

Sell Cows Before It's Too Late, Says Extension Specialist

SPRINGFIELD, MO.

“Cows get one year older every 365 days, yet some beef cow owners often lose sight of their cows advancing age,” says Eldon Cole, a University of Missouri Extension livestock specialist.

Some breeds and crosses can still be productive beyond 10 to 12 years of age if cared for properly according to Cole. However, it is easy to lose track of time.

“Unless a thorough head-to-tail checkup is made about every year, those aging cows become a liability. They may become hard keepers with chronic problems, poor teeth, blind quarters and a whole host of conditions that are best dealt with before they lay down and die,” said Cole.

Cull cows should be sold while still in fair condition and capable of loading on a trailer and withstanding the marketing process.

“Some cow-calf producers delay selling cows until it's too late and they die with no salvage value,” said Cole.

Earlier in 2009, the pickup and rendering service ceased for several months in southwest Missouri and burial was the best alternative for disposal.

Backhoe and other charges added \$75, plus or minus, to a cow's cost.

“It's definitely better to look ahead and move old cull cows out while they can still give you \$250 to \$300 return instead of a \$75 burial charge,” said Cole. Δ



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