHAPS	Cow Herd Analysis and Performance System
DM	dry matter
EPD	expected progeny difference
FMD	foot-and-mouth disease
GnRH	gonadotropin-releasing hormone
IBR	infectious bovine rhinotracheitis
ID	identification
IM	intramuscular
in.	inch
lb.	pound
LCT	lower critical temperature
lepto	leptospirosis
Mg	magnesium
MiG	management-intensive grazing
MLV	modified-live virus
N	nitrogen
P	phosphorus
PI	persistent infection
PI <sub>3</sub>	parainfluenza-3 virus
preg-check	pregnancy-check
Se	selenium
sq. ft.	square feet
SPA	Standardized Performance Analysis
TB	bovine tuberculosis
TDN	total digestible nutrients
THI	temperature-humidity index
trich	trichomoniasis
Zn	zinc

## Southern Great Plains

by **David Lalman**, Oklahoma State University, [dlalman@okstate.edu](mailto:dlalman@okstate.edu)

### Spring-calving herds

- Follow the vaccine program outlined for May, if not done at that time.
- Consult your veterinarian regarding the need to deworm young cows and/or calves in June. This investment will depend a great deal on the location of your operation, forage species, stocking density, previous internal parasite management and other factors.
- June mid-day temperatures can suppress aggressive estrus activity. Therefore, visual heat detection should be done in early-morning and late-evening hours.
- Turn bulls out with cows after the AI program is completed. The bull-to-cow ratio will vary depending on the number of cows or heifers serviced to AI and the age of the bull. A conservative rule of thumb is to expose bulls to about 10 cows per year of age, and up to 30 open cows.
- For breeders who choose to creep-feed calves grazing native pastures, consider using a limit-fed, high-protein creep beginning around the end of June. Locally, we refer to this approach as the Oklahoma Silver program, where calves consume around 1 lb. per day of supplement. Weight gain is improved substantially, and calves do not become fleshy compared to free-choice, lower-protein creep-feeding programs. The conversion of feed to additional weight gain is drastically improved compared to a traditional creep-feeding program.

### Fall-calving herds

- Wean fall-born calves in June or early July. A dam's milk production and calf performance decline dramatically during the month of July due to declining forage quality and summer heat.
- At weaning, vaccinate calves according to your veterinarian's recommendations, deworm calves, weigh and condition score cows, and weigh calves. Transfer records for your whole herd to the American Angus Association.
- A high-protein supplementation program, such as the Oklahoma Gold program, can facilitate around a 2-lb. ADG in weaned calves grazing native pastures.

## General recommendations

- Continue fly and tick control programs for all cattle.
- In Oklahoma, more foot rot cases are observed in June than any other month. Develop a plan for treatment with your veterinarian, and acquire the necessary supplies.
- Plan to harvest native grass hay during early July to achieve near-optimum balance between quality and quantity of hay. Harvest Bermuda grass hay, or graze at about 30-day intervals when precipitation is abundant. All else being equal (maturity, precipitation, soil fertility, etc.), Bermuda grass harvested for hay in June has higher digestibility than Bermuda grass harvested in the hot summer months of July and August.
- Begin grazing Sudan grass and Sudan hybrids when 18- to 24-in. high.
- Federal and state estimated tax payments are due June 15.

## Midwest Region

by **Twig Marston**, University of Nebraska, [tmarston2@unl.edu](mailto:tmarston2@unl.edu)

June is a month to let Mother Nature take her course. Native grasses are usually at peak production; therefore, little supplementation is needed, with the exception of some minerals. Cool-season grasses are reaching maturity, making them less palatable and lower in nutrient quality.

## Cow-herd nutrition

- Provide plenty of clean, fresh water.
- Provide free-choice minerals to correct any mineral deficiencies or imbalances.
- Monitor grazing conditions and rotate pastures if possible and practical.
- Consider creep-feeding if it's cost-effective.

## Herd health

- Monitor and treat pinkeye cases. Provide fly control. Consider all options; price and efficiency will dictate the best options to use.
- Monitor and treat for foot rot.
- To reduce heat stress, avoid handling and transporting cattle during the hottest times of the day.

## Forage and pasture management

- Check and maintain summer water supplies.

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- Place mineral feeders strategically to enhance grazing distribution.
- Effective herbicide application will improve range and pasture species profiles.
- Check water gaps after possible washouts.
- Harvest hay in a timely manner; think quality and quantity.

### Reproductive management

- If using AI, manage for maximum pregnancy rates. A common practice is to use estrus synchronization, inseminate once or twice with AI, and then turn out bulls for the balance of a 65-day breeding season. A 42-day AI season with estrus synchronization at the front end gives most females three chances to conceive by AI.
- Follow one of the recommended Beef Reproduction Task Force estrus synchronization protocols (listings available from your Extension service, genetic companies and semen suppliers).
- Watch bulls for libido, mounting and breeding function.
- Record breeding dates to determine calving dates.
- By imposing reproductive pressure (45-day breeding season) on yearling heifers, no late-calving 2-year-olds will result. This will increase lifetime productivity and profits.

### Genetic management

- Monitor herd performance. Then identify candidates to cull because of poor performance.

### General management

- Check equipment (sprayers, dust bags, oilers, haying equipment, etc.), and repair or replace as needed. Have spare parts on hand because downtime can make a big difference in hay quality.

## Western Region

by **Randy Perry**, *California State University, Fresno*, [randyp@csufresno.edu](mailto:randyp@csufresno.edu)

### Fall-calving herds

The main focus is to keep weaned calves healthy; cows are on cruise control.

**Pregnancy-check.** Cows should be pregnancy-checked. Open and problem cows should be culled. Avoid holding over open cows even if they have been excellent producers, as typically the problem will recur.

**Body condition.** Monitor body condition of cows. The target BCS at calving is 5.0 for mature cows and 5.5-6.0 for 2-year-old heifers (scale = 1 to 9).

**Heifer and bull development.** The developmental period from weaning until yearling time and beyond to the start of the breeding period is critical in terms of influencing the future productivity of

both bulls and heifers. Both sexes need to be developed at adequate rates so that differences in terms of genetic potential for growth can be exhibited. However, neither sex should be developed at extremely high rates as excessive fat deposition can hinder future reproductive performance and detrimentally affect foot and leg soundness.

**Weaned calves.** Weaned calves should be treated to control any internal or external parasites. Heifer calves should be Bang's vaccinated if you have not already done so, and both bulls and heifers should be PI-BVD tested if that is part of your animal health management program.

**Pregnant cows.** If late-term abortions have been a problem in the past, consider booster vaccinations for the respiratory diseases and leptospirosis at pregnancy-check time. Many of the MLVs that are available today are approved for use in pregnant cows as long as females were exposed to the vaccine prior to breeding.

### Spring-calving herds

The main focus is breeding season and suckling calf health.

**Breeding season.** Depending on desired calving dates, the AI breeding period should be close to being concluded. Monitor return heats for any patterns that may arise in terms of low conception rates with specific sires. Also consider using GnRH injections with repeat inseminations. In addition, be sure that clean-up bulls have been semen- and trich-tested and are ready for use in terms of vaccinations and health, body condition, and foot and leg soundness.

**Mineral supplementation.** Be sure that cows are receiving adequate levels of calcium, phosphorus and trace minerals that are deficient in your area. Minerals should be supplemented on a year-round basis, with the period from calving until conception the most critical in terms of influencing reproductive performance.

**Energy balance.** Energy balance has a major effect on fertility and, thus, it is critical that cows are in a state of positive energy balance or gaining weight during the breeding season. June is normally a month when cows will be grazing pastures that are of sufficient quality to maintain cows in positive energy balance without any need for supplementation.

**Treatment protocol.** Treatment protocols and products should be on hand for scours and pneumonia in suckling calves. Have first and second treatment options available for both conditions. Early summer is typically the time of the year when we experience the most problems with pneumonia in young calves. Monitor calves closely and be quick and aggressive with treatment as young calves will go downhill quickly.

**General management.** This is again a year when I think producers should consider castrating the bottom portion of their bull calves at a young age while they are suckling their mothers. Some producers are reluctant to do this because of the effect it has on contemporary groups and performance records. However, there is more profit (less loss) in selling a weaned steer calf vs. a cull yearling bull with development costs where they are today.

## Southeastern Region

by **Jane Parish**, *Mississippi State University*, [jparish@ads.msstate.edu](mailto:jparish@ads.msstate.edu)

### General recommendations

Hurricane season begins June 1 each year. Prepare now for possible storms. Develop a ranch-level disease and disaster preparedness plan.

Stock pastures according to current and projected available forage amounts. Implement MiG systems for efficient forage use. Harvest Bermuda grass at four- to five-week intervals for best quality. Fertilize hay fields using soil test information to optimize fertilizer investments. Record hay yields, forage test each cutting and store hay to minimize losses. Maintain hay harvesting equipment. Provide minerals and fresh water at all times.

Observe cattle frequently, taking precautions to prevent heat stress. Work cattle early in the morning. Limit the time cattle spend in confined areas with limited air movement. Provide fresh, cool water for cattle confined for extended periods. Reduce cattle stress, especially for very excitable cattle.

Provide adequate shade during summer. Construct shades to allow adequate air movement. Minimum shade requirements are 18 sq. ft. per head for 400-lb. calves and 25 sq. ft. per head for 800-lb. stockers.

Flies and biting insects are abundant now. Remove insecticidal fly tags as they become ineffective. Watch for pinkeye problems. Control for anaplasmosis. Ask a veterinarian about BQA and available disease monitoring and certification programs. Apply for a ranch premises ID number.

Form alliances for group marketing and bulk input purchasing. Continue production and financial recordkeeping. Use enterprise budgets and cash flow analyses to make decisions.

### Spring-calving herds

Organize and review calving records. Submit calving information early to breed associations. Consider marketing late-calving females.

Maintain good breeding records, including heat detection records, AI dates, dates bulls were turned in and out, ID of herd females and breeding groups, dates

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bred, returns to heat, and expected calving dates. Observe for returns to heat. Remove bulls from herd females after a controlled breeding season.

Monitor herd body condition.

Supplement the forage program if cows are thin or forage quantity or quality is limiting. Place cattle with the highest nutritional needs on the highest-quality grazing. Provide additional nutrients to thin or growing bulls.

### **Fall-calving herds**

Manage bulls to start the next breeding season in good condition. After weaning, cull

cows based on pregnancy status, soundness, health, and performance. Manage market cows according to BQA guidelines, market conditions, and body condition. Select replacement heifers, and permanently identify them. Plan a heifer development program to reach target breeding weights.

Vaccinate calves and boost vaccinations based on veterinary advice. Wean calves at least 45 days before shipment and within accepted weaning age windows for registered cattle. Make sure fences in weaning areas are in good shape. Implement weaning strategies that minimize calf stress. Train calves to eat

from bunks and drink from troughs during preconditioning. Continue a high level of nutritional management for early-weaned calves. Use weaning performance reports for marketing and management decisions.

Consider optimum calf marketing times, methods, and risk management strategies. Run breakevens on stockering and finishing. Prepare for special feeder-calf sales and calf verification programs. Share information on feeder-calf marketing programs with bull customers.

