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TEN TIPS TO IMPROVE FEEDYARD EFFICIENCY 22
Post-wean
gains vs. profit

NUTRITION
Clay Mathis, a livestock
specialist at New Mexico State University,
describes results of two years of trials
comparing low- and high-input pasture
preconditioning systems. Researchers sorted
calves into two groups after finishing
weaning. One group received 32 percent-
protein range-cube supplements three times
per week, with daily gains targeted at 1.25
pounds. The other group had free access to a
self-fed pellet supplement. At sale time, the
calves receiving the self-fed pellets were 42
pounds heavier and had a $2.00 per head
greater final value. However, their precondi-
tioning feed costs were $42 per head higher
than the low-input calves. The calves receiv-
ing the more limited range-cube supplement
had a net income advantage of $20.54 per head.

Flog over-rested pastures

PASTURE MANAGEMENT
CRP land often contains large quan-
tities of old, dead grass that limits forage production and
quality when the land is returned to grazing or haying. While
haying and prescribed burning can remove the buildup,
grazing it can provide additional benefits, says University of
Nebraska agronomist Bruce Anderson, PhD. But not just any
type of grazing will do the job. A method called “flog grazing”
works best. Flog grazing, Anderson explains, places a very
high concentration of animals in a small area for a short time
period. He suggests using at least 100,000 pounds of cattle, or
100 cows per acre.

With that many cattle crowded into a small area, they will
trample much of the dead litter into the soil. This increases
soil organic matter, and it hastens the return of nutrients that
were trapped in the dead forage back to the soil. Also, nutri-
ents from the forage and supplements your cattle eat while
flog grazing will be spread back on the ground as manure and
urine, helping improve grass growth next year. As an added
benefit, removal of litter and trampling by animals opens up
areas for new seedlings and tillers to grow next spring.

Anderson says the intense grazing should last only for one
to seven days. Then move animals to another spot and repeat
the process until all overgrown acres in your CRP have been
flogged. Start flogging as soon as allowed, before the snow flies
and while at least some nutrition remains in the grass, using
temporary electric fences as needed. Next spring those flogged
CRP fields will grow fresh, high-quality grass for your cattle.

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