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 with the same producers.

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. Carol Olson, IRB Chair, 415 Whitehurst Hall, 405-744-1676.
Oklahoma Beef Cattle Project Baseline Assessment

Cow-Calf 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Nearly Always</th>
<th>Rarely, if ever</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. For cattle grazing spring and summer pasture, do you provide:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. A commercial mineral</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6  7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. White salt</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6  7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Both white salt and a commercial mineral</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6  7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. No salt or mineral supplement</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6  7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How do you determine how much and what type of supplement to feed during winter?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Consult veterinarian</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6  7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Consult feed company representative</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6  7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Consult Extension educator</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6  7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Use a supplement that has worked well in the past</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6  7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Use forage tests and estimated animal requirements to calculate</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6  7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Use OSU CowCulator or OSU Auto NRC to design a supplementation or feeding plan</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6  7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Are bull calves that are not intended for breeding purposes castrated prior to weaning?</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6  7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

4. Do you implant steer calves prior to weaning? | 1  2  3  4  5  6  7 |   |

5. Do you implant heifer calves not intended for replacements prior to weaning? | 1  2  3  4  5  6  7 |   |

6. Do you implant heifer calves that are intended for replacements prior to weaning? | 1  2  3  4  5  6  7 |   |

7. Calves with horns are
   - Not applicable to my operation
   - Dehorned
   - Tipped
   - Neither
   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
Forages and Introduced Pasture

8. 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

9. If you raise introduced pasture such as Bermuda grass, fescue or smooth brome, Old World bluestem, or weeping lovegrass, how frequently do you use a soil test?
   Annually Every other year Once every 3-4 years Rarely Never N/A
   1 2 3 4 5 6

10. 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 No Not Sure
   1 2 3

11. Forage test to determine nutritive value of the hay or silage you produce?
   Nearly Always Rarely, if ever
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

12. Forage test to determine nutritive value of hay or silage you purchase?
   Nearly Always Rarely, if ever
   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.

13. Do you have land in native vegetation (e.g. prairie, shrubland or forest)? Yes No
   Nearly Always Rarely, if ever
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

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

14. Do you have land in introduced forages? Yes No
   Nearly Always Rarely, if ever
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

14A. 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 Rarely, if ever
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Quality Assurance and Animal Health

15. Which of the following steps do you use to control ticks to reduce beef cattle weight loss?
   a. Pesticide (tags, spray, pour-on)
      Nearly Always Rarely, if ever
      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

16. When do you deworm nursing calves?
   Do not deworm calves Mid-summer (spring calves)
   1 2 3
   60-120 days of age (branding) At weaning
17. When do you vaccinate your calves for IBR, BVD, BRSV and PI3 (respiratory disease complex) prior to marketing them?

- Do not vaccinate prior to marketing
- Single vaccination 2-3 weeks after weaning
- Single vaccination 2-6 weeks prior to weaning
- Single vaccination at weaning
- Multiple vaccination at 2-6 weeks prior to weaning and at weaning
- Multiple vaccination at weaning and at 2-3 weeks after weaning

18. Have you ever collected carcass data from your finished calves? Yes  No

18A. If yes:  
   a. Average Yield Grade  
      - < 2
      - 2-2.5
      - 2.6-3.0
      - 3.1-3.5
      - 3.6-4.0
      - 4.1-4.5
      - > 4.5
   b. Percent grading choice or higher  
      - < 50
      - 51-60
      - 61-70
      - 71-80
      - 81-90
      - 91-100
      - > 100
   c. Average carcass weight (lbs)  
      - < 650
      - 651-750
      - 751-850
      - 851-950
      - 951-1050
      - 1051-1150
      - > 1150

19. How do you individually identify cows? Mark all that apply.

- None (skip to next question)
- Electronic ID
- Freeze brand
- Hot brand

19A. Location of the hot brand:  
   - Rib
   - Hip
   - Shoulder

20. How do you individually identify calves? Mark all that apply.

- None (skip to next question)
- Electronic ID
- Freeze brand
- Hot brand

20A. Location of the hot brand:  
   - Rib
   - Hip
   - Shoulder

21. Where do you administer injections?

   a. Neck
   b. Rump
   c. Hip or back leg

22. What is the average body condition score of your first calf cows at calving?

23. The body condition of cows culled from your herd is
24. What percent of your annual calf crop do you sell as preconditioned calves? ______ %

25. Which of the following practices do you include as part of preconditioning as used in the previous question? 
   a. Weaned at least 45 days prior to marketing  
   b. Two rounds of respiratory vaccinations  
   c. Treatment for internal and external parasites  
   d. Castration (healed prior to marketing)  
   e. Dehorning  
   f. Familiar with feed bunks

26. How many days prior to marketing are calves that are not preconditioned typically weaned?
   Less than 7 7-20 21-45 More than 45

27. What percent of your male calves are:
   a. Sold as stocker/feeder steers or bulls  
   b. Retained as stocker/feeder steers or bulls  
   c. Retained for your own use as breeding animals  
   d. Retained for sale as breeding animals  
   Total 100 %

28. What percent of your female calves are:
   a. Sold as stocker/feeder cattle  
   b. Retained as stocker/feeder cattle  
   c. Retained for your own use as breeding animals  
   d. Retained for sale as breeding animals  
   Total 100 %

29. Do you belong to a cattle cooperative, alliance, or similar marketing program? Yes  
   No  
   If yes in 29, what percent of your annual calf crop is marketed as part of a cooperative, alliance, or similar marketing program? ______ %

30. Which of the following best describes the way you typically market the majority of your calves? Mark only ONE.
   1. Regularly throughout the year (e.g. monthly)  
   2. Sporadically throughout the year  
   3. Seasonally (1-3 times per year)
31. Which of the following best describes the way you typically market the majority of your calves? Mark only ONE.
   ① Small lots (1 to 9 head)
   ② Medium lots (10-50 head)
   ③ Truckload lots

32. Which of the following best describes the way you typically market the majority of your calves? 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)

33. What percent of your annual calf crop is marketed or retained among the following alternatives? The sum for each column should total 100.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sold through a local or regional livestock market (within 50 miles of ranch)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Regular (weekly) sales</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Special sales (e.g. preconditioned, breeding)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sold through regional livestock markets (more than 50 miles from ranch)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Regular (weekly) sales</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Special sales (e.g. preconditioned, breeding)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Sold through a video/satellite auction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sold direct from ranch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. To a stocker operator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. To a feedlot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retained only through stocker stage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. On my ranch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. As a custom stocker (e.g. background lot or wheat pasture)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retained through stocker and feedlot stages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Stockered on my ranch, then custom feedlot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Custom stocker, then custom feedlot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100 %</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

34. Indicate the use you make of tools to manage the risk of market price fluctuations:
   a. Locking in expected fixed prices with feeder cattle futures contracts
   b. Locking in expected minimum prices with feeder cattle options contracts
   c. Forward priced with cash contracts (e.g. direct ranch sales or video auction for later delivery)
Business Planning and Management

35. 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

36. 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

37. 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

38. 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): _____________

39. What kind of financial planning or assessment of your operation do you conduct?
   a. Summary for tax planning or reporting
   b. Balance sheet
   c. Cash flow plan or budget for whole operation
   d. Income statement
   e. Budgets projections for individual enterprises within operation, such as cow/calf, stockers, hay
   f. Historical analysis for individual enterprises, such as Standardized Performance Analysis (SPA)
   g. Other (please describe): _____________

   More than once per year  Annually  Every 2-3 years  Rarely, if ever
   1  2  3  4
40. Do you record and keep information on
   a. Vaccinations
      Nearly Always
      Occasionally
      Rarely, if ever
   b. Medical treatments
      Nearly Always
      Occasionally
      Rarely, if ever
   c. Number of offspring
      Nearly Always
      Occasionally
      Rarely, if ever
   d. Weights of offspring
      Nearly Always
      Occasionally
      Rarely, if ever
   e. Birthdates of offspring
      Nearly Always
      Occasionally
      Rarely, if ever
   f. Sire and dam of animals
      Nearly Always
      Occasionally
      Rarely, if ever

Reproduction

41. How often are Expected Progeny Differences (EPD) used as a tool in bull selection?
   Nearly Always
   Occasionally
   Rarely, if ever

42. What is your breeding season? Mark all that apply.
   1. Bulls kept with cows year-round
   2. Fall calving
      42A. If you have a fall breeding season, how long do you leave the bull with cows? (Include artificial insemination period, if any.)
      60 days or less
      60-90 days
      90-120 days
   3. Spring calving
      42B. If you have a spring breeding season, how long do you leave the bull with cows? (Include artificial insemination period, if any.)
      60 days or less
      60-90 days
      90-120 days

43. Pregnancy examinations are performed on
   a. Owned mature cows
      Nearly Always
      Occasionally
      Rarely, if ever
   b. Raised replacement heifers
      Nearly Always
      Occasionally
      Rarely, if ever
   c. Purchased heifers and/or cows
      Nearly Always
      Occasionally
      Rarely, if ever

44. Breeding soundness evaluations are performed on
   a. Mature bulls (2 years and older)
      Nearly Always
      Occasionally
      Rarely, if ever
   b. Young bulls (< 2 years old)
      Nearly Always
      Occasionally
      Rarely, if ever

45. What percentage require assistance in calving?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Easy pull</th>
<th>Hard pull</th>
<th>Cesarean section</th>
<th>No assistance</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heifers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cows</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Genetics

46. What is the average purchase price you normally pay for breeding bulls used on commercial cows?

$________

47. Predominant breed of bulls used in your operation (Mark only one.):

- Angus
- Hereford
- Charolais
- Limousin
- Simmental
- Brangus
- Brahman
- Gelbvieh
- Red Angus
- Other

48. Predominant breed of cows used in your operation (Mark only one.):

- Angus
- Hereford
- Charolais
- Limousin
- Simmental
- Brangus
- Brahman
- Gelbvieh
- Red Angus
- Angus X Hereford
- Angus X
- Other

49. Where do you obtain most breeding bulls?

a. Raise my own
b. Neighbor
c. Stockyards
d. Bull test station sales
e. Purebred breeder sales
f. Other (please specify): ___________________

50. Where do you obtain most replacement heifers?

a. Raise my own
b. Purchase from another source with a known history
c. Purchase from another source with an unknown history

51. Describe your commercial breeding program.

a. Bull is same breed as commercial cow herd.
b. Rotational cross
c. Terminal cross (2 breeds and do not keep heifers)
d. Use composite bulls
e. Other: Please describe ____________________________

Page 8 of 10
52. Rate these trait categories based on their importance relative to your bull selection decisions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trait Category</th>
<th>Extremely Important</th>
<th>Extremely Unimportant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Growth</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Reproduction</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Carcass weight</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Marbling</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. External fat</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Muscling</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Weaning weight</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Convenience (good disposition, polled, etc.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Eye appeal or physical appearance</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

53. Rate these trait categories in order of importance relative to replacement female selection:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trait Category</th>
<th>Extremely Important</th>
<th>Extremely Unimportant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Growth</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Reproduction</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Carcass weight</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Marbling</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. External fat</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Muscling</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Weaning weight</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Convenience (good disposition, good udder history, polled, etc.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Eye appeal or physical appearance</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demographics – All Survey Respondents

54. Gender of primary operator:  
   Male  1  Female 2

55. Extent of off-farm work:  
   No off-farm work  1  
   Full-time off-farm job 2  
   Part-time off-farm job 3

   You 1  
   Spouse (if applicable) 2

56. Primary operator’s age:  
   29 Years of age or less 1  
   30 to 39 2  
   40 to 49 3  
   50 to 59 4  
   60 years of age or more 5

57. What is the highest level of education attained by primary operator:

   Less than high school graduate 1  
   College graduate 4  
   High school graduate 2  
   Some post-graduate work 5  
   Some college 3  
   Graduate or professional degree 6
58. Number of breeding females in the herd:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>None</th>
<th>1-49</th>
<th>50-99</th>
<th>100-249</th>
<th>250-499</th>
<th>500-999</th>
<th>1000+ head</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   a. Commercial Cow/calf
   b. Purebred Cow/calf

59. Number of head of stockers grazed or back-grounded annually

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>None</th>
<th>1-49</th>
<th>50-99</th>
<th>100-499</th>
<th>500-999</th>
<th>1000+ head</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

60. In what county is your primary ranching operation? ________________________________

61. State: ________________________________

62. How important is:

   a. Generating enough farm income so that off-farm work is not necessary? Very Important Very Unimportant
   b. Choosing practices to reduce labor use? Very Important Very Unimportant
   c. Use of the internet for business purposes? Very Important Very Unimportant

63. Which of the following best describes your 2003 household net income from all sources?

   | Less than $30,000 | $90,000 to $119,999 | $30,000 to $59,999 | More than $120,000 | $60,000 to $89,999 |
   | 1               | 2                 | 3                  | 4                   | 5                        |

64. Approximately what percentage of your 2003 household net income came from your beef cattle operation?

   | 0 percent   | 41 to 60 percent |
   | 1           | 5                |
   | 1 to 20 percent | 61 to 80 percent |
   | 2           | 5                |
   | 21 to 40 percent | 81 to 100 percent |
   | 3           | 6                |

65. Race of primary operator:

   | White      | Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander |
   | 1          | 6                                     |
   | Black or African American | Asian |
   | 2          | 5                                     |
   | American Indian or Alaska Native | More than one race |
   | 3          | 6                                     |

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.