

# THE HEIFER'S BULL

By Sharon Fox Gamble - Extension Agent IV- Livestock

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## Calendar:

**Nov. 30** FCA Quarterly Meeting -  
Clewiston  
**Dec. 4-9** 40- hour Inter-Agency  
Prescribed Fire School – Daytona Beach  
**Dec. 3** Volusia County Cattlemen's  
Association Annual Election of Officers  
**Dec. 3** 4-H Youth Livestock Evaluation  
School - Gainesville  
**Dec. 10** 4-H/FFA Horse Judging School -  
Gainesville  
**Jan. 19, 2006** Florida Cattlemen's  
Institute and Allied Trade Show –  
Kissimmee  
**Jan. 26** Volusia County Cattlemen and  
Women's Association Meeting  
**Feb. 3-5** National Youth Horse  
Council Symposium – Gainesville  
**Feb. 7,14,21,28,**  
**Mar. 7,14,21** Master Tree Farmer  
Satellite Downlink Series

Dear Agriculturalist,

We have almost "weathered" another storm season. I would like to believe we are at an end. In this newsletter, I have compiled information from many sources and experiences. I have heard the frustrations over the past two years and have experienced them myself.

In this newsletter, I have set forth some ideas (Food for Thought) about your own disaster planning efforts relative to large animals. I hope you won't lay this aside but if you do, at least think about how you can better take care of yourself and your animals. While the focus of the article is on horse management, much of the content can be applied towards other animals as well.

A point that you need to be really made aware of is that **YOU HAD BETTER BE ABLE TO TAKE OF YOU AND YOURS FOR AT LEAST 3 DAYS** before you can even begin to expect any kind of assistance. After all, agriculturalists are used to being self sufficient, why would we ever want to change that characteristic?

Sincerely,



Sharon Fox Gamble  
Extension Agent, IV

# Food for Thought – Horses and Disaster Planning

By Sharon Fox Gamble– Extension Agent IV– Livestock

Hopefully you have already made some well thought out plans on what to do with your animals. Hopefully you already know everything I am going to mention in this article. If not, perhaps it will serve to make you think of how to improve your plan. Maybe it will encourage you to start making a plan.



## Plans

Plans should be written, clear and easily understood. Can the whole family carry out your plan in your absence? Is it within your OWN capabilities to carry out the plan? Plans should be revised regularly and equipment checked prior to the hurricane season. If your plan includes your dependence on someone else, you may very well be setting yourself up for failure but one thing is sure....

## Failure To Plan, Is Planning To Fail

### The Nature of Things

Let us visit for a few minutes on animals. The earliest known horse was the Eohippus (Dawn Horse) that inhabited the swamps and riverbeds of North America during the Eocene epoch. Now at some point the

Eohippus disappeared from the North America continent but not before it spread to other continents. Since that time, modern man and horses developed together. The modern horse has for the most part survived just fine, all except for those that were eaten as evidenced by the bones of 40,000 horses found outside a rock dwelling in Solutre France 25,000 years ago. Now my point is,

horses have learned to survive the elements without lots of human interference.

In the natural scheme of things, horses were made to be grazers. They wandered from grazing area to grazing area unfettered by fences, barns, water troughs, cars, etc. Those that were swift, healthy and tough survived.

It is well known that animals will seek shelter as storms approach. Often times they will seek out low-lying areas and areas that will block wind. They often turn their hindquarters to the wind and stand in a semi-circle with their heads low. Their hide is even thicker on their hindquarters! As the weather subsides, they go out and graze and as the weather increases, they resume their stance, changing their locations relative to wind directions.

Human interference into their natural tendencies has brought fences, barns, speeding vehicles, power lines, etc. Fences prevent wandering from one grazing area to another, prevent location of suitable water sources and may prevent them from locating low lying areas, forcing them to graze close to the same areas over and over. They even make them share their space with power lines. So in today's modern society we must make decisions relative to enhancing the safety of our horses as we have prevented them from making decisions on their own, the same decisions that enabled the species to survive for thousands of years. Barns and fences are a human convenience, not a convenience for horses.

Animal psychology plays a big part in herd dynamics. Just like kids, chickens, dogs, cows and lions develop a "pecking order" or social hierarchy, so do

etc. Anyone who has ever owned more than one horse or has been around more than one horse is aware of the animals that rule the roost and which ones are always on the bottom. These social orders have been worked out over time and they all become quite accustomed to their rank. Removing and re-introducing animals often results in a shift of the pecking order, which may not ever return to the original order.

Now you might be wondering why I am writing all this stuff when this article is suppose to be concerned with horses and disaster planning. The answer is easy, if you don't understand these above mentioned components you are trying to plan a safety strategy with only half the information and all your well intentioned plans and strategies may actually put your animals at more risk!

## **Hurricanes, Floods, Wildfire, Drought and Tornadoes are all Facts of Nature and all Occur in Florida**

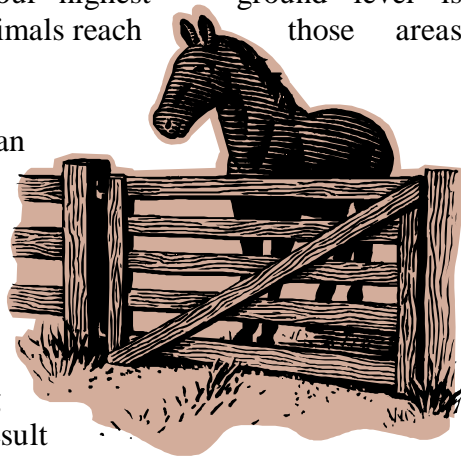
### **Flooding is a Fact of Nature**

Flooding results from low areas and little rain, medium areas and lots of rain and then there is the story of Noah and the Ark and 40 days of rain. If you don't live on an Ark, strongly consider your potential to flood. Don't forget what could happen if the nearby ditch gets backed up. How many feet above the ditch or dry lakebed are you?

### **Fences prevent horses from escaping flood waters:**

There are things about your farm, ranch or ranchette that you need to know. Are you in an area subject to flooding? How about the "once in a 100-year high water mark". After the past year of rains, new levels of high water have been reached. Do you know where your highest ground level is and can your animals reach those areas freely?

If you are in an area subject to flooding, you must consider evacuating your horses. Severe hoof and leg problems can result after only days of standing in water. Additionally lightning and downed power lines can electrocute animals standing in water. If they are maintained in stables or paddocks, of less than one acre, they can't avoid water, debris or collapsed buildings.



## **Evacuation:**

### **Overview-**

Evacuation is a great idea but only, if you can be on the road 3 to 4 days in advance of the storm! With the predictability/unpredictability of weather events this is not really all that practical. Besides so you go somewhere else, how do you know you are not moving into the path of the storm. We saw this several times during the 2004 storm season.

A livestock trailer is a very unstable vehicle and can easily be caught in traffic and high winds. Emergency vehicles are considered out-of-service when wind speeds are 45-55 mph...and most bridges go to lock down about 47-50 mph, that means officials won't let you go over them. The weight of your horses is not adequate to assure the upright stability of your trailer. Fuel also becomes an issue as folks try to exit and re-enter following evacuations. We all know that trucks pulling loaded trailers don't get much mileage.

**Do you even own a trailer and the truck to pull it?** Having this as your evacuation plan may be a "pipedream." Folks having trucks and trailers, for the most part have their own animals. They will take care of theirs first, yours last. So do you really think this is a viable plan? What happens if they happen to be out of town or otherwise just unavailable? What's your backup plan?

**Can you borrow a truck and trailer?** Have you driven a truck and pulled a trailer? For those who "pull" or have "pulled" don't have any problem but for the beginner, do you want to add the stress of evacuation to your educational training opportunity? Is the equipment well maintained? How does it sound to be sitting on the side of the road with 2 horses and a trailer with burned up wheel bearings?

### **Following the 1994 Hurricane Season**

Long distance evacuation is no longer recommended as storms may move faster than anticipated or changed directions put you in the

path. Evacuations closer to home have merit if your property must be vacated.

### **Pro's and Con's of Moving Animals to Another Pasture:**

The safest place for large animals to be is in a large pasture. Under today's environment this comes the closest to approximating life in the wild, where they can make decisions for themselves. The safest fencing should be a mesh type. Barbed wire should be avoided at all costs. It is best if the animal is already familiar with the pasture, location of water etc. and of course its pasture buddies. This is where herd dynamics come into consideration. **If the horses aren't familiar with one another, they will immediately start to establish pecking orders.** They don't take time out for the hurricane to pass. They chase, bite, kick and push each other. This process can take days to complete. The risk from injury from pecking order establishment is as great or greater than that of the storm.

Pastures of one acre or less prevent horses from moving out of the way of flying debris which could be described as flying missiles. Large pieces of debris, like sheet metal roofing or side pieces is relatively easy for them to move away from. Barrel tiles and small objects are another consideration completely.

### **In a perfect world...**

The pasture fences should be well clear of trees so that they don't come down and compromise the fences. The pasture should be clear of power lines which could also come down. Downed power lines can energize bodies of water whether they be mildly damp soils or flowing ditches. Electrical lines should be well away from areas where wind driven debris could be generated. Trees in the pasture should not be exotic species which easily break under

hurricane force winds. Your pasture should have low areas in which the animals can freely move and higher areas that will not be flooded after the storm. Horses should already be well acquainted with the field and their pasture mates.

Barns are built to standards suitable for hurricane force winds. Damaged components have been replaced. The floor height is well above the ground

level so the floor stays dry and all parts have been hurricane strapped.

Does this describe your operation? If not, you probably live in a less than perfect world....most of us do.

### **In a Less than Perfect World...**



in hurricanes and similar events are collapsed barns, dehydration, electrocution, and accidents resulting from fencing failure. If you own farm animals, you should take precaution to protect them from these hazards, no matter what the disaster potential for your area.

### **Buildings:**

Very few barns are built to hurricane standards! They don't have hurricane straps on the roof, bracing may be inadequate and/or termites may even be holding onto each other to keep the building upright! Why would you even consider locking animals in, leaving them defenseless? Locking animals in mostly makes the owner feel better but leaves the animal even more vulnerable. Do you have the capabilities of removing debris to get the animal out? These are all things the horse owner needs to seriously consider. Imagine the panic of the horse that is trapped. Are medications available to calm the animal? Have you thought about the danger of a trapped animal and your own health as you are trying to free the animal? Animal experts know the unpredictability of a panicked animal the question is DO YOU? Your otherwise kid proof horse, may take on another personality completely.

Most horses are kept enclosed in relatively small acreages, or are in housing areas where debris can be substantial. Power lines are prevalent and fencing may be a little less than stout. Barbed wire

can cut horses substantially and woven fences collect debris and often prevent it from continuing on its path.



### **So What is One Supposed to Do?**

First, realize that no one plan will absolutely guarantee the safety of your animals. Therefore, you must decide what is within your capabilities. If you can live in a perfect world, go for it! If not you must make decisions and accept the associated risks.

If you can evacuate, have the time and finances and equipment to do so, locate a list of places that will accept horses. The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences under its [www.flsart.org](http://www.flsart.org) site maintains such a list at: <http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/ai/pdf/Emergency%20Equine%20Sheltering.pdf>

### **Pastures**

If large suitable pastures are available but other horses are going to be there, know that herd psychology will also go along with your putting them together. Putting strange horses together at the last minute, just ahead of the storm is not recommended. Get them to their location and acquainted them with the pasture and their pasture mates days in advance if necessary, be advised you may incur some vet bills before the hurricane even strikes.

If you have a several acre pasture that you are not introducing new animals into and they are familiar with the property, securely tie all gates open so animals can move about freely. If you have an area that could pose a real danger, like power lines over

a ditch, tie that gate shut securely!!! Walk your pastures potentially become a missile. You might be really surprised how much “stuff” you have accumulated!

### **Buildings**

The natural tendency is to lock horses in their stalls. I previously explained why not to do this. Unless you KNOW, built and designed your barn to hurricane standards, **turn out** your large animals. Shut stall and/or barn doors and secure them. If a suitable low lying area is not available, horses will stand on the side of the barn away from the prevailing winds and rain. As the winds switch around, they will move around to the other sides. If the building starts to come apart, they will be able to move out of the way. **Inside they cannot!** It is better to stitch up a horse due to flying debris than to euthanize one because they were trapped. You might be surprised how well they “weather” the storm, when left to their own instincts.

### **Water**

Have a back up water source. Do you have a trough that you can fill in advance that will hold several days worth of water? Rain bands might just keep it filled but then again they may not. An old-fashioned pitcher pump on a well may provide water in the absence of a generator run well. Use common sense! A 1,000 pound horse requires anywhere from four to fifteen gallons of water per day! Kidney failure is often a result of dehydration. Colic and founder result in too much water after dehydration.

### **Think DEBRIS!**

How much stuff have you accumulated? In Hurricane Andrew, boards were literally blown from the posts becoming debris. Secure or remove anything that could become blowing debris; make a habit of securing trailers, propane tanks, and other large objects. Tiles from roofs became missiles. Tie down anything that can get blown around. Turn over picnic tables and benches and secure as much together as possible to increase their weight. Of course, anything that can be stored should be stored! If you have boats, feed troughs, or other large containers, fill them with water before any high wind event. This prevents them from blowing around and can serve as an additional water supply.

Mostly, it is the small flying debris that injures the horses. With adequate space, livestock can generally get out of the way of large flying objects. During Hurricanes Charley, Jeanne and Francis, large pieces of roofing tin were entangled in the fences and proved to be of little danger.

## Who Is Who in the Zoo – Identification Issues

Have some sort of an identity program for your critters. A recent photo of you and your horse, dog, cat, ferret, etc. really helps to show that the animal is really yours. Have several pictures of your critter, also show any significant identification marks. Make sure you are in at least one of the pictures! Put these pictures in a zip lock type freezer bag for safe keeping.

Keep a copy of important papers in a safe and reasonable place...like your emergency medical kit for your critters. Your vet can recommend various identification options for your animals.

Electronic identification is widely accepted on smaller animals and in the next few years will be highly encouraged in larger animals. Retired University of Florida veterinarian Dr. Lane recommended after the Hurricane Andrew event that fetlock bands made of a Tyvek® type material, written on with a water indelible ink placed on each front fetlock seemed to be the safest and most reliable identification source. If you can't get bands in a hurry and you haven't planned ahead some envelopes are made from this extremely strong material. Cut 1" strips and figure a way to make them relatively secure. Do not make them too tight and cut off the circulation. Just because you know it is your horse, whoever has it, does not. **You must be able to prove it is yours!** There are many "schools of thought" on whether to leave halters on or off horses. Halters, with nameplates, are an alternative identification source. Many experienced horse folks think horses are more likely to get their heads and halters caught than their feet. Also, how many times have you had a horse slip a halter in a field, only to be found (hopefully), at a later date?

## Your Animal Medical Kit

Those who experienced Hurricane Andrew said one of the most sought after commodities was fly spray. Have enough fly spray on hand to last for at least two weeks.

I know everyone has a veterinarian that they work with and think very highly of. I know many of these veterinarians and they are extremely dedicated to their trade but in the case of an emergency they may not be able to get to you as soon as you would like. You need to have a kit put together of some basic first aid items.

If you don't already have such a kit (a tool box works well), ask your vet, friends, go on-line, etc and determine what you may need. Lots of bandages and various ways to hold them in place can prove invaluable. Baby diapers and duct tape will do in a pinch. Have a good supply of antiseptic solution too.

## Planning Around the Farm

Boats, trash cans, lawn furniture and hanging plants all need to be secured. If possible fill objects with water, or chain them to much heavier items. If you use heat lamps, or other electrical machinery, make sure the wiring is safe, and that any heat source is free of flammable debris. Label hazardous material and place them all in a safe areas. Provide local fire and rescue and emergency authorities with information about the location of any hazardous material on your property.

Review and update your disaster plan, supplies and information regularly. Have you written down your feed plan? Statistics show that most livestock owners have more than one animal! Write down your feed program. Does everyone know where it is? Have a list of your neighbor's phone numbers, veterinarian, emergency management office and Extension office, along with your feed plan. Photographs of all your animals with you in the pictures, Coffins and registration papers all help to identify your animals and the fact that you own them. Re-sealable freezer bags help to keep items clean and dry. Keep these items in a safe and accessible place. I use my animal medical kit,

because it is dry, secure and usually the first thing I grab when planning to travel.

Have handling equipment, cages and appropriate tools for each kind of animal. As well as water, feed, buckets, tools and supplies for sanitation. A two-week supply window is highly advised.

If you plan to evacuate, check in advance for the required paperwork necessary for where you are planning to go and the equipment needed and what is expected of you. Map out and be familiar with alternate travel routes.

Walk fence lines, peruse around barns and look for debris or “boobie traps.” Did you find that roll of old wound up fence wire? How about the old half barrel that no longer holds water? If you have animals and live in one place long enough, you will have “stuff.” Disaster planning is a good way to help you “part” with debris and most of us have trash pick-up service at least once a week.

Work and plan with you neighbors. Your neighbors’ debris can shortly become your own and visa-versa. Share your preparation plans and concerns.

Good luck, plan, review your plan and revise your plan. Share your plan with neighbors and relatives. We are all in this together.



## **DON'T GET TAKEN**

**by Kathy M. Bryant**

Now that the storm has passed, it is time to survey the damage and to start cleaning up and making repairs. This is a stressful period and a time when homeowners may be easily victimized. Unethical workers may take advantage of the need to get repair work done quickly.

Before having any work done, whether it is removing a tree or making home repairs, know whom you are dealing with. Do they have a license, if so by whom? Any person or company doing home repairs in Florida must have a license issued by the state and follow certain practices designed to protect the consumer.

Ask to see evidence that the worker or company has liability insurance. Liability insurance protects the homeowner against lawsuits in case of a worker being injured on their property.

Have a written, signed contract before any work begins. Be sure all details are clearly stated, for example, the number of trees to be cut, the stump height, and who will remove the trees from the property. Make sure the contract has a beginning and a completion date clearly stated. The mailing address and the physical location of the business should be prominent on the contract.

If a company or individual comes to your door (residence) and solicits work, you have three working days within which to cancel the agreement without a penalty. Make sure you are given an address and telephone number where you can contact the company. Although you call to cancel it is wise to also send a letter. Send it certified mail and request a returned signature.

Never pay for work before it is done. Do not give money to a worker or company to buy supplies unless you know them well. If supplies must be purchased before the work can begin, the homeowner should purchase them and take them to his/her home.

Never sign a completion statement until all work is done satisfactorily. If credit is used be sure all

blanks in the contract are filled in before signing. Know the annual percentage rate, if it is a fixed or a variable rate, the total amount of the payments, how long the loan will last and if a lien is being placed against your home.

You have experienced one loss. Protect yourself against another.

For further information contact the Volusia County Extension Office at 386-822-5778.

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## Standby Electric Generators A Source Of Emergency Power For Farmers



An emergency source of power is important for any farm with mechanically ventilated production facilities, bulk milk handling equipment, mechanical feeding equipment or facilities requiring constant and continuous heat (such as brooders). On such a farm, a standby electric generator is a good investment, possibly preventing costly losses during a power failure.

During disasters such as flood or tornado, relief agencies may provide generators to farmers on an emergency basis.

### TYPES OF GENERATORS

Standby generators are either engine driven or tractor driven. Either type can be stationary or portable. Engine driven units can be either manual or automatic start. Gasoline-, LP gas- (bottled gas) and diesel-fueled engines are available.

Generators must provide the same type of power at the same voltage and frequency as that supplied by power lines. This is usually 120/240 volt, single phase, 60 cycle alternating current (AC). An air-cooled engine is often used for generators up to 15

kilowatts. A liquid-cooled engine is necessary for generators larger than 15 kilowatts. Engine capacity of 2 to 2 1/4 hp with the proper drive system must be available for each 1,000 watts of generator output.

### SIZE OF GENERATORS

A full-load system will handle the entire farmstead load. Automatic engine-powered, full-load systems will begin to furnish power immediately, or up to 30 seconds after power is off. Smaller and less expensive part-load systems may be enough to handle essential equipment during an emergency.

Power-take-off (PTO) generators are about half as costly as engine-operated units. Under a part-load system, only the most essential equipment is operated at one time. For most farms, this type of system is adequate, provided the generator is sized to start the largest motor. For example, the milk cooler or ventilation fan would need to be operated continuously, but the operation of the silo unloader and mechanical feeding system could be postponed until the milking chores are completed. PT units can be mounted on a trailer.

### INSTALLATION

Wiring and equipment must be installed in accordance with the National Electrical Code, local ordinances and the requirements of your power supplier. It is essential that you have the proper equipment for disconnecting the generator from public utility lines. Most companies require the installation of a double-pole double-throw transfer switch or its equivalent for this purpose. Check with your electrician or power supply representative for installation, installation instructions and inspection.

### LOCATION AND SAFETY FEATURES

- ?? Large engine generators should be located in a building, preferably a heated building.
- ?? Inlet and outlet air ducts must be large enough to carry off excess heat. They should be open at least a half a square foot for each 1,000 watts of generator capacity.
- ?? Combustion fumes must be carried outdoors safely. Exhaust pipes must be at least 6 inches from combustible material.

## OPERATION

An automatic standby unit should start automatically when power fails, and stop when power is restored. When using an engine-driven generator with a manual start, or when using a tractor driven unit, follow this procedure when power fails:

- ?? Call your power supplier and advise them of the conditions.
- ??
- ?? electrical equipment.
  
- ?? Position the tractor or engine for belt of PTO drive.
  
- ?? Start the unit and bring the generator up to proper speed (1,800 or 3,600 rps). Check on arrangement to carry off exhaust fumes. Be sure there is no danger of fire. The voltmeter will indicate when the generator is ready to carry the load.
  
- ?? Put the transfer switch in the generator position.
  
- ?? Start the largest electrical motor first, adding other loads when each is up to operating speed. Do not add too much too fast. If the generator cuts out for any reason, repeat the second, third and fourth steps above.
  
- ?? Check the voltmeter frequently. If voltage falls below 200 volts for 240 volt service or below 100 volts for 120 volt service, reduce the load on the generator by turning off some electrical equipment.
  
- ?? When commercial power is restored, put the transfer switch in normal power position. Then stop the standby unit.

## MAINTENANCE

- ?? Keep the unit clean and in good running order at all times so it will be ready for immediate use. Dust and dirt accumulations on the motor can cause it to overheat when operated.

Follow maintenance instructions in manufacturer's manual. A short operation at set intervals will keep the engine in good operating condition. Regularly scheduled warm-ups are necessary to keep a standby engine in working order.

## **23rd Annual FLORIDA CATTLEMEN'S INSTITUTE AND ALLIED TRADE SHOW January 19, 2006 Kissimmee, FL**

**AM**

**8:00 Trade Show Opens**

**Moderator:**

**Joe Walter**, Chairman 2006 FCIATS, Brevard County

**8:45 Welcome**

**Jimmy Cheek & Joe Marlin Hillard III**

**9:00 Basics of Pasture Fertilization**

**Dr. Jerry Sartain**, Soil and Water Science UF

**10:00 Trade Show Break**

**10:30 Recent Developments in Cattle Marketing**

**Mark Harmon**, Joplin Regional Stock Yard, Joplin MS

**11:30 The State of The State**

**Charlie Bronson**, Florida Commissioner of Agriculture

**12:00 PM AWARDS**

**12:15 Lunch**

**1:00 Ranch Horse Safety**

**Joel McQuagge**, Animal Sciences Department - UF/IFAS

**1:45 BQA Update**

**Todd Thrift**, Animal Sciences Department - UF/IFAS

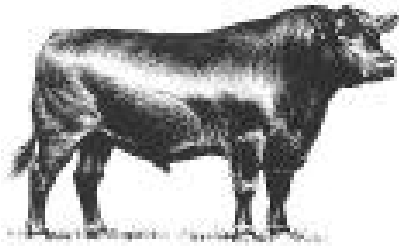
**2:00 Trade Show Break**

**2:30 State and Federal Regulations – Changing the Way You Do Business**

**Mike Milicevic, Dr. Tom Holt, Wade Gresby, Don Robertson, Mark Harmond, Mark Donaway**

**3:30 Return evaluations and drawing for Fence Building Kit:**

# A BULL IS WORTH?

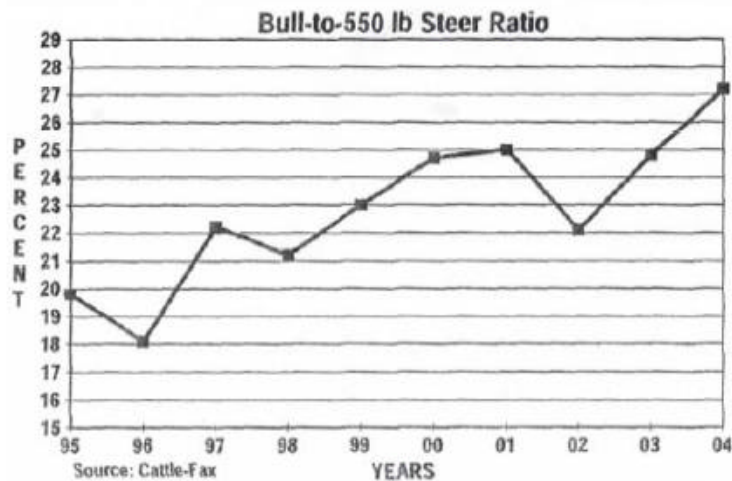


During bull buying season producers' minds. What is a bull prices compared to 550 lb steer suggests that it typically takes between 4 and 5 calves (between 20 to 25% of the bull value) to purchase a bull at the average price. (The bull price data is the annual average bull price from 10 respective breed associations averaged together over the previous 10 years, compared to the Cattle-Fax annual average steer price.)

this is a question in many worth? An analysis of bull values over the past ten years

From 1995-2004 the calf price as a percentage of bull price averaged 23% with a low occurring 1996 of 18.1% and a high in 2004 of 27.2%. That percentage has increased in recent years due to a strong calf market that the bull market hasn't kept pace with.

Given the average 550 lb steer price for 2005 of \$128, this would historically suggest bull values would be in a range of \$2,700 to \$2,900 per head. If history repeats itself, that would have the average bull price at its highest levels in history. Given the fact that bull prices have not recently kept pace with calf prices, a more likely scenario would be for that spread to continue to widen and bull averages to be around \$2,500 per head, still a historically high price.



**SOURCE:**

**Troy Applehans**

**Cattle-Fax**

**Englewood, CO**

**Phone: (800) 825-7525**

**Web: <http://www.cattle-fax.com>**

# BEEF MANAGEMENT CALENDAR

## NOVEMBER

- ☞☞ Have soils tested
- ☞☞ Observe cows daily to detect calving difficulty.
- ☞☞ Use mineral with high level of magnesium if grass tetany has been a problem in the past.
- ☞☞ Check for external parasites and treat if needed.
- ☞☞ Maintain adequate nutrient level for cow herd.
- ☞☞ Calve in well-drained pastures.
- ☞☞ Survey pastures for poisonous plants.
- ☞☞ Start summarizing your annual records, both production and financial-then you will have time to make adjustments for tax purposes.
- ☞☞ Re-evaluate winter feeding program and feed supplies.
- ☞☞ Get breeding soundness exams on bull battery so you have time to find replacements if some fail.
- ☞☞ Implement bull conditioning program
- ☞☞ Review plans and arrangements for the upcoming breeding season?

## DECEMBER

- ☞☞ Begin grazing small grain pastures (if ready).
- ☞☞ Check mineral feeder.
- ☞☞ Check for external parasites and treat if needed.
- ☞☞ De-worm cows and heifers prior to winter feeding season.
- ☞☞ Observe regularly for calving difficulties.
- ☞☞ Rotate calving pastures to prevent diseases.
- ☞☞ Watch for scours in calves.
- ☞☞ Investigate health of bulls before you buy.
- ☞☞ Have dead animals posted by a veterinarian or diagnostic laboratory.
- ☞☞ Complete review of management plan and update for next year. Check replacement heifers to be sure they will be ready to breed 3-4 weeks prior to the main cow herd.

## JANUARY

- ☞☞ Check for lice and treat if necessary.
- ☞☞ Apply lime for summer crops.
- ☞☞ Control weeds in cool season pastures.
- ☞☞ Begin grazing winter clover pastures when approximately 6 inches high. Rye should be 12-18 inches high.
- ☞☞ Check mineral feeders.
- ☞☞ Put bull out for October calving season.
- ☞☞ Make up breeding herd lists if using single sire herds.
- ☞☞ Watch for calf scours.
- ☞☞ Give bulls extra feed and care so they will be in condition for breeding season.
- ☞☞ Make sure cow herd has access to adequate fresh water.
- ☞☞ Buy only performance tested bulls with superior records.
- ☞☞ Get taxes filed.
- ☞☞ Discuss herd health with your veterinarian and outline a program for the year.
- ☞☞ Review herd health program with your veterinarian and outline a program for the year.
- ☞☞ Review herd health program with your veterinarian regularly.
- ☞☞ Carry a pocket notebook to record head, breeding abnormalities, discharges, abortions, retained placentas, difficult calvings and other data.
- ☞☞ Observe cow herd for calving difficulties.
- ☞☞ Watch for grass tetany on winter pastures.
- ☞☞ Increase magnesium levels in mineral mixes if grass tetany has been previous problem (if you are not already using a high magnesium mineral).
- ☞☞ Examine bulls for breeding soundness and semen quality prior to the breeding season.
- ☞☞ Vaccinate cows and heifers against vibriosis and leptospirosis prior to the breeding season.



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