



Beef Cattle 101

Jeannie Dudding

Giles ANR Agent – Animal Science



Things to consider...

- Type of Operation
- Marketing Goals
- Nutrition
- Health
- Pasture and Grazing
- Equipment



Types of Operations

- Cow/Calf producers
 - Commercial or seedstock
- Backgrounders/stockers
 - Poundage cattle
- Finishers/feedlots



Types of Operations

- **Cow/Calf producers**
 - Buying heifers of either weaning, breeding age, bred heifers
 - Purchasing an entire cow herd
 - Purchasing individual cows from established herds
- **Backgrounders/stockers - Markets/VQA**
 - Poundage cattle – ask other local producers/Extension agents
- **Finishers – Markets/VQA/Tel-o-auction**



Marketing Goals

- What are your goals?
 - Breed
 - Calving seasons
 - Marketing programs
 - Equipment needed
 - Location of markets/processors
 - Niche marketing



Nutrition

- Spring herd
 - average quality hay Nov to Jan
 - Need higher quality hay Jan to March
 - Spring/summer pastures
- Fall herd
 - Coming off pasture just before calving
 - Require more inputs Nov to Spring
 - Requires better manager of the herd



Nutrition

- Stage of life
 - Calf
 - Young growing
 - Pre-breeding
 - Bulls
 - Mature cow - BCS
 - Lactation



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Nutrition

- Water
- Energy
 - Corn, barley, oats, wheat, etc
- Protein
 - Soybean meal, cottonseed meal, corn gluten, brewers grains
- Vitamins/minerals
 - Trace mineral (loose/blocks/tubs)



Health

- **Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship**
- Use of vaccinations
 - bovine rhinotracheitis (IBR), parainfluenza 3 (PI3), bovine syncytial virus (BRSV), bovine viral diarrhea (BVD), *Haemophilus somnus*, leptospirosis, and clostridial diseases
- Deworming – have a plan
- Flies and Lice control



Health - Prevention is cheaper!

- General practices
 - Stocking density
 - Record keeping
 - Identification
 - Grouping cattle
 - Low-stress cattle handling
 - Clean environments
 - Weaning strategies



Health

- Bio-security
 - Buy from reputable sources
 - Well managed – vaccination programs
 - Isolate new cattle
 - Limit traffic
 - Clean trailers
 - Clean pastures/calving areas



Pasture

- Pastures must be taken care of
 - Adequate acreage - fencing
 - Soil testing/amendments
 - Spraying
- Grazing – so many strategies!
 - Stockpiling
 - Summer annuals
- Bottomline – longer grazing season saves money!



Equipment

- Cattle Handling facilities
- Head-chute – no question!
- Hay equipment
- Barn/Shop – hay/grain storage
- Maternity/sick pen/weaning area/bull pen
- Feeding equipment – bunks, hay rings, creep gates/feeders, electric fencing



Summary

- Create a network of support and resources
 - Extension, Service providers like local Veterinarian, FSA, Soil & Water, NRCS, local co-ops, County Farm Bureau Federation, Professional associations like Virginia and National Cattlemen's Association, Virginia Beef Council



Jeannie Dudding
Giles ANR Agent
jdudding@vt.edu



Thanks and stay safe!