

# The Range Review

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**Upcoming Events:**

- **Making Every Dollar Count**  
Bradford County Extension Office  
November 13, 2008
- **Things with Wings**  
Bradford County Public Library,  
Starke  
November 13, 2008
- For more information about these or any other program, please call 904-966-6299

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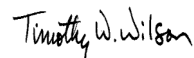
Howdy from the Bradford County Extension Office.

As the late fall and early winter arrive, the weather has cooled down, gas and corn prices have dropped and many fall calving operations are beginning to see calves hit the ground. In this issue of the Range Review, I will discuss management strategies related to both the post-partum cow and the new born calf.

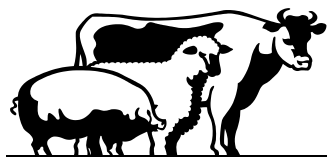
Evaluating the nutritional management of the post-partum cow can improve your overall success. These cattle have just undergone the stress of parturition (birthing the calf), are recuperating and are now lactating. I will cover the nutritional aspect related to the post-partum beef female and what needs to be done to improve the chances of these cattle becoming pregnant as soon as possible after they calf.

Calves are the result of carefully planned breeding programs and must be managed to ensure that they develop into the best possible product for your customer. Poorly managed calves that become sick or even die can undermine the work that has been done by reducing or eliminating potential revenue.

We have a number of events scheduled for November and December and I hope you can attend those that relate to your operation. If you would like to attend any of these programs or, if you have any questions related to livestock and forages, please feel free to give me a call at any time.



Timothy W. Wilson  
County Extension Director  
Livestock and Forages

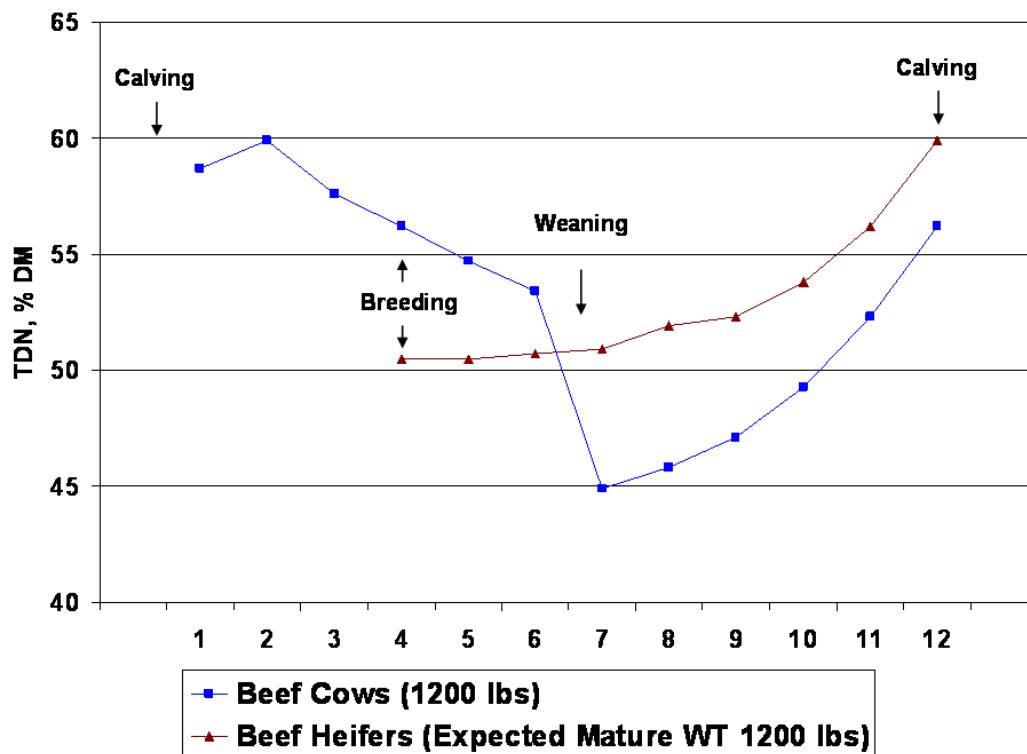


## Managing Nutrition in the Post-partum Cow

One of the many joys of raising beef cattle is the start of the calving season. The hours of hard work spent during the previous breeding season are displayed as each live calf is delivered. Although management success is achieved when a live calf is born, management does not end at calving. After calving, the beef female must recuperate, she is now lactating and if she is a heifer, should continue to grow. The time period from calving to the first estrous cycle in a cow is called *anestrous*. The length of anestrous can vary from one beef female to the next ranging from day to months. Since it takes approximately 283 days for a calf to develop (gestation), anestrous cannot last more than 82 days in order to have one calf every year. One facet that may affect all others in post-partum cattle management is nutrition.

Focusing on nutrition 3 months prior to and 3 months after calving can be beneficial (Figure 1). Research has demonstrated that by increasing the amount of energy in the diet prior to calving, the percent of cows pregnant after the first 20 days of the breeding season can be increased. Managing the nutrition in your herd today will have a dramatic effect on the conception rates in your next breeding season.

**TDN Requirements of Beef Cows and Pregnant Replacement Heifers throughout Pregnancy**



Source: Nutrient Requirements of Beef Cattle: 2000

## Managing the New Born Calf

### *Identification*

Identifying your cattle and maintaining records should be a high priority. Beef producers who use individual identification should be able to maintain accurate records and in the long term improve overall production efficiency by making informed decisions based on those records. Many forms of individual animal identification are used in the beef industry. Some of these methods include fire brands, freeze brands, ear tags, tattoos and electronic identification.

### *Castration*

Improving marketability, preventing males from breeding, reducing aggression and improving meat quality are just a few of the reasons producers incorporate castration into their operations. To take full advantage of this tool at the local stock barn, producers may want to sell steer calves in groups and emphasize that they have been castrated and healed. Otherwise, buyers may pay bull calf prices for steers that have been properly managed.

### *Vaccinations*

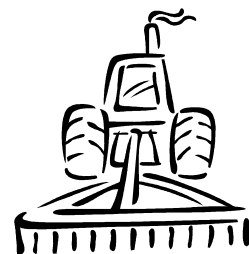
There are many vaccines that can be used to protect calves. However, producers should contact their large animal veterinarian to ensure that their vaccination regimen includes the vaccines necessary for Bradford County. Diseases may be more prevalent in one region of the country or state and may not be relevant locally. Confirming your practice will not only build your veterinarian/client relationship but may also save you time and money in the long run.

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## Summer Sod Stubble and Winter Forages

Pasture managers who plan to overseed winter forages on bahiagrass or bermudagrass should evaluate the amount of summer forage available at planting time. Pastures with considerable forage availability may interfere with the soil to seed contact and establishment of the winter forage. Particularly susceptible to the tall stubble from the summer grass are the clovers because of the small size of their seed. To avoid this situation the summer sod needs to be cut or grazed short, usually to a 3 inch stubble.

Additional 'scratching' or very light disking (2 to 3 inches penetration of the sod) is recommended to break the sod and enhance seed to soil contact. Make sure you don't overdo the light disking because, although the rhizome systems of bahiagrass can take it, it will promote the growth of winter weeds as the sod/soil is disturbed. Winter forages with large size seed, such as small grains (oats, wheat, and rye) and vetches can stand taller stubbles. Some times burning the summer grass residue is used but is the less preferred option if mowing or grazing can be done because of dry field conditions that prevail usually prior to overseeding time.



Dr. Yoana Newman, UF/IFAS Forage Specialist

**“NEW RESOURCE” Forages of Florida website**

<http://agronomy.ifas.ufl.edu/ForagesofFlorida>

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## SOLUTIONS *for your* LIFE

### Beef Management Calendar

**We're on the web!**

<http://bradford.ifas.ufl.edu>



#### *November*

- Start feeding high magnesium mineral supplement 30 days before cattle are turned in on winter grazing.
- Check and treat lice when appropriate.
- Remove old insecticide tags.
- Evaluate pasture conditions and supplement when needed
- Have your Hay tested to balance rations appropriately.
- Check cattle frequently for calves
- Evaluate body condition
- Process calves

#### *December*

- Start feeding high magnesium mineral supplement 30 days before cattle are turned in on winter grazing.
- Evaluate pasture conditions and supplement when needed.
- Do not graze winter annuals closer than 4".
- Vitamin A supplementation might be needed if frosted grass or weathered hay is the primary forage source (visit with your large animal veterinarian).
- Process calves (record birth date, assign to dam, tag, castrate, weigh, sex, etc.)

(Source: Silcox and McCann)