



A WELL-PLANNED CREEP-FEEDING PROGRAM HELPS CALVES REACH GENETIC POTENTIAL

When it comes to creep feeding, there is no one-size fits all approach, according to Greg Lardy, professor and head of the Department of Animal Sciences at North Dakota State University.

Rather, the decision to creep feed depends on a series of variables ranging from the genetic potential of your calves to feed costs to nutritional deficiencies in forage and milk.

"The creep-feeding decision depends on many variables, including forage situations, production goals, genetics of the herd, and economic variables such as the price of calves, pasture, and creep feed," Lardy said.

The first step in assessing the effectiveness of creep feeding is for cow-calf operators to articulate their goals, Lardy explained. Do they want to creep feed to prepare calves for processed feeds to make weaning easier? Is it to add weight on the calves? To relieve stress on the cows, thereby enhancing breedback? Or, to replace nutrients that are missing in the current diet?

If nutritional value and weight gain are your goals, then "you want to provide a supplement for the calf that will offer nutrients currently missing in the diet or above and beyond what they would get from milk and forage," Lardy commented.

In order to accomplish that, the producer must have an idea of the current nutrient content of forage and the milk production potential of the cows. And, producers must understand what might be missing from forages during different times of the year.

To acquire this information, Lardy suggests contacting the state or local extension office; they offer forage nutrient information on common types of forage in their regions of the country. In addition, local feed dealers can often provide historical information about the composition of various forages in the area.

To determine milk production deficiencies, operators generally rely on their experience with their herds, as well as the milk production information of bulls they've purchased or utilized, he explained.

If nutritional deficiencies

are identified in milk and/or forage, providing creep will be a way to correct them, Lardy commented.

"By pinpointing the deficiencies, you can select the appropriate feed to achieve your goals—and increase the odds that the decision to creep feed will be a sound one," he said.

Lardy elaborated that creep feeding can alleviate some of the stress on the cow, especially earlier in the season, thus enhancing breedback. If heat and/or drought are part of the equation, creep feeding can be even more essential, filling nutritional gaps brought on by unfavorable forage-growing conditions and by reducing the need to irrigate pastures.

In addition to being sound nutritionally, though, creep feeding must make sense economically. "A favorable growing season this summer should increase feed supplies and decrease the price of corn and other feedstuffs. That, coupled with the current high prices for calves, would suggest that creep feeding has a higher likelihood of being profitable this summer and fall," Lardy speculated.

Strong genetic potential is another consideration that can tip the scale in favor of creep feeding.

"Calves with the ability to grow and utilize nutrients are going to respond to creep better than calves with less growth potential," Lardy explained. In those cases, creep feeding delivers a greater return on investment.

One common misconception is that creep will reduce demand on the cow, Lardy stated. "In most cases, that doesn't occur because calves will still nurse just as aggressively when creep fed. Indirectly, though, the cow benefits, because the creep-fed calf will ingest less forage, freeing up more forage for the cow."

Another pitfall for producers is failing to understand which are the limiting nutrients. So, they provide a creep feed that doesn't supply the nutrients that are missing. As a result, creep feeding doesn't add the desired weight and it becomes less cost effective.

"In order to make the right decision about what creep feed to buy, producers need to understand what



nutrients they are trying to provide,” Lardy emphasized.

One situation Lardy cautions producers about is *ad libitum* (unlimited) creep feeding, which can have detrimental effects on replacement heifers in the future by having negative effects on future lactation potential and longevity. He added that consumption limiting technologies, such as Purina’s Intake Modifying Technology® program, should alleviate this concern.

Lardy offered this summary about designing a creep-feeding program:

- Take a step back. Articulate clear goals for your creep-feeding program.

- Gather appropriate information about forage quality and milk production, as well as the genetic potential of calves to more accurately predict the success and economic benefit of creep feeding.
- Factor in the gains you will achieve using creep feeding, compare the cost of forage to the cost of creep feeding.

Contact your Purina dealer or local Purina representative to find out more about how their full spectrum of creep-feeding products can help your calves reach their full genetic potential. Using Purina’s sophisticated Intake Modifying Technology® program, they will help you design a creep feeding program specific to your herd.

THIRD GENERATION FARM THRIVES ON FAMILY TIES, SOLID NUTRITION

When it comes to sustaining their herd, Purina products aren’t the only things that nourish Country Lane Farm and TC Reds.

Located in Ringle, WI, the purebred cow-calf venture enjoys a rich history of family involvement that’s alive and well in its third generation. Founded in 1950 by Leonard A. Bayer, the 580-acre farm was passed down to his son. Today, grandsons Scott and Matthew Bayer own the “conception to consumption” operation, where they breed and raise Angus cattle—and grow corn, hay and cold season grasses on about 200 acres.

Scott’s wife, Mia, is actively involved. And, their son, Ty, 20, and daughter, Calli, 19, participate in everything from breeding management and showing to crop and feedlot management. At four years old, Tucker isn’t working on the farm yet, but no doubt he will be soon.

Matthew and Mia manage the family-owned meat locker, Country Fresh Meats, established in the early 1980s. Scott and Matt’s parents have retired from the family business, but still help out as needed.

And, if that isn’t enough kinship, consider the fact that Scott and Matt’s sister, Reneé, operates S&R Angus with her family in nearby Schofield.

So clearly, the Bayers know a thing or two about cattle, whether it’s the Black Angus that Country Lane specializes in or the Red Angus they raise under the name TC Reds.

In fact, Scott says he, Matthew and Reneé “have been doing this since we were born.” Scott and Matt attended the University of Wisconsin, River Falls, where Scott majored in broad area agriculture with an animal science minor and Matthew majored in meat science. All three siblings were active in 4-H and FFA.

And, their experience shows. Country Lane Farm and TC Reds livestock have placed numerous times at the National Western Stock Show and various other venues where they’ve been shown.

In order to achieve superior genetics, Scott says he selects cattle “based on type and EPDs (Expected Progeny Differences). We do a lot of AI (artificial insemination) work, using our bulls and others.”

Scott says proper nutrition also plays a major role in their success.

“We work to make sure the herd has good nutrition, including sufficient minerals and good quality forage,” he offered. “We try to balance the forage by providing free-choice minerals and supplements so the cows get everything they need.”

Scott said he uses Purina Wind and Rain® Minerals, Purina Pasture Gestation and Cattle Chow® Complete Feed with impressive results.

“We’ve noticed a difference in terms of hair coat and ‘bloominess,’” Scott offered. “They are much bloomier and easier to put on flesh. They gain weight better, and show better as a result,” he added.

No doubt these qualities have figured into the successes Scott and his children have enjoyed in the show ring.

“Both my son and daughter have exhibited nationally and won. They won the Champion Red Angus in the National Western Junior Stock Show in 2007, 2009, 2010 and 2011. In 2009, they also won the title of Champion Angus Female in the Junior and Open Shows. Their heifer was also named Reserve Champion at the National Western Stock Show in 2012.

He said his children’s success and enthusiasm for the cattle business is one of the things he values most.

“I’m very passionate about cattle, as most cattlemen are,” he declared. “But, to see my kids be as passionate as I am is really gratifying.”

Sure, feed costs can be a challenge, he admits, adding that they’re always looking for quality feed at a lower cost.

“We think Purina’s minerals are reasonable for the results they deliver,” Scott asserted. “And Todd Heise at Marathon Feed is a good, honest guy to deal with. If he doesn’t know the answer to a question, he finds somebody that does. They’re a good ally to have.”

All in all, cattle ranching is a lifestyle Scott embraces with few reservations.

“I like being my own boss and working outside every day with my family,” he remarked. “When it’s 15° below, checking cows in the middle of the night isn’t the most enjoyable thing, but to see everything work out in the end is very rewarding.”



NEW WIND AND RAIN® STORM™ MINERALS — IMPROVED RESISTANCE TO THE ELEMENTS

Purina's Wind and Rain® Minerals just got better.

The new Wind and Rain® Storm™ Minerals have been enhanced to resist moisture even better than Wind and Rain® Minerals—reducing clumping by 85 percent over previous formulas.

“The new formula is much more water resistant,” said Rod Nulik, Director, Production Livestock Marketing and Cattle Business Leader for Land O'Lakes Purina. “It sheds moisture, so water finds its way through the minerals rather than sitting on top and causing clumping and spoilage.”

“Minerals only accomplish their purpose if they get into the cow. For that to happen, they have to be palatable,” Nulik explained. “Wet, spoiled or hardened clumps simply aren't palatable to the cow, so we put our efforts into improving the formula to eliminate those problems.”

Conventional mineral particles are so small that they often blow out of the feeder, Nulik remarked. And, they won't allow water to

pass through them. The new Wind and Rain Storm Mineral formula, on the other hand, consists of larger particles that stay put—and allow the water to pass right through.

The new formula, of course, continues to offer the same consistent intake you have come to expect, while providing balanced mineral nutrition to optimize herd health and breedback rates. It is also important to note that, while the new Storm™ technology resists water, digestion is not affected. As with all Purina products, extensive testing was done to assure your cattle continue to receive the high-quality nutrient value you expect for your herd.

Purina Wind and Rain® Storm™ Minerals are available in specific regions now, and will be distributed nationally by early 2013. To see how impervious these minerals are to wind and rain, visit your local Purina dealer or talk to your local representative. To view a demonstration online, just visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7zh51-L8YBM&feature=youtu.be>.

GREAT CATTLE REQUIRE GREAT STARTS

Everyone knows that great cattle don't develop overnight. They are the product of years of careful planning and attention to the details of nutrition, health and management.











But when it comes to feeding, sometimes the choices are so numerous that decision making can become complicated. That's why Purina has established its Great Starts™ Cattle Feeding Program.

Great Starts™ is designed to help producers match their feeding choices with their operations. They can choose the right feed to

improve their profit potential, based on their feeding preferences, objectives and facilities.

The Great Starts™ program provides feeding recommendations—from early weaning to finishing and breeding—for feeding preferences, ranging from complete rations to complete forage.

Talk to your Purina dealer or local representative about how you can use Purina's Great Starts Cattle Starting Program to simplify the decision process in your feeding program—and increase your profit potential.

	COMPLETE POTENTIAL PROGRAM	COMPLETE FAST START PROGRAM	FORAGER PLUS PROGRAM	FORAGER PROGRAM
FORAGE REQUIREMENT	OPTIONAL	OPTIONAL	FREE-CHOICE WITH A MINIMUM OF 8% PROTEIN	FREE-CHOICE WITH A MINIMUM OF 13% PROTEIN
Creep Feeding Programs	 ACCURATION CREEP FEED® A Complete Meal Feed With Medicated Options		 4 SQUARE® STOCKER GROWER 14 FEED A 14% protein calf feed	
Early Weaning Programs 90-150 Days of Age	 ACCURATION® STARTER COMPLETE LW FEED For light weight calves Fed as the sole ration, these coarse-textured feeds, which include roughage, utilize INTAKE MODIFYING TECHNOLOGY® to help assure the targeted intake of 3% of body weight is achieved. Proper nutrition is essential to help minimize metabolic disorders and support rumen health. It contains Availa® 4 organic minerals and Diamond V® Original XPC™ to support immune status and forage intake. Targeted intake 3% of body weight. Available with AS-700 and Deccox®.		 PRECON™ FEED A pelleted supplement that provides the essential nutrients in a small inclusion package stressed calves. It contains Availa® 4 organic minerals and Diamond V® Original XPC™ to support the immune status and forage intake. Targeted intake of 5 lbs./head/day. It is recommended to provide a Wind and Rain® Mineral Tub with Availa® 4 for calves during weaning.	 WIND AND RAIN® MINERAL TUB WITH AVAILA® 4 OR PURINA STRESS TUB A highly palatable molasses based tub supplement for stressed or weaned calves. It contains Availa® 4 organic minerals to support immune status. Stress tubs also contain Diamond V® Original XPC™, high levels of vitamins and minerals to restore nutrients lost due to stress of weaning and shipping.
Starting Programs 150-210 Days of Age	 ACCURATION® STARTER COMPLETE FEED For Weaned Calves, WC or HL Fed as the sole ration, these coarse-textured feeds, which include roughage, utilize INTAKE MODIFYING TECHNOLOGY® to help assure the targeted intake of 3% of body weight is achieved. Proper nutrition is essential to help minimize metabolic disorders and support rumen health. It contains Availa® 4 organic minerals and Diamond V® Original XPC™ to support immune status and forage intake. Targeted intake 3% of body weight. Available with AS-700 and Deccox®.	 PRECON™ COMPLETE FEED The sole ration of a complete, pelleted feed that is very palatable to encourage feed intake to restore nutrients lost due to the stress of weaning and shipping. Targeted intake 3% of body weight. It contains Availa® 4 organic minerals to support immune status and forage intake. Previously Preconditioning Receiving Chow®.	 PRECON™ FEED A pelleted supplement that provides the essential nutrients in a small inclusion package stressed cattle. It contains Availa® 4 organic minerals and Diamond V® Original XPC™ to support the immune status and forage intake. Targeted intake of 5 lbs./head/day.	
Growing Cattle > 210 Days or Until Finishing or Breeding	 ACCURATION® RANGE SUPPLEMENT FEED Cattle Limiter for good quality forages An INTAKE MODIFYING TECHNOLOGY® Process supplement for calves, stockers and heifers on low quality hay or forages. Encouraging forage utilization but controlling Accuraction® intake lets cattle adjust their intake based on weather and grass conditions and nutritional need. Save labor and time with Accuraction® Range Supplements self-fed programs.			

FENCELINE WEANING REDUCES STRESS, IMPROVES PERFORMANCE

By Larry Hollis, DVM, M.Ag.

There are many things we do with beef calves that can cause stress. And, we know all too well that stress affects performance. Stress can even suppress the immune system and lead to health problems, especially respiratory disease.

But, weaning is one procedure that doesn't have to be a major stressor in the calf's life. Our industry is rapidly learning that low-stress weaning makes a significant difference in how much calves gain and how well they perform.

There are multiple ways to wean. Some are abrupt (hard weaning), others more gradual (soft weaning). Hard weaning methods immediately separate calves from their mothers, including putting unweaned calves on the truck or in a pen or dry lot until they stop bawling. We also hard wean when we sort calves off and move them into a new pasture.

Soft weaning methods prevent nursing, but still allow the calf to have contact with the cow. Nose clip and fenceline weaning are the two most common soft weaning techniques. Plastic nose clips, attached to the calf's nose, have a flap that prevents the calf from getting the cow's teat in its mouth; some also "stick" the cow so that she moves away when the calf tries to suckle. With fenceline weaning, cows are moved into an adjacent pasture and calves are left in their "home" pasture, allowing them to go nose-to-nose and do everything except nurse.

When you look at the various weaning methods, soft weaning methods clearly create less stress for the calf and should

be employed whenever feasible and appropriate for the operation. Specifically, research has revealed that fenceline weaning comes closest to replicating the performance of the pre-weaned calves in terms of how much time they spend resting and eating, as well as how much they gain at 2 weeks and at 10 weeks.

So, for producers who have the resources to introduce fenceline weaning, I highly recommend it. It's less stressful than even the nose clip method, which requires putting calves through a chute twice to insert and remove the clips.

To implement fenceline weaning, you do have to make sure you have a calf-proof fence because the calves will, of course, try to get to their mothers. And, you must have adequate pasture space, which may be an issue for some smaller operations.

Nevertheless, the advantages of fenceline weaning are clear. Calves are less stressed, have better gains and enjoy better health than those weaned in other ways. Of the producers I know who have tried fenceline weaning, none have gone back to previous methods.

Larry Hollis is extension beef veterinarian and professor of beef cattle management and nutrition at Kansas State University.

E.O. Price, J.E. Harris, R.E. Borgwardt, M.L. Sween and J.M. Connor, Journal of Animal Science, Fenceline contact of beef calves with their dams at weaning reduces the negative effects of separation on behavior and growth rate, Vol. 81, No. 1 116-121. January 2003. <http://jas.fass.org/content/81/1/116.full>

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