



Beef Cow Herd Planning Calendar

Use this planning calendar and the two-step process below to schedule yearly events for the beef cow herd. Events you may wish to plan for include breeding, pregnancy checking, weaning, calving, vaccinations, deworming, culling, and breeding soundness examinations. An example planning calendar for a fall calving herd is included. Keep in mind that all of the example events may not fit your herd, while your herd may require others which are not included in this calendar.

Two major categories of animals are to be scheduled:

- Calves (suckling period, preweaning, and postweaning).
- Breeding animals (replacement heifers, bred heifers, cows, and bulls).

Step 1. Pencil in the breeding and calving seasons.

Without a defined breeding season, the herd will not have a defined calving season. Calving begins about 283 days after the bull begins breeding and ends about 283 days after the bull is removed. Use the 283-Day Gestation Table to plan the breeding and calving seasons. An 84-day breeding season is a reasonable goal. This allows four 21-day heat periods for breeding.

All management milestones in the beef herd depend upon reproductive events. If animals are not in similar stages of the reproductive cycle, procedures such as vaccinations and pregnancy checking will be much less effective as management tools.

Use the four critical periods of nutrition for breeding females

Four Critical Periods Of Nutrition For Breeding Females

Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4
80 days (postcalving)	125 days (pregnant & lactating)	110 days (mid-gestation)	50 days (precalving)

Adapted from Corah, L. 1995. Beef Life Cycle Nutrition.

to evaluate quality of available forage and plan for appropriate supplemental nutrition:

Period 1. To maintain a yearly calving interval, the cow has approximately 80 days from the time of calving until rebreeding. In the case where it is desirable to move late calving cows to an earlier calving date, the cow may have less than 50 days to rebreed. Because mature cows typically take from 40 to 80 days to recycle and first calf heifers take from 60 to 100 days, proper nutrition during this period is important.

Period 1 is the most critical period, because the cow is not only maintaining a peak level of lactation but also beginning the breeding cycle and rebreeding. Nutrition during this period will have a major influence on conception rates.

Period 2. Once the cow is pregnant, the major nutritional need is to maintain lactation. Also, in most systems the cow should gain weight during this period in order to put on adequate "flesh" for harsher environmental conditions and poorer forage later in the year, especially for spring calving cows.

Period 3. This period has the lowest nutritional requirements. However, the cow should not lose excessive weight during this period unless she enters it in fairly good body flesh. If the cow enters in moderate to slightly

below average condition, she should maintain weight and possibly even gain some weight.

Period 4. This is the period most often overlooked on many farms. During this short period (about 50 days), approximately 65 to 80 percent of fetal growth occurs. Where birth weights are typically 80 to 85 pounds, fetal growth is 50 to 60 pounds during this period. Research clearly shows that improper nutrition during period 4 influences calf birth weight, calf vigor, and calf health and survival. Reducing the cow's nutrition to reduce calf size will not reduce calving difficulty. Poor nutrition during period 4 causes a longer postpartum interval, reduced level of milk production, and reduced calf weaning weight.

Step 2. Pencil in all other yearly management events, such as weaning, vaccinations, implanting, deworming, pregnancy checking, and body condition scoring to check on nutritional status.

For more specific information on recommended herd health and management planning, consult your veterinarian and county Extension agent. Also refer to Extension Circular ANR-881, "Health And Management Calendar For The Brood Cow Herd," and Extension Circular ANR-968, "Vaccinations For The Beef Cow Herd."

BREEDING ANIMALS

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR
CALVES				
REPLACEMENT HEIFERS				
BRED HEIFERS				
COWS				
BULLS				

EEF COW HERD PLANNING CALENDAR

	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	

AR

SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC

Example:

BEEF COW HERD PLANNING CALENDAR

(FALL CALVING)

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
CALVES		Vaccinate: • Blackleg • IBR/P13/intranasal • Brucellosis Calphood Vac for Heifers		Vaccinate: • Blackleg • IBR/P13/ BVD/BRV	Vaccinate: • IBR/P13/ BVD/BRV deWorm		Wean Calves		Calving Season Dehorn, castrate, ear tag at birth, implant steers			
REPLACEMENT HEIFERS	BREEDING SEASON								Vaccinate: • IBR/P13/BVD/BRV • Lepto/Vibrio	vaccinate: Lepto/Vibrio	BREEDING SEASON	
BRED HEIFERS					Preg Check & Cull vaccinate: • IBR/P13/BVD/BRV • Lepto/Vibrio			Vaccinate: • "7-way" Blackleg Booster	Calving Season			
COWS	BREEDING SEASON				Preg Check & Cull vaccinate: • IBR/P13/BVD/BRV • Lepto/Vibrio				Assess Body Condition	Calving Season	BREEDING SEASON	
BULLS	BREEDING SEASON								BREEDING SOUNDNESS EXAM		BREEDING SEASON	
											Vaccinate: • IBR/P13/ BVD/BRV • Lepto/Vibrio	

The specific events and procedures in this example calendar are for illustration only. Consult closely with the herd veterinarian to plan the events and procedures for your herd.

283-Day Gestation Table

Find date of service in upper line. Figure below indicates date due to calve.

Jan.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		
Oct.	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Nov.
Feb.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28					
Nov.	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		1	2	3	4	5	6	7			Dec.	
Mar.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		
Dec.	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Jan.	
Apr.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30			
Jan.	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6		Feb.	
May	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		
Feb.	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Mar.	
June	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30			
Mar.	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		Apr.	
July	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		
Apr.	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	May	
Aug.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		
May	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	June	
Sep.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30			
June	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		July	
Oct.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		
July	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Aug.	
Nov.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30			
Aug.	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		Sep.	
Dec.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		
Sep.	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Oct.	



Auburn and Alabama A&M Universities

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For more information, call your county Extension office. Look in your telephone directory under your county's name to find the number.

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