

As July creeps up on cattle producers in the Southwind District, much of the attention is set to continue baling winter feed. While this is true, there are also cow herd management decisions to think of. Jason Warner, K-State Research and Extension Cow-Calf Specialist, offers some insight on what we need to watch for in July:

## Cow Herd Management

For spring-calving cow herds:

- Score cows for BCS concurrent with grass growth.
- 2-4 year old females and thin females will respond most to early-weaning.
- If you plan to early-wean:  
Develop your plan for feeding and marketing calves.  
Prepare weaning/receiving pens and waterers in advance.  
If feeding early-weaned calves, test your forages and have your ration plan and ingredients in place 2-3 weeks prior to weaning.
- Schedule early pregnancy checking activities if not already done.

For late-summer and early-fall calving cow herds:

- Evaluate cows for BCS and adjust your plan to ensure mature cows are  $\geq 5.0$  and 2-4 year old females are  $\geq 6.0$  at calving.
- The final 60 days prior to calving represents the last opportunity to add BCS economically.
- Review your calving health protocols as needed.

Closely manage free-choice salt and mineral programs.

- Record date and amount of salt and mineral offered and calculate herd consumption on a pasture or group basis.
- Adjust how you are offering product to cattle if needed to achieve target intake.
- If consumption is 2X the target intake, then cost will be too!
- Properly store bags and pallets to avoid damage and product loss.

Continue to monitor bulls and their activity throughout the breeding season.

- Monitor BCS, particularly on young bulls.
- If pulling bulls from cows to manage the length of the breeding season, schedule those dates and have them on the calendar in advance.
- If bulls are  $BCS \leq 5.0$  after breeding, consider supplementing to regain BCS going into fall.

## Calf Management

- If creep feeding calves, closely monitor intake and calf condition/fleshiness.
- Monitor calves for summer respiratory illness.
- Schedule any pre-weaning vaccination or processing activities.

## General Management

- Visit [KSUBeef.org](https://ksubeef.org) for info and events!
- Evaluate grass growth and adjust your grazing plan as needed.
- Continue efforts to control invasive species in pastures.
- Employ multiple strategies, chemistries for late-season fly/insect control.
- Begin taking inventory of harvested forages for fall feed needs.
- If planning to harvest corn silage, prepare your pile/bunker site and equipment.
- Use the Management Minder tool on [KSUBeef.org](https://ksubeef.org) to plan key management activities for your cow herd for the rest of the year  
<https://cowweb.exnet.iastate.edu/CowWeb/faces/Index.jsp>.
- With high feeder calf prices, consider price risk management tools.
- Visit with your local FSA and extension office if you plan to utilize CRP acres for emergency forage use or other assistance programs.

Once again, thank you to Jason Warner for all of this great information. If you have any additional questions about the contents in this article, please contact Hunter Nickell at any of the Southwind Extension District Offices.