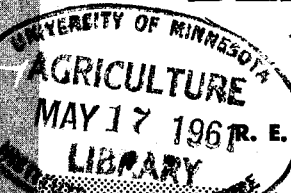


farm and home

ANIMAL
HUSBANDRY
NO. 6

FACT
SHEET

BEEF CATTLE RATIONS



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STEER AND HEIFER CALVES--STARTING AT 350-500 LBS.

This fact sheet will discuss three major feeding systems--Drylot with Liberal Grain, Drylot with Liberal Roughage, and the Wintering-Pasturing-Finishing plan.

Drylot with Liberal Grain

Steers fed to 900 to 1,100 lbs. in 9-11 months: Expected gain of 2-2.4 lbs. per day. Heifers fed to 775-900 lbs. in 6-8 months: Expected gain of 1.8-2.2 lbs. per day.

The most desirable program for heifer calves is to full-feed them during the winter on liberal grain to have ready for market in May or June.

Daily Ration

- 1.5 lbs. protein supplement (S. B. O. M. Protein Equivalent).
- 2-3 lbs. whole oats.
- 3 lbs. legume hay.
- Minerals (see note at end of this publication).
- Full feed of shelled or cracked-shelled corn.

You can vary this ration by including the protein supplement and legume hay from above, plus one of these six alternatives: A full-feed of-- 1) ground ear corn or 2) ground grain sorghum or 3) ground wheat or 4) 70% ground barley and 30% ground oats or 5) a mixture of 20% cull field peas, 40% screenings, and 40% barley-- ground and mixed (pelleted if convenient) or 6) ground proso millet. Increase only the fattening grains as the feeding period advances.

Drylot with Liberal Roughage

The program is made up of two feeding periods--roughage and finishing. The expected gain for the roughage period is 1.5-1.9 lbs. per day. The expected gain for the finishing period is 2.2 to 2.5 lbs. per day.

- A. Roughage period--lasts from 4-6 months and consists of two alternative rations--Heavy Silage or Heavy Hay feeding.

① Heavy Silage Daily Ration

- 6 lbs. ground ear corn or mixtures of corn and other grains--(see alternatives under Drylot Liberal Grain rations).
- 3 lbs. Alfalfa-Brome or other legume hay.
- 1 lb. protein supplement (omit if silage is legume).
- Silage, full-fed. Silage may be corn, sorghum, legume, grass, drought-damaged corn, small grain, peas and oats, or cannery pea vine.

② Heavy Hay Daily Ration

- Limit grain to 6 lbs. daily with legume-grass hay full-fed without protein supplement.
- With grass hay only add 1.0 lbs. protein supplement per head daily.

- B. Finishing period--time to finish depends on whether you use full grain or limited grain programs.

① Full Grain Ration

- Protein and hay as suggested under Drylot Liberal Grain rations.

② Limited Grain Ration

- Green-chop forages (legumes in the summer, corn in the fall) with increased grain plus protein supplement for finish to desired grade. Substitute dry roughages last 60 days in drylot.

Wintering-Pasturing-Finishing Steer Calves

- A. Wintering phase for Steer Calves to be pastured--desired gain is 1-1.25 lbs. and not more than 1.5 lbs. per day.

Daily Ration

You may choose a silage or hay program. They are broken down as follows:

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Silage and Hay Programs

① Silage Wintering

- 3 lbs. ground ear corn or other grain.
- 3 lbs. legume-grass hay.
- full-feed of silage: corn, sorghum, legume, grass, drought-damaged corn, oats, peas and oats, and pea vine silage.

② Silage-Protein Wintering

- 1.5 lbs. protein supplement (S.B.O.M. equivalent).
- full-feed of well-eared corn silage (Add 3 lbs. grain daily to ration only if silage is low in corn grain content, or if sorghum or oats silage is used in this ration).

③ Hay Wintering

- 3 lbs. ground ear corn or other grain.
- full-feed of legume or legume-grass hay (If grass hay or poor quality legume hay is fed, add 3/4 lbs. oilmeal).

B. Pasture phase for Steer Calves

- On native grass pastures--start with 3-4 lbs. grain per day and increase to a full-feed of grain by mid-July. Then add 1 lb. protein supplement. Finish in drylot 60-120 days. Alternative is to pasture without grain 60-90 days.
- On legume-grass pastures--feed 3-4 lbs. grain per day. By mid-August put cattle on full-feed of grain plus 1 lb. protein supplement. Remove from pasture by early September and finish in drylot 60-90 days.

GOOD TO CHOICE YEARLINGS (Steers and Heifers)

Steers, 550-800 lbs. fed 6-8 months.
Heifers, 500-650 lbs. fed 4-6 months.
Expected rate of daily gain 2-2.6 lbs. We recommend the same three major feeding systems for this group as outlined under the section on Calves.

Drylot with Liberal Grain

Daily Ration: Provide a full-feed of corn or other fattening grains (as under calf rations), 1 lb. protein supplement, and 3 lbs. legume hay. When cattle are allowed a full-feed of grain they will eat little or no silage.

Drylot with Liberal Roughage

Daily Ration: Choose from these 4 systems:

- ① Full-feed well-eared corn silage and 2-2.5 lbs. protein supplement daily during entire feeding period.
- ② Full corn silage ration with 2-2.5 lbs. protein for 120 days (heifers 75-100 days). For last 60 days increase grain to full-feed, reduce protein supplement to 1 lb., and add 3 lbs. legume hay to ration.

- ③ Full-feed of oats, grass, sorghum, or drought-damaged corn silage; 4-5 lbs. grain; 2 lbs. legume hay; and 1.5 lbs. protein supplement. Increase grain to full-feed last 60-90 days and cut protein to 1 lb.
- ④ Full-feed legume, oats and peas, or pea vine silage; 8-9 lbs. grain; and 2 lbs. legume hay. During last 60-90 days increase grain to full feed and add 1 lb. protein supplement.

Wintering-Pasturing-Finishing

- A. Wintering phase--for steers weighing 550-650 lbs.

Daily Ration

- ① Full-feed of legume silage, 2 lbs. legume hay, and 2 lbs. grain.
- ② Full-feed of corn silage, drought-damaged corn silage, oats, or sorghum silage plus 3 lbs. legume hay and 1 lb. protein supplement.
- ③ Full-feed of high quality legume hay--if average quality, add 2 lbs. grain daily.
- ④ Full-feed of grass hay plus 1 lb. protein supplement.

- B. Pasturing-Finishing phases--see previous section on pasture and finishing rations for calves.

COMMON GRADE YEARLINGS

Buy as yearling feeders in the fall and feed to the Standard or Good grade; sell in April or May. Give these cattle full-feed silage, 2-3 lbs. legume hay, and 4-5 lbs. grain. Add 1 lb. protein supplement if you use non-legume silage. Increase grain to 1 lb. per cwt. liveweight of cattle for last 60 days on feed and continue giving full-feed of silage and protein supplement as before.

HEAVY STEERS

Feed 3-5 months: Expected gain 2.6-3 lbs. per day.

Daily Ration -- 2 alternatives

- ① A full-feed of grain, 3 lbs. hay, and 1 lb. protein supplement.
- ② Full-feed of good corn silage and 2 lbs. protein supplement for 75-90 days. Finish for 30-60 days on full grain feed plus 1 lb. protein supplement and 3 lbs. hay.

Note: Protein Supplements--In referring to amounts of protein supplements to feed with the foregoing rations, we had in mind supplements equivalent to the common oil meals (36-44% protein).

Minerals: Minerals should be offered free-choice with all cattle rations and in many cases also forced. These and other supplements will be discussed in Animal Husbandry Fact Sheet No. 7.

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