

ON THE RANCH

Range Beef Cow Symposium

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Mitchell Event Center
Scottsbluff County
Fairgrounds
Mitchell, NE

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RANGE BEEF COW SYMPOSIUM



The Implications of this Year's Rains on Next Year's Calf Crop

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A snowy/rainy spring gave way to above average rainfall for the summer in much of the mid-section of the country. While most of us know better than to complain about rain, the moisture has sure presented challenges for this year's hay crop.

Abundant moisture resulted in rapid growth and maturity in forages. The continued rain delayed cutting the forage, adding to the maturity of the crop, and unfortunately, a lot of hay has been rained on between cutting and baling. This combination is most certainly going to result in poor quality hay, even if tonnage is adequate.

Even forages that are intended for late summer, fall, or winter grazing are likely to be lower in protein and energy than usual due to the rapid and abundant growth which resulted in a lot of stem and seed head production and not as much leaf material. While it is always a good practice to test the nutrient content of forages and hays, this is going to be a very important year to test it and to feed or graze accordingly based on the nutrient content of the forage and the nutrient requirements of the cattle at various stages of production.

For example, research has shown that a greater percentage of cows will conceive when they are on an increasing plane of nutrition rather than on a decreasing plane of nutrition. Therefore, May calving cows and heifers may need supplemental protein and energy during the breeding season even though grass is abundant this summer.

Early spring calving cows typically graze deferred forages in the winter and receive hay and supplement from calving time until green grass is available, again. If the winter forage is lower in quality than most years, this could result in lower body condition of the cows coming into calving. Once calving ensues, the energy needs of the now lactating cow doubles, making this a difficult time for the cow to gain weight if necessary. Cows calving in a body condition score below 5 (1-9 scale) are less likely to rebreed and also have reduced immunoglobulins to pass onto the newborn in the colostrum. Therefore, maintaining a body condition score of no less than 5 on mature cows and no less than 6 on heifers during the winter is important and should be closely monitored this winter, due to forage maturity and quality.

Sending forage and hay samples to a commercial laboratory is an economical way to know what hay to feed at each production segment as well as how much supplement to feed to ensure requirements are met without overfeeding costly supplement.



University of Nebraska Extension personnel are available to assist in estimating nutrient requirements and ration formulation.

2019 Nebraska Cow-Calf Pair and Stocker Rental Rates

Recent findings published from the Nebraska Farm Real Estate Market Highlights 2018-2019 indicate changes in cow-calf and stocker monthly rental rates trended slightly lower when compared to 2018 (Table 1). Nebraska monthly grazing rates represent a typical fee for one month of grazing during the summer. Many leases run for a five-month grazing season subject to annual weather conditions.

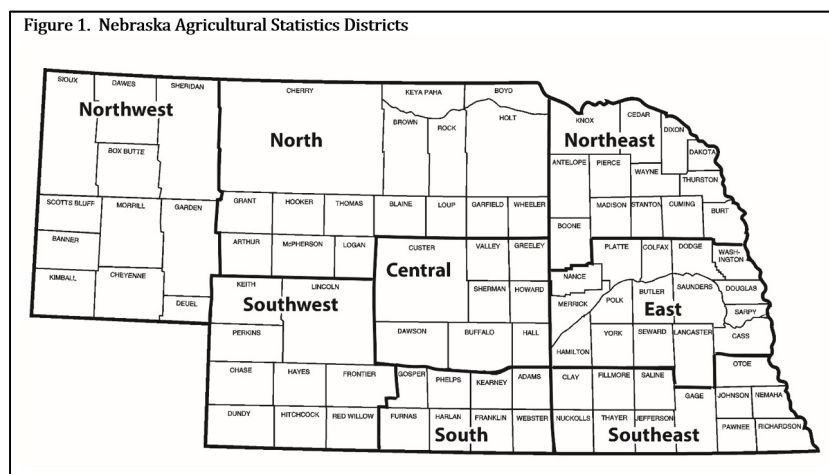
Table 1. Reported Cash Rental Rates for Pasture on a Monthly Rate Basis for 2019: Averages and Ranges by Agricultural Statistics Districts

Type	Agricultural Statistics District							
	Northwest	North	Northeast	Central	East	Southwest	South	Southeast
----- Dollars Per Month -----								
Cow-Calf Pair Monthly Rates^b								
Average.....	36.15	57.50	54.90	50.70	49.15	46.35	44.10	45.15
High Third Quality...	46.75	70.95	72.60	62.25	63.00	58.20	57.55	55.80
Low Third Quality.....	27.10	47.45	42.35	39.55	43.75	40.45	36.95	34.60
Stocker (500-600 lb.) Monthly Rates								
Average.....	22.80	33.55	37.40	30.85	36.05	34.65	31.30	35.25
High Third Quality...	29.20	41.00	45.65	40.40	43.75	40.90	37.85	42.40
Low Third Quality.....	17.85	27.90	28.60	24.15	28.35	27.70	26.50	25.70

Source: ^a Panel members reported estimated cash rental rates (both averages and ranges) from the UNL Nebraska Farm Real Estate Market Survey, 2019.

^b A cow-calf pair is typically considered to be 1.25 to 1.30 animal units (animal unit being 1,000 lb. animal). However, this can vary depending on weight of cow and age of calf.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Department of Agricultural Economics annually surveys Nebraska land professionals including appraisers, farm and ranch managers, and agricultural bankers. Results from the survey are divided by rental rate class and summarized by the eight Agricultural Statistics Districts of Nebraska (Figure 1).



Reported rates for cow-calf pair and stocker from the Nebraska Farm Real Estate Market Highlights include by district the average, high third quality, and low third quality. The range in these averages reflect the differences in the quality of the grazing land. Features influencing the quality of the grazing land might include the mix of the forages present during the growing season, livestock water sources, fencing upkeep, and general market competitiveness for the area.

To determine a cow-calf pair rental rate for a five-month period, the monthly rate for a district would be multiplied by five to calculate the seasonal rate. For example, the Central District average cow-calf pair monthly rental rate of \$50.70 multiplied by five would be \$253.50 per cow-calf pair for the 2019 grazing season. This rate would vary depending upon the district of the state and provisions considered as part of the lease.

Negotiations on contractual terms for the grazing season include considerations on the landlord and tenant's willingness to provide fencing maintenance, weed or brush control, and monitoring or providing water. Depending upon the willingness of either party to maintain, control, or provide these resources as part of the lease, the final rental rate may vary accordingly as panel members noted.

In addition, panel members also reported on the need for reviewing leases to account for different kinds of weather-related disasters such as flooding or drought. Reviewing these provisions by the appropriate agency or organization providing disaster assistance ensures compliance on grazing land in the case of an adverse weather event.

Survey results shown and discussed in this report are findings from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln 2019 Nebraska Farm Real Estate Market Survey. Complete results from the survey may be found at the Nebraska Farm Real Estate website: <http://agecon.unl.edu/realestate>.

Source: beef.unl.edu