

ON THE RANCH

Signs that Indicate Unhealthy Animals:

- ▶ Lethargic/listless
- ▶ Ruminants not chewing their cud
- ▶ Rough hair coat
- ▶ Dull eyes
- ▶ Abnormal feces and discolored urine
- ▶ High temperature
- ▶ Limping
- ▶ Labored breathing/coughing
- ▶ Separates self from herd or flock
- ▶ Loss of appetite
- ▶ Runny nose
- ▶ Swelling on any body part

Branding/Pre-Breeding ... Calf & Cow Management Activities to Consider

Branding season has typically been about managing calves; identifying, castration, dehorning, and black leg shots. In this BeefWatch article we would like for you to consider visiting with your veterinarian about adding a few more management activities to the list.

Let's start with the cow ... THE MOST IMPORTANT INFLUENCERS OF HEALTH IN A CALF IS BEING BORN TO A HEALTHY MOTHER! It starts before she is bred. We will start this article at PRE-BREEDING and not back into a detailed discussion of heifer/cow management. As you are gathering calves for branding, it is a perfect opportunity to influence the immunity of all your calves' mothers.

The list of vaccines and procedures to consider visiting with your veterinarian about include:

- **Vibrio in oil** ... this is a vaccine that has short immunity and must be given within 60 days of breeding.
- **Lepto** ... this is a common vaccine included with many vibrio vaccines.
- **IBR** ... this is a disease many of us think most often about being

associated with respiratory disease, but it affects the cow's reproductive tract and in the worst case, causes abortion. Ask your veterinarian about using a modified live virus (MLV) vaccine. Unless indicated on the vaccine label, using a MLV IBR vaccine is not recommended in pregnant cows. BUT this is pre-breeding and none of the mothers of the calves you are gathering at branding are pregnant, so a MLV IBR vaccine is perfectly acceptable and most veterinarians consider the immunity stimulated by a MLV to be superior to the immunity stimulated by a killed vaccine.

• **BVD** ... this is another serious disease you should discuss with your veterinarian. If your cows have not been BVD-PI (Persistently Infected) tested, they should be and the sooner the better. It requires an ear notch sample to be submitted to the UNL Animal Diagnostic Laboratory. Your veterinarian can help you with the details. Visit with your veterinarian about using a MLV BVD vaccine. The discussion above about MLV vaccines and pregnancy applies to BVD vaccines as well.

• **BRSV and PI3** are not serious diseases of adult cattle but your veterinarian may want you to booster their immunity in hopes it may lessen the impact of "Summer Pneumonia" in your calves. A MLV vaccine for these diseases is very safe, including the use in and around pregnant cows.

• The recommendations for **controlling or managing internal parasites** is being reconsidered and researched by veterinarians. While we once wanted all internal parasites out of our cattle, today parasite experts tell us it may be best to have a low level of internal parasites in our cow herds. They call this "refugia" and this is a low level of parasites that have not been exposed to dewormers and therefore have no resistance to dewormers. We will discuss this in more detail in a future BeefWatch article, but for now, perhaps consider deworming only the thin cows pre-breeding when you gather the calves at branding.



Advanced planning with your veterinarian can make the future of your calves and cow herd look even brighter. Photo courtesy of Troy Walz.

Now for the calves ... visit with your veterinarian about:

• **Branding, identification, dehorning, and castration** have long been key activities at branding time. In a previous BeefWatch article, the use of Meloxicam was discussed to help mitigate the pain associated with branding, castration, and dehorning. Meloxicam is a prescription medication that has a long half-life so one dose will provide the longest pain relief of any medication we know of in cattle. The dose is just three aspirin size tablets per CWT and in the previous BeefWatch article a home-made dosing device was described. Visit with your veterinarian about adding Meloxicam to your branding schedule.

• **Black leg** (Clostridial vaccine) is another key activity at branding time. Not all vaccines are created equal so visit with your vet about acquiring a high quality product. BUT, your handling of vaccine is just as important. NEVER, let a vaccine freeze! NEVER shake a "bacterin" (killed bacterial vaccine) because shaking can cause some of the bacterial cells to break and release additional endotoxin that can cause a severe, sometimes deadly, vaccine reaction. Instead of

shaking, rotate the bottle back and forth to mix a bacterin that has a layer of cells settled to the bottom of the vaccine bottle. It takes more time but the outcome could be worth the effort.

• **BVD-PI testing** all the heifers born from the first heat cycle. These are most likely to be the biggest heifer calves you will work at branding, and will most likely be the group of calves from which you select your replacement heifers.

BVD-PI testing these calves will pave the way to insure you don't keep any BVD-PI positive replacement heifers.

• **IBR, BVD, PI3, and BRSV MLV vaccine**... because it is pre-breeding and none of these calves' mothers are pregnant, there is no danger to the cows from using MLV vaccines on your calves. At worst, a MLV IBR may affect the first heat cycle on a few cows, but the improved immunity produced by a MLV vaccine compared to a killed virus vaccine should be well worth considering. Again, visit with your veterinarian, but discuss selecting a high quality IBR, BVD, PI3, and BRSV MLV vaccine to give to your calves at branding.

• **Bacterial pneumonia vaccines**... these vaccines

have never been as effective as we need, but there are a few that have research data that suggests they may be worth considering. These include Once PMH® (either SQ or IN), Prespense HM®, and Pulmo-Guard PH-M®. These vaccines may aid in lessening the summer pneumonia issues in your herd and will be the first step in improving the calves' bacterial immunity when pre-weaning vaccines are considered.

• **Implants** ... not included as often as they should be. A Ralgrow® or Synovex-C® will increase your weaning weight about 5% ... if you are not considering implants you are leaving a lot of money on the table. Follow label directions which includes using in calves over 45 days of age and to never implant replacement bull calves.

• One last comment, when you do your pre-breeding bull breeding soundness and Trichomoniasis testing, if you haven't previously, BVD-PI test your bulls. You don't want a disease shedding bull out with your herd.



Source: Beef.unl.edu

Branding time always reminds us of a hopeful future. Advanced planning with your veterinarian can make the future of your calves and cow herd look even brighter.

Considerations for Pasture Leases

Article from: Cropwatch.unl.edu

It is appropriate to review typical lease arrangements for pastures from time to time. With more education in the area of leases, the more it is realized that each "neighborhood" has a different set of rules for leasing. Provisions mentioned here are normal for the common lease.

The length of the pasture lease is typically five months, often starting May 15 and ending October 15. West of Highway 14, leases tend to start later, running from June 1 to November 1.

Setting Lease Terms

Lease terms either ask for rent to be paid by the acre or by the stocking rate which is the cow/calf pair. The per-acre lease is a flat amount per acre for the grazing season. The cow/calf pair rate is typically expressed either as an amount per month or an amount for the grazing season. The per-acre charge is more common in eastern Nebraska, while the cow/calf pair rate is more common in north central and western Nebraska, especially in the Sandhills.

Current per-acre rates in Nebraska vary by region and are shown in *Table 1*. These rates are from NASS and the 2015 UNL Ag Land Survey. The UNL survey results are preliminary; final results will be released in June. Also know that local rents may be higher or lower than what is reported here.

In some cases, I've run into situations where the lease is set up on a per head per day basis. This amount is simply calculated by taking a monthly rate and dividing by 30. Know that this payment method for pasture rents is not a legal lease as determined by the USDA, meaning that the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) would not be in effect for any pastures rented with this method. Contact your Farm Service Agency for more information about the LFP program requirements.

Region	NASS* Avg	UNL Avg	UNL Range	Avg
	Per-acre monthly rate			Per cow-calf pair per month
Northeast	\$54	\$85	\$55-97	\$57.50
East	\$47.50	\$59	\$43-66.65	\$52.30
Southeast	\$37.50	\$55	\$50-70	\$60.00
Central	\$30.50	\$40	\$31-51	\$59.97
South	\$27.50	\$38	\$36.65-56.65	\$38.00
Southwest	\$16.50	\$27	\$22-34	\$53.75
North	---	\$26	\$22-37	\$46.65
Northwest	\$9.10	\$11	\$5-18	\$37.40
*USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (USDA NASS)				

The landlord typically is responsible for fences with this rental rate. Another common arrangement is for the tenant to provide the labor for fence maintenance and the landlord to provide the materials. If the tenant provides the labor or materials, it is appropriate for the lease to be discounted by some amount to reflect the work being provided to the landlord. The tenant usually provides the fertilizer and the noxious weed control. Volunteer tree control, most notably control of eastern red cedars, is a landlord responsibility and expense.

Expect the Unexpected. One of the most important parts of the lease is to make provisions for unexpected events such as the drought of 2012. The pastures ran out of grass early that year. What provision is there in the lease for such events as drought, hail, flooding, or fire? Both parties need to be protected in such cases. Or, what happens if the well goes bad, or the watering holes go dry? Who will bear the expense of these events?

There isn't a good database of common practices to work from to make solid recommendations about how the lease is modified to account for a drought for example. These situations should be discussed and a procedure should be outlined and included in the lease provisions. What the landlord and tenant agree to is always the best lease that you can have.

Get the Lease in Writing. Sample pasture lease forms are available on the UNL Department of Ag Economics website at <http://agecon.unl.edu/realestate>.