



Modoc Ranch Roundup

C O O P E R A T I V E E X E T E N S I O N

B E E F B I T S – C O S T O F R U N N I N G A C O W

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Although cow-calf producers have been blessed with high cattle prices lately it has been accompanied by high input costs: fuel, hay, leases etc. Unfortunately, we may have hit our high in the cattle cycle and CattleFax suggests feeder cattle and calf prices to be slightly lower in 2008, than they were in 2007, with no reduction in input costs. Additionally, CattleFax stated profits will remain thin for many operations, particularly margin operators

and cow-calf producers.

The cost of running a breeding cow is \$542 in Northern California, with this being said, I don't believe it is an accurate number for the basis of cost and return on investment for a cow-calf producer. A rancher may lower the cost of running a cow but is she still producing? I would suggest using cost per hundredweight of calves weaned to make management decisions which is about \$120/cwt for this area.

Each ranch is different when costs are concerned usually producers place feed, fuel, hired labor, fertilizers, rents and leases, veterinary services and supplies, taxes etc into the equation but what about depreciation or paying themselves? These two components may comprise over 20% of your operating costs.

Very few ranches are average on all expenses. A producer must know what its true cost of running a breeding female is. Also a ranch should identify those expenses not contributing to the overall pro-

ductivity of the operation by scrutinizing every expense and determining whether or not it is making an adequate contribution to weaning more pounds of calves.

What to do about these expenses depends on your operation; however, Barry Dunn, Ag Economist from Texas A&M, suggested some general considerations that may lower your investment in the business:

1. Rent some of your assets. Land is the logical choice. While current rental rates are high they remain lower than the cost of ownership.
2. Keep the portion of your production system dedicated to replacements as low as possible. Longevity is an important trait in your cowherd and the payoffs are higher levels of production and lower expenses (annual or depreciation).
3. Find production systems that do not require expensive investments in depreciable assets (items needing to be repaired or replaced shortly after they have been depreciated).

There are a couple of good websites to get you started:

http://www.beefusa.org/prodstandardperformanceanalysis_spa.aspx

and

<http://agrisk.tamu.edu>

Good luck and remember: you don't have to change but be willing to compete with those that will.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- March 11th– Upper Pit River Coalition, Beiber Memorial Hall, 10 AM Beiber
- March 13th– Goose Lake Watershed,
- March 13th– Western Video Market Sale, Shasta Livestock, Cottonwood
- March 26-27 Niche Markets for Meat Products Conference, Stanislaus County Agricultural Center Modesto, CA
- April 8th– JLS Goat, Sheep, and Swine Tagging Deadline
- April 10th– Modoc County Cattlewomen's Meeting, Jack's Café Eagleville, 5:30 Social, 6:00pm Dinner Meeting with a Spring Basket Exchange

HORSE HINTS – IN SHAPE OR IN TROUBLE

The sun has been shining and my right arm is getting itchy and I can hardly type because my fingers want to curl around some coils. However, I look into the pasture and my horse has a different idea. She hasn't been ridden since December and would hate to gather and brand a couple hundred calves. She is out of shape. It is time to start thinking about getting our horses into shape for branding, trail, and performance season. Horses like their human counterparts do not take long to lose stamina and muscle strength. In fact one week of inactivity can reduce stamina and endurance by 20%.

Horses need to be warmed up and cooled down especially during cool mornings and nights. Warm-up animals for 5-10 minutes, begin with a walk and pick up speed gradually. In the beginning 30-40 minutes of exercise is plenty working up to a full day over the course of several weeks. Cool down horses to reduce soreness and possibility of chilling or other medical problems. Also, you may add various obstacles such as hills to develop hindquarters and serpentine patterns to loosen the midsection

Also, with spring coming on horse owners should beware of the spring flush of grass and the

possibility of founder especially with ponies. Founder (laminitis) can be caused by overeating of grain, hard work on hard surfaces, steroids, fever, toxicity, lush grass, too rapid cool-down when hot and other causes. The microscopic layers that connect the hoof to the bone below become inflamed; this condition is extremely painful and can cripple a horse for life. To prevent grass founder, control the amount of grass your horse has access to in the Spring -- start by allowing your horse out on grass for 10 minutes or so daily, gradually increasing the time on grass. Some animals are so prone to foundering that they can not consume any grass safely and must be kept in a dry lot eating hay.

WANTED

Does your club, association, or group have an event?

Let us know:

202 W. 4th St, Alturas, CA 96101

Or 530-233-6400

PUMP MOTOR MAINTENANCE AND PROTECTION

Compiled by Don Lancaster, Farm Advisor

Most growers in Modoc County rely on season long irrigation to maximize crop production and economic returns. Irrigation system failures can be devastating and tremendously expensive. The following are some helpful tips from Lynn Culp - Member Service Manager for Surprise Valley Electrification Corporation.

Lynn Culp can be reached at (530) 233-3511 if you have any questions.

PUMP PANEL MAINTENANCE

Tighten Connections

Loose connections in the pump panel can cause low voltage and overheating resulting in equipment damage. Be sure that the power is disconnected before tightening all connections in the panel!

Seal the Panel

Moisture, dust, yellow jackets, and mice nests all cause problems for electrical connections. Be sure to seal all open knock-outs and holes. Lightly blow out or vacuum dust and debris from the panel.

Refasten Loose Panels

Panels that are falling off poles or are loose should be re-attached using lags or screws. Be sure to seal all holes.

Exclude Livestock

Protect your investment by installing fences or livestock panels to keep cattle from rubbing against and breaking equipment.

Install Properly Sized Capacitors

Capacitors improve the power factor for systems with 20 horse power or larger motors.

POWER PROTECTION EQUIPMENT

Three Phase Voltage Monitor/Motor Protector

The most common incidents that cause single phase conditions are: Bird nests on pole tops; Tree limbs in power lines; and Bird or animal contacts with power lines. A three phase voltage monitor/motor protector protects against single phase conditions or phase loss; will not allow the motor to start if a single phase condition is present; and protects against phase reversal, under voltage, and unbalanced voltage.

Meter Socket Surge Protector

These surge protectors are available for purchase by SVE customers for single phase motor and residential protection.

Lightning Protection

Make sure that all systems are properly grounded, and install secondary lightning arrestors on power panels and center pivots.

Time Delay Restart

Turbine motors that could back spin should have a time delay restart. This device is also good for automatic restart after power bumps.

Proper Overload Protection

The safety factor for most pump motors is generally 15% above motor brake horsepower. Overloads sized higher can allow motor amperage to run high in an overload condition. This could burn up the motor windings.

Provide Shade for Pump Motors

A simple shade that keeps direct sunlight off motors and provides open sides for good air flow can prolong pump motor life and efficiency.

SAVE THE DATES

Junior Livestock Show

June 9-13, 2008

Sale is June 13th

Entries due May 8, 2008 to Farm Advisors Office



WE ARE ON THE WEB
CEMODOC.UCDAVIS.EDU

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Alturas, California
Permit # 22

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

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Alturas, CA 96101

Don Lancaster: County Director

Forage and Field Crops, Range and Natural
Resources Advisor

Missy Merrill-Davies: Livestock and Natural
Resources Advisor

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WATERSHED MANAGEMENT SESSIONS

Modoc RCD in cooperation with the Pit River Watershed Alliance will be hosting a series of informational sessions on watershed management strategies. These sessions are funded in part by the Department of Water Resources. The dates for these events are:

February 29– Canby Firehall, 4 PM

March 4th– Likely Firehall, 4PM

March 5th– Alturas Veterans Hall 5PM

If involved or want to become involved please come and express your concerns, inputs, goals and questions.

For more information look in the Modoc Record or call Byron Hadwick 233-8878.

BEEF PRINCESS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Modoc County Cattlewomen will be holding their annual beef princess scholarship program. Interested applicants should contact Nicole Frutuozo for more information 530-279-1219. Applications will be available April 1st and are due May 15th. The contest will be held June 21st in Cedarville. Applicants must be 16– 21 years of age and have a strong desire to promote and educate consumers about beef. Also, applicants should be willing to travel some during the summer months and be ready to have fun. Please stay tuned for further details!