

Losses In Recent Missouri Steer Feedout Largest Since 1981

SPRINGFIELD, MO.

In keeping with the general economy and beef markets, the steers fed in the recently completed Missouri Steer Feedout lost more money per head than any group since the program began in 1981.

Eldon Cole, a University of Missouri Extension livestock specialist says the \$154.05 per head loss was not unexpected.

"High feed and transportation costs coupled with a slumping fed-cattle market and high set-in value on the feeders last June, pretty well set the stage for poor returns," said Cole.

During the previous feedouts, the greatest loss was experienced in the 2005-06 period when the average loss was \$98.92.

On the positive side, Cole notes that the average daily gain of 3.82 pounds during the 157 days was the best ever. The feed conversion was also outstanding at 5.55 pounds of dry matter feed to 1 pound of gain.

"Only a group of steers in the 1999 feedout converted any better. Unfortunately, the cost of gain, thanks to \$5.45 corn still ran \$62.03 per hundred weight gain. The overall cost was \$80.85 per hundred," said Cole.

As high as the cost was in Iowa, Cole says a recent summary of closeouts in selected Kansas Yards showed an average cost of just over \$90.

Another reason the losses were great with the Missouri cattle was the high death loss. Fifty-three steers were sent to the lot and three deaths occurred.

"That 5.6 percent death loss really hurt. A normal death loss would be 1 percent or less on this age and weight of steers," said Cole.

The cattle sold on a carcass merit program at 773 pounds with Tyson's for an actual price of \$143.44 per hundred, or \$88.22 on a live weight basis.

Another bright spot for the program was that 68 percent graded low Choice or better. However, only 38 percent made Yield Grades 1 and 2. The average set-in price of the cattle in June at 659 pounds was \$111.45.

Cole said only one steer out of the 50 harvested, showed a profit. His profit was \$19 per head while at the other extreme one steer lost \$238.74.

"It's not uncommon to find that wide a spread in a group of feedout steers, or even a wider spread on occasion," said Cole.

The feedout program is offered by the University of Missouri Extension to give beef cow-calf producers a chance to assess the performance of their feeder calves in the feedlot and in the carcass.

"Even when profits do not occur, participants can gather beneficial information about their herd's genetic makeup. This allows them to make better decisions on breeding and selection practices in order to improve their product," said Cole.

Feedouts are conducted for both fall-born and spring-born calves. The next group that will be put together will go to southwest Iowa in early June. Δ