



# Cow-Calf Management Guide

## VI. Wintering—Cows and Bulls

**Management Objective**—To maintain the cow herd in good productive condition, as economically as possible.

**Critical feed period**—A time in which the cow and her offspring may suffer performance if not enough nutrients are supplied.

**Noncritical feed period**—A time in which the cow and fetus will not suffer materially if short-term shortage of nutrients exist.

**Trimester**—The 9 months of the pregnancy can be divided into 3 periods of 3 months each. Each period is called a trimester.

**Salt-mineral supplements**—A mixture of salt and several minerals that are blended to meet the requirements of the animals under a specific set of conditions.

### Points to Remember

- The cow has both *critical* and *noncritical* feed periods. **CL300, 303, 330, 331**
- The noncritical feed period for the cow is the second *trimester* of pregnancy. The least damage to the cow and fetus will be incurred by underfeeding during this period. **CL300, 330**
- Each producer will need to develop a bull management plan that works best for his operation. **CL300, 421, 436**
- As the bulls come out of the breeding pasture, one of the first steps is to appraise the bull battery and sort them three ways. The largest groups should be the mature bulls in good condition that won't require any special care. Perhaps the most important group is the bulls that are still growing and that will need higher quality feed in winter. The last group is the older, crippled bulls that have completed their productive life and are to be marketed. **CL212, 213, 218, 300, 421, 436, 1037**
- Bulls should be included in the normal herd health program. This is the recommended period to test bulls for trichomoniasis. **CL659**
- Always have *salt-mineral supplements* available. **CL300, 303, 306, 315, 327, 628, 629**
- Avoid toxins and poisonous plants. **CL612, 625, 626, 632, 635, 636**

**Chlorophyll**—The green portion that contains carotene: the substance used by the animal to synthesize Vitamin A.

**Nutrient analysis**—A laboratory analysis of a feed sample giving the specific quantities of the various nutrients.

- The herd should be treated for internal parasites. **CL685, 688, 690, 691**
- The herd should be treated for external parasites. **CL691**
- If feed is dry or leached of *chlorophyll*, you should sample feeds for *nutrient analysis*. **CL300, 301**
- Minimizing waste during feeding operations will reduce costs for cow wintering, bull conditioning, heifer development, and gain for growing animals. **CL581**

## Good Management Practices

1. Thin cows should have access to the better feeds at this time since they need to gain some weight before the third trimester of pregnancy. **CL300, 310, 325, 720, 747, 1130, 1170**
2. Replacement heifers that have fall calved will need extra feed during this period. **CL300, 325, 720, 745**
3. Probably the heifers that have weaned their first calf will need some supplemental feed. **CL300, 303, 306, 310, 325, 413, 720, 745**
4. Bulls should be part of the health and parasite control program. **CL436, 659, 690, 691**

## Plan Ahead

- Plan for third trimester feeding. **CL300, 315, 330, 400**
- Plan for future financing. **CL900, 905, 925, 930, 935, 940, 950, 951, 960**
- Analyze production records. **CL1002, 1035**
- Plan purchase of new bulls. **CL421, 1002, 1035, 1037, 1038, 1045**
- Are you where you want to be? **CL828, 950**



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