

Make Preparations For Marketing Feeder Calves This Fall



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Will your calves be ready to market at the designated time this fall? To answer yes to this question, several management practices must be performed for the calves to sell for the most money.

The first management practices that must be completed are castrating and dehorning. Market reports continue to show that steer calves sell for more than bulls, and calves without horns sell for more than calves with horns. The difference between bulls and steers continues to be \$5 to \$7 per 100 pounds. This amounts to a discount of \$25 to \$35 for bulls compared to steers. Horned calves generally sell for \$1.50 to \$2 per 100 pounds less than calves with horns.

The next step in preparing for fall marketing is completing the requirement for a marketing pro-

gram available in your area. Many producers are marketing their calves through Process Verified Programs (PVP). This process involves recordkeeping to verify birth dates plus a health and weaning program. Most of the programs require a prescribed set of vaccinations be given during a specific time period. Calves are also weaned and provided supplemental feed.

Calves that have been preconditioned are less likely to get sick after marketing and will start eating immediately after arrival at the stocker or finisher operation. Fewer problems allow buyers to pay more for these calves and thus increase the total income from the calf crop.

Now is the time to identify the market where the calves will be marketed. Contact the market operator to learn what must be done for the calves to qualify for the sale. Start the preconditioning program early enough so the calves will be ready for the sale date. Δ

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