

Iowa Quality Market Cow Project

The Iowa Beef Center, in conjunction with the Tri-County Steer Carcass Futurity, Iowa Lakes Community College and ISU Extension conducted a feeding demonstration in 2002-03 to examine whether a high-energy feeding program would achieve white fat status in culled market cows. Approximately 100 market beef cows and 12 dairy culls of varying body condition score (BCS), weight and age were consigned by Iowa producers into three groups and fed out at three feedlots in southwest and northwest Iowa. The two southwestern Iowa groups were harvested in February while the remaining northwest Iowa group was harvested in March.

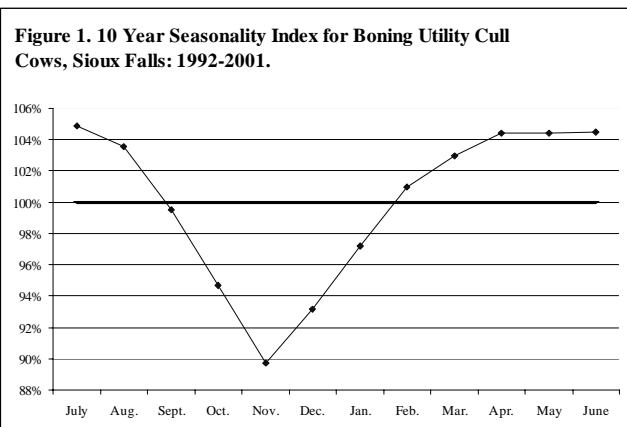
Questions to be looked at were: Can cull beef cows hit a premium white fat cow market in 60 to 90 days? What can one expect for ADG and Feed Efficiency? What type of cows fit? The cooperating harvest facility was owned and operated by the American Foods Group at Green Bay, Wisconsin. Nearly 90 percent of the cows graded in premium price categories. Depending on the group from 74% to 89% of the cows made it into the #1 or #2 Premium White Fat grades. These premium grades were achieved with a high concentrate feeding program in 70 to 90 days.

Cows were delivered in early November and December and implanted upon feedlot arrival with Revalor H. Vaccinations included using a modified-live-program that included the overeating-toxoids. Cows were started on feed slowly using lower energy rations at the start and worked up to typical finishing rations after 30 days, all of which contained MGA and an ionophore. Final rations contained 55 to 61 megacalories per hundred pounds of dry matter.

Each of the three groups experienced problems with cows that either entered the test unsound or became that way during the feeding period. It is imperative that producers be selective in the type of market cows that they feed for this type of market. Besides having

the potential for muscle thickness and good depth of body, cows should be structurally sound, healthy and thrifty.

These demonstration beef cows had shrunk average daily gain from 2.78 to 3.87 lbs., and their feed efficiency ranged from 9.98 to 12.03 lbs of dry matter for each pound of gain. On average, yearling steers fed the same rations would convert at 7 lbs of dry matter per pound of gain. Feed cost per hundredweight ranged from \$47.84 to \$56.82.



Before deciding to feed cull cows, producers need to consider the following:

- ◆ Ask yourself what is the potential buy/sell margin, think about market seasonality.
- ◆ Be selective about the cows you choose for your feeding program. Make sure they are structurally sound, healthy and thin to moderate BCS.
- ◆ Make sure you have your end marketplace decided before you begin.
- ◆ Use good management practices to make gains as fast and efficient as possible. Aggressively implant and use feed additives that improve feed efficiency

The Iowa Quality Cull Cow Project was a joint effort between the Iowa Beef Center, ISU Extension, the Tri-County Steer Carcass Futurity Coop and Iowa Lakes Community College. The three market groups were fed at the Bentley East Feedlot of Macedonia; the Delmar Marckmann Feedlot of Greenfield; and the Iowa Lakes Community College Feedlot near Emmetsburg. The animals were harvested at the American Foods Group processing facility, Green Bay, WI.

Northwest & Southwest Iowa Cull Beef Cow Value-Added Program 2002-2003

Performance Data

	NW Iowa Extension & Iowa Lakes CC	Marckmann – Wallace Beef Cows	TCSCF Beef Cows
No of Head	27	27	48
Market value \$/cwt	\$36.40	\$34.57	\$36.19
Days on Feed	94	87	69 or 90
Shrunk Feedlot Weight	1378	1609	1548
ADG Shrunk Feedlot Wt	2.78	3.78	3.87
F/G Shrunk Feedlot Wt	12.03	9.98	10.57
Average NEg Mcal/cwt	54.6		59.3
Average Ration Dry Matter	58%	79%	69%
Hot Carcass Wt	787.1	917	880
Dress % Feedlot Wt	55.6%	54.9%	54.3%
Fat Cover, Inches	.51	.66	.64
% Yield Grade 3 or less	92.6%	67%	57%
% Yield Grade 4	7.4%	22%	25%
% Yield Grade 5	0%	11%	18%
% # 1 Premium White Fat	66.7% (18hd)	89%	70%
% # 2 Premium White Fat	7.4% (2hd)	-	12%
Boning Utility/Dark Cutter	7.4% (2hd)	7%	2%
Holstein Choice	-	-	2%
Holstein Gold/Hard Bone with Marbling	-	-	-
Low Choice	11.1% (3hd)	4%	2%
Select +	3.7% (1hd)	-	2%
Standard	0	-	2%
Cutter/Canner	3.7% (1hd)	-	-
Unknown/Not Reported	-	-	8%
Carcass Price \$/cwt	\$89.98	\$85.59	\$84.57
Live Price Shrunk wt \$/cwt	\$51.41	\$48.77	\$48.39
Feed cost/cwt shrunk wt	\$56.82	\$47.84	\$56.62
Total cost/cwt shrunk wt	\$87.81	\$73.20	\$84.96
Profit \$/head	\$74.06	\$89.72	\$52.71

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