

## **Beef Cattle Management Practices Assessment**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the research is to document current management practices of Oklahoma beef producers in the areas of nutrition, business management and planning, marketing and risk management, forage production, genetics, animal health, and natural resources. OSU has not conducted a statewide assessment of beef management practices in at least 15 years. As cattle and calves are consistently the number one ranked commodity within the state based on value of production and account for approximately 1/3 of the state's agricultural production in most years, current information is needed as a basis for research and education program planning.

### **Procedures**

Producers who participate in Extension meetings or request a copy of the Beef Cattle Manual will be encouraged to complete the assessment. Completing the initial assessment is expected to take 30 minutes. A sample of beef producers drawn by the Oklahoma Agricultural Statistics Service may also be used. If funds are available three years from now, a similar follow-up assessment will be conducted.

### **Benefits of the study**

Benefits that will accrue to participants and other Oklahoma beef producers include redirection of research and educational programs to address best management practices for beef production.

### **Data storage and use**

No identifying information will be recorded on the survey instrument. Computer files with survey data will be developed so that statistical analysis can be conducted. Only statistical measures will be reported; no individual responses will be reported. Data will be stored in password-secure locations fifteen years.

Participation is voluntary and can be discontinued at any time.

For information on subjects' rights, contact Dr. Sue C. Jacobs, IRB Chair, 415 Whitehurst Hall, 405-744-1676 or [irb@okstate.edu](mailto:irb@okstate.edu).

# Oklahoma Beef Cattle Project Baseline Assessment

## Stocker Producers

Please describe your current beef production and management practices. Your honest feedback will help in planning future educational programs. The survey should take less than 30 minutes to complete. Please do not sign this form. Your information will remain confidential. There are no wrong answers. Some questions have more than one part. Please fill in a bubble for each part of a question.

Completely fill in the bubbles to mark your selection(s) – Example: All beef producers should be (mark only one):

- ① Healthy   
  ② Wealthy   
  ③ Wise   
  All of the preceding

### Nutrition and Management

**Nearly  
Always**

**Rarely,  
if ever**

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |     |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|
| 1. For stocker cattle grazing spring and summer pasture, do you provide:            |   |   |   |   |   |     |
| a. A commercial mineral   | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ ⑦ |
| b. White salt   | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ ⑦ |
| c. Both white salt and a commercial mineral   | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ ⑦ |
| d. No salt or mineral supplement  | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ ⑦ |
| 2. How do you determine how much and what type of supplement to feed during winter? |   |   |   |   |   |     |
| a. Consult veterinarian   | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ ⑦ |
| b. Consult feed company representative  | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ ⑦ |
| c. Consult Extension educator   | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ ⑦ |
| d. Use a supplement that has worked well in the past                                | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ ⑦ |
| e. Use forage tests and estimated animal requirements to calculate                  | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ ⑦ |
| f. Use OSU or other software to design a supplementation or feeding plan            | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ ⑦ |

Implants are pellets that are inserted just under the skin on the backside of the ear of growing calves that release extremely low concentrations of various hormones or hormone-like substances.

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |     |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|
| 3. Do you implant steers?   |   |   |   |   |   |     |
|   | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ ⑦ |
| 4. Do you implant heifers not intended to be saved for breeding purposes? |   |   |   |   |   |     |
|   | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ ⑦ |
| 5. Do you implant heifers that are intended for replacements?             |   |   |   |   |   |     |
|   | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ ⑦ |
| 6. Cattle with horns are  |   |   |   |   |   |     |
| Don't buy calves with horns   | ① |   |   |   |   |     |
| Dehorned  |   | ② |   |   |   |     |
| Tipped  |   |   | ③ |   |   |     |
| Neither   |   |   |   | ④ |   |     |

### Forages and Introduced Pasture

- |   |            |            |                                   |
|---|------------|------------|-----------------------------------|
| 7. Your typical hay-feeding season is (mark one): |            |            |                                   |
| Less than 30 days                                 | 31-60 days | 61-90 days | 91-120 days    More than 121 days |
| ①   | ②          | ③          | ④ ⑤                               |

8. If you raise introduced pasture such as Bermuda grass, fescue or smooth brome, Old World bluestem, or weeping lovegrass, how frequently do you conduct a soil test?

- Annually (1)    Every other year (2)    Once every 3-4 years (3)    Rarely (4)    Never (5)    N/A (6)

9. Rotational grazing involves utilizing subdivided paddocks of pasture at different times. Continuous grazing involves using the whole pasture at one time. Research and practical experience have shown that the most important component of grazing management is a proper and flexible stocking rate, not which grazing system you use. Do you know how to set and monitor a proper stocking rate?

- Yes (1)    No (2)    Not Sure (3)

How often do you (fill in only one bubble per line):

10. Forage test to determine nutritive value of the hay or silage you **produce**?

- Nearly Always (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Rarely, if ever

11. Forage test to determine nutritive value of hay or silage you **purchase**?

- (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7)

Stockpiling forage means deferring grazing in a pasture to accumulate it for grazing when production is slow during the winter months.

12. Do you have land in native vegetation (e.g. prairie, shrubland or forest)? Yes (1) (2) No

12A. If yes in 13, do you stockpile native vegetation for fall and winter grazing? Nearly Always (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Rarely, if ever

13. Do you have land in bermudagrass or fescue? Yes (1) (2) No

13A. Stockpiling fall growth of bermudagrass and tall fescue requires nitrogen fertilization during late summer. Do you stockpile fescue or bermudagrass for fall or winter grazing? Nearly Always (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Rarely, if ever

**Quality Assurance and Animal Health**

14. Which of the following steps do you use to control ticks to reduce beef cattle weight loss?

- a. Pesticide (tags, spray, pour-on) (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7)  
 b. Pasture rotation (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7)  
 c. Prescribed fire (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7)

15. When do you deworm stocker calves?

- Do not deworm calves (1) (3) Approximately every 21 to 35 days  
 At time of purchase (2) (4) At "turn out" and again in the middle of the growing season  
 (5) Other, please comment \_\_\_\_\_

**Quality Assurance and Animal Health**

- |  |                          |   |   |   |   |                            |   |
|--|--------------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------------------|---|
|  | <b>Nearly<br/>Always</b> |   |   |   |   | <b>Rarely,<br/>if ever</b> |   |
| 16. For shipping fever complex vaccines, do you prefer to use modified live? | ①                        | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥                          | ⑦ |
| killed products?   | ①                        | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥                          | ⑦ |

17. Do you retain ownership of your cattle through the finishing phase? Yes ① ② No

- ↓
- 17A. If yes, do you collect carcass data on the cattle you finish (or feed)?
- |  |                          |   |   |   |   |                            |   |
|--|--------------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------------------|---|
|  | <b>Nearly<br/>Always</b> |   |   |   |   | <b>Rarely,<br/>if ever</b> |   |
|  | ①                        | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥                          | ⑦ |

18. How do you individually identify stocker cattle? Mark all that apply.

- Do not individually ID ①      ④ Electronic ID
- Visible ear tags            ②      ⑤ Freeze brand
- Tattoos                      ③      ⑥ Hot brand

- 18A. Location of the hot brand:
- |     |     |          |
|-----|-----|----------|
| Rib | Hip | Shoulder |
| ①   | ②   | ③        |

- |   |                          |   |   |   |   |                            |   |
|---|--------------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------------------|---|
|   | <b>Nearly<br/>Always</b> |   |   |   |   | <b>Rarely,<br/>if ever</b> |   |
| 19. Where do you administer intramuscular injections? | ①                        | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥                          | ⑦ |
| a. Neck   | ①                        | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥                          | ⑦ |
| b. Rump   | ①                        | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥                          | ⑦ |
| c. Hip or back leg                                    | ①                        | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥                          | ⑦ |

**Marketing and Risk Management**

22. What percent of your stocker calves purchased are preconditioned cattle? \_\_\_\_\_ %

23. Approximately how much would you say each component of preconditioning is worth to you in \$/cwt?
- |  |              |
|--|--------------|
| a. Weaned at least 45 days prior to marketing    | _____ \$/cwt |
| b. Two rounds of respiratory vaccinations        | _____ \$/cwt |
| c. Treatment for internal and external parasites | _____ \$/cwt |
| d. Castration (healed prior to marketing)        | _____ \$/cwt |
| e. Dehorning                                     | _____ \$/cwt |
| f. Trained to eat from feed bunks                | _____ \$/cwt |

24. Where do you obtain most of your stocker cattle?
- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| a. In-state auction                                    | _____ % |
| b. In-state direct purchase                            | _____ % |
| c. Through broker, direct from ranch                   | _____ % |
| d. Through broker, cattle put together from sale barns | _____ % |
| e. Video auction                                       | _____ % |
| f. Out-of-state direct purchase                        | _____ % |
| Total  | 100%    |

25. When are the majority of your cattle received?

- Sep - Nov     
  Dec - Feb     
  Mar - May     
  Jun - Aug     
  Year-round

26. When are cattle grazed?

- |   | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ | ⑦ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Winter grazing of small grains forage (Nov - Mar)                 | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ | ⑦ |
| Spring grazeout of small grains forage (Mar - May)                | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ | ⑦ |
| Both winter and spring grazing of small grains forage (Nov - May) | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ | ⑦ |
| Summer grazing  | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ | ⑦ |
| Year-round  | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ | ⑦ |

27. Type of forage base used for stocker cattle:

- |                     | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ | ⑦ |
|---------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Small grain pasture | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ | ⑦ |
| Bermuda grass       | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ | ⑦ |
| Fescue              | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ | ⑦ |
| Smooth brome        | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ | ⑦ |
| Old World bluestem  | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ | ⑦ |
| Weeping lovegrass   | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ | ⑦ |
| Native range        | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ | ⑦ |
| Other               | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ | ⑦ |

28. What percent of your male cattle purchased are:

- a. Sold as feeder steers \_\_\_\_\_ %
- b. Retained for feeding \_\_\_\_\_ %
- Total 100 %

29. What percent of your female cattle purchased are:

- a. Sold as feeder cattle \_\_\_\_\_ %
- b. Retained for feeding \_\_\_\_\_ %
- c. Retained for breeding \_\_\_\_\_ %
- Total 100 %

30. Do you belong to a cattle cooperative, alliance, or similar marketing program? Yes  No

30A. If yes in 30, what percent of your annual stocker cattle are marketed as part of a cooperative, alliance, or similar marketing program? \_\_\_\_\_ %

31. Which of the following best describes the way you typically market the majority of your cattle? Mark only **ONE**.

- Regularly throughout the year (e.g. monthly)
- Sporadically throughout the year
- Seasonally (1-3 times per year)

32. Which of the following best describes the way you typically market the majority of your cattle? Mark only **ONE**.

- ① Small lots (1 to 9 head)
- ② Medium lots (10-50 head)
- ③ Truckload lots

33. Which of the following best describes the way you typically market the majority of your cattle? Mark only **ONE**.

- ① Mixed lots (steers and heifers or variable weights/size in the same group)
- ② Uniform lots (steers or heifers all the same weight/size)

34. What percent of your stockers are marketed or retained among the following alternatives? The sum for each column should total 100.

	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>
Sold through a local or regional livestock market (within 50 miles of ranch)		
a. Regular (weekly) sales	_____ %	_____ %
b. Special sales (e.g. breeding)	_____ %	_____ %
Sold through regional livestock markets (more than 50 miles from ranch)		
c. Regular (weekly) sales	_____ %	_____ %
d. Special sales (e.g. breeding)	_____ %	_____ %
e. Sold through a video/satellite auction	_____ %	_____ %
Sold direct from ranch to a feedlot	_____ %	_____ %
Total	100 %	100%

35. Indicate the use you make of tools to manage the risk of market price fluctuations:

	<b>Nearly Always</b>					<b>Rarely, if ever</b>	
a. Locking in expected fixed prices with feeder cattle futures contracts	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
b. Locking in expected minimum prices with feeder cattle options contracts	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦
c. Forward priced with cash contracts (e.g. direct ranch sales or video auction for later delivery)	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦

**Business Planning and Management**

36. Do you have a long term (5 years or more) business plan for your farm, clearly stating where you want the farm to be? No ① ② Yes → 35A. If yes, is it a written plan? No ① ② Yes

37. Do you have a short term (1 - 2 year) operational plan? No ① ② Yes → 36A. If yes, is it a written plan? No ① ② Yes

38. How frequently are receipt and expense data typically entered into your farm record system?  
 Daily Weekly Monthly Semi-annually Annually Rarely/Never  
 ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥

39. Which of the following best describes your financial record system? Mark only one.

- ① Store receipts and bills in box or file only
- ② Summarize income and expenses using a notebook or ledger
- ③ Computerized records using Quicken or other personal financial software
- ④ Computerized using QuickBooks or other double entry business accounting software
- ⑤ Computerized using accounting package designed for farms (e.g. Redwing, FarmWorks)
- ⑥ Computerized using spreadsheet or database of my own design
- ⑦ Other (please describe): \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>More than once per year</b>	<b>Annually</b>	<b>Every 2-3 years</b>	<b>Rarely, if ever</b>
40. What kind of financial planning or assessment of your operation do you conduct?				
a. Summary for tax planning or reporting	①	②	③	④
b. Balance sheet	①	②	③	④
c. Cash flow plan or budget for whole operation	①	②	③	④
d. Income statement	①	②	③	④
e. Budgets projections for individual enterprises within operation, such as cow/calf, stockers, hay	①	②	③	④
f. Historical analysis for individual enterprises, such as Standardized Performance Analysis (SPA)	①	②	③	④
g. Other (please describe): _____				

	<b>Nearly Always</b>							<b>Rarely, if ever</b>
41. Do you record and keep information on								
a. Vaccinations	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	
b. Medical treatments	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	
c. Source of cattle	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	
d. Implants	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	
e. Deworming treatments	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	
f. Feeds used	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	





**Demographics – All Survey Respondents**

46. Gender of primary operator: Male  ①  ② Female
47. Extent of off-farm work: No off-farm work Full-time off-farm job Part-time off-farm job
- You  ①  ②  ③
- Spouse (if applicable)  ①  ②  ③
48. Primary operator’s age: 29 Years of age or less 30 to 39 40 to 49 50 to 59 60 years of age or more
- ①  ②  ③  ④  ⑤
49. What is the highest level of education attained by primary operator:
- Less than high school graduate  ①  ④ College graduate
- High school graduate  ②  ⑤ Some post-graduate work
- Some college  ③  ⑥ Graduate or professional degree
50. Number of stocker/feeder cattle managed each year:
- None 1-100 100-250 250-500 500-1,000 1,000-5,000 5,000+ head
- ①  ②  ③  ④  ⑤  ⑥  ⑦
51. In what county is your primary ranching operation? \_\_\_\_\_
52. State: \_\_\_\_\_
53. How important is:
- |  | <b>Very Important</b>   |                         |                         |                         | <b>Very Unimportant</b> |                         |                         |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| a. Generating enough farm income so that off-farm work is not necessary? | <input type="radio"/> ① | <input type="radio"/> ② | <input type="radio"/> ③ | <input type="radio"/> ④ | <input type="radio"/> ⑤ | <input type="radio"/> ⑥ | <input type="radio"/> ⑦ |
| b. Choosing practices to reduce labor use?                               | <input type="radio"/> ① | <input type="radio"/> ② | <input type="radio"/> ③ | <input type="radio"/> ④ | <input type="radio"/> ⑤ | <input type="radio"/> ⑥ | <input type="radio"/> ⑦ |
| c. Use of the internet for business purposes?                            | <input type="radio"/> ① | <input type="radio"/> ② | <input type="radio"/> ③ | <input type="radio"/> ④ | <input type="radio"/> ⑤ | <input type="radio"/> ⑥ | <input type="radio"/> ⑦ |
54. Which of the following best describes the past year’s household **net** income from all sources?
- Less than \$30,000  ①  ④ \$90,000 to \$119,999
- \$30,000 to \$59,999  ②  ⑤ More than \$120,000
- \$60,000 to \$89,999  ③
55. Approximately what percentage of the past year’s household net income came from your beef cattle operation?
- 0 percent  ①  ④ 41 to 60 percent
- 1 to 20 percent  ②  ⑤ 61 to 80 percent
- 21 to 40 percent  ③  ⑥ 81 to 100 percent
56. Race of primary operator:
- White  ①  ④ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- Black or African American  ②  ⑤ Asian
- American Indian or Alaska Native  ③  ⑥ More than one race

**Please return your assessment to your local county Extension office or mail to Damona Doye, Oklahoma State University, 513 Ag Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078. Thank you for your participation.**