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Bull and Marketing Survey

Drought Webinars (23rd and 29th)

Range, Fire, Bulls, Vaccinations

COVID Webinar: Direct marketing
ideas and updates

Weaning Management In Drought

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Weaning and Pasture Management

- *Early Weaning
 - Effort to correct a management problem that is usually feed or nutrition related
 - Drought

Weaning Management

- “Strip and Ship”
- Fenceline
- Two-step
- Pre-conditioning
- Early weaning

Weaning Management: Strip and Ship

- Lowest input method.
- Typically results in price “correction” at market.
- Unless you sell directly to a buyer, limited opportunity for price improvement.
- No post-weaning risk for you.

Weaning Management: Strip and Ship

- If you do sell directly to buyer:
 - Vaccinate, castrate, etc. at branding.
 - Consider re-vaccinate 2-4 weeks prior to weaning.
 - Nose flaps? (discussed later)

Weaning Management: Fenceline

- Probably most common weaning transition practice.



Weaning Management: Fenceline

- Calves allowed visual and auditory contact through a strong fence.
- Typically 4 to 7 days after weaning.
- Idea is to reduce stress = minimize weight loss, minimize health issues, etc.
- Remember, in general, calves will lose weight 12 days after weaning.
- Response predicated on pasture size.

Weaning: Nose-flaps and 2 Step

- Concept: utilize nose flaps to prevent suckling



Weaning: Nose-flaps and 2 Step

- Calf wears device for 4-7 days then is weaned (abrupt or fence-line)
- Vaccination and nose flap 2 weeks prior to weaning?

Weaning: Nose-flaps and 2 Step

- When used in conjunction with abrupt weaning:
 - Can reduce walking, vocalizing, etc. (Alvez et al. 2014)
 - Growth and health responses are less consistent

Early Weaning

- Early is a “loose definition”. Anything prior to 6 months could be considered early.
 - April born are now 4 months
- Main reason to wean early to maintain forage resources in drought or other management situations where forage becomes limited

“Early”

- Weaning prior to 90 days requires intensive management and likely a last resort.
- Effects on reproduction only if weaning prior to 3 months.
- In the current situation, likely deciding to wean calves now at a lighter weight to save forage.
 - Impacts on reproduction should be minimal
 - What about cows and range?

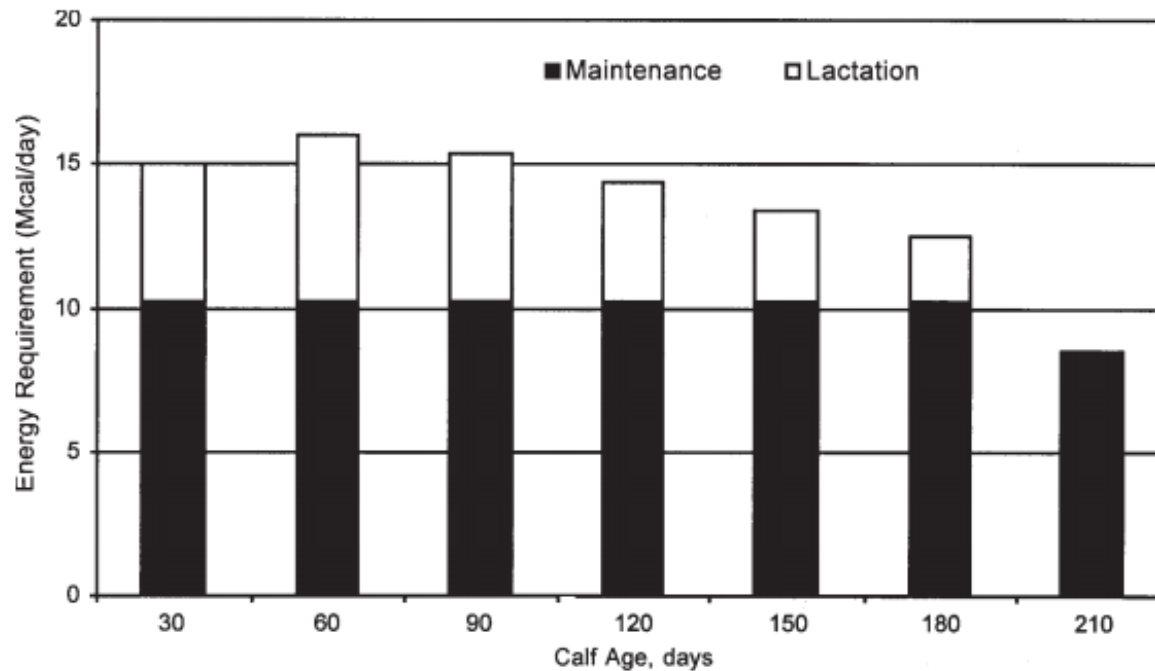


Figure 2. Maintenance and lactation energy requirement of an 1,100-pound Angus cow with 17.5-pound peak milk yield on specific days between calving and weaning (NRC, 1996)

Table 1. Conception rate, postpartum interval, and calf weight at normal weaning time (October 11) for very thin first-calf Hereford heifers and their calves.

	Treatment			Difference
	Normal Weaning (7 months)	Early Weaning ^b (6-8 weeks)		
Conception rate (%)	59	97		38
Calving to conception (days)	91	73		18
Cycling at 85 days postpartum (%)	34	90		56
First-calf heifer weight at normal weaning (lb)	788	875		87
	Normal	Early Weaning Pasture	Drylot	Norm. -Past.
Calf weight at normal weaning (lb)	373	330	374	43

^aLusby et al, 1981.

^bEarly weaned calves were managed in a drylot or on pasture.

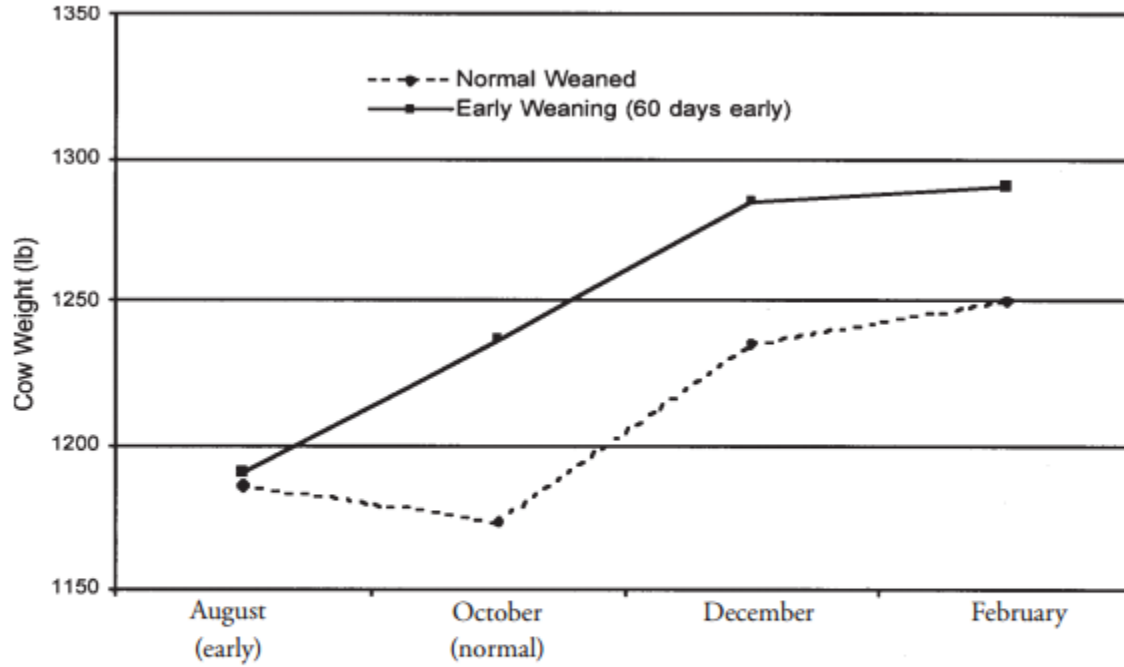


Figure 3. Influence of weaning calves 60 days early on cow body weight (Story et al., 2000)

Variable measured	Year and weaning date					
	2003		2004		2006	
	August	November	August	November	August	November
Cow weight (lb)						
EW cows	1261 (22.4)	1292 (18.1)	1275 (22.4)	1331 (16.5)	1450 (22.4)	1499 (23.2)
NW cows	1325 (22.4)	1086 (13.1)	1307 (22.4)	1236 (13.9)	1398 (22.4)	1331 (16.6)
Cow BCS						
EW cows	5.83 (0.235)	5.64 (0.159)	4.71 (0.235)	6.43 (0.165)	5.83 (0.235)	6.04 (0.139)
NW cows	5.83 (0.235)	3.59 (0.159)	4.75 (0.235)	5.16 (0.161)	5.13 (0.235)	4.81 (0.136)
Calf weight (lb)						
EW calves	389 (17.3)	–	411 (17.3)	–	443 (17.3)	–
NW calves	411 (17.3)	529 (16.2)	412 (17.3)	619 (16.2)	432 (17.3)	632 (16.2)
Herbage biomass (lb/acre)						
EW pastures	1984 (694)	1268 (113)	1778 (345)	1253 (128)	1905 (169)	1523 (221)
NW pastures	2126 (505)	1148 (83)	1403 (393)	999 (94)	1763 (235)	1014 (68)

Johnson et al. 2015

Likely Nature Forces Your Decision to Wean or Not

Critical Decision is What do You do With Calves

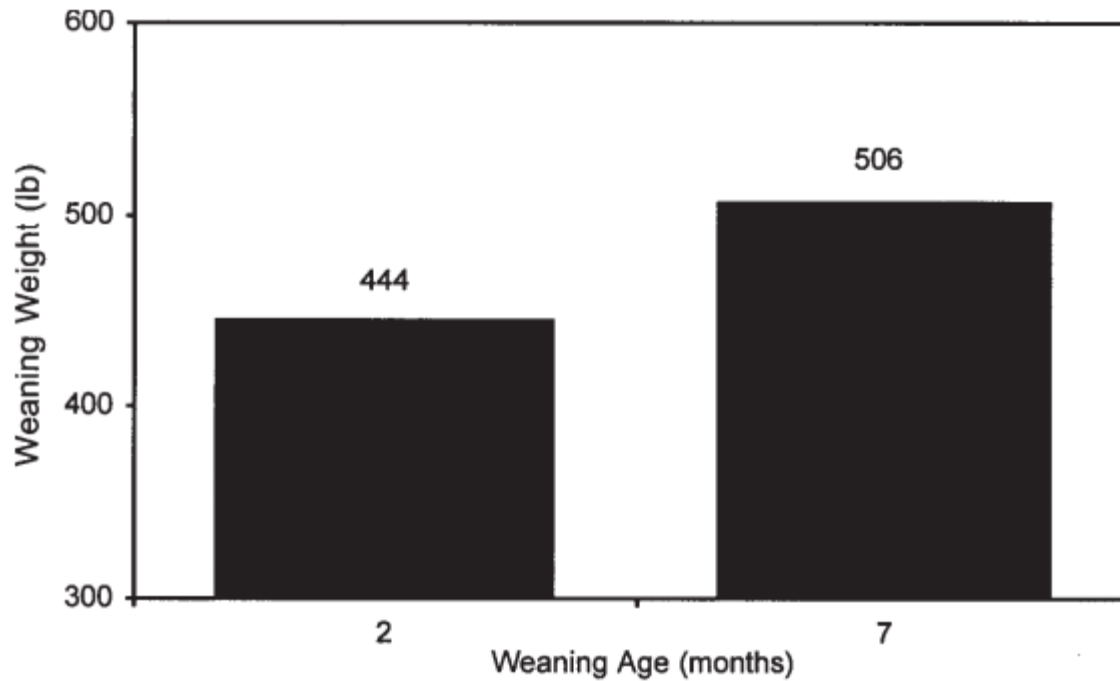


Figure 4. Difference in weaning weight on the normal weaning date (October 10) for calves weaned at 2 months of age managed on pasture verses calves weaned at 7 months of age (Purvis et al., 1995)

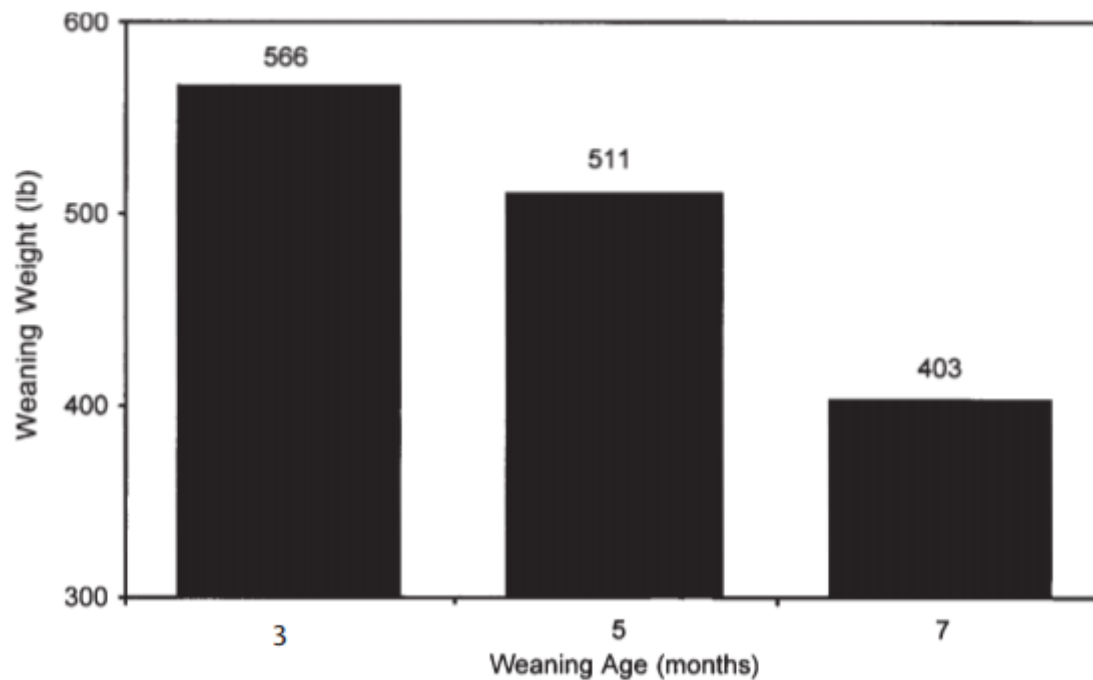


Figure 5. Difference in calf weights on the normal weaning date for calves weaned at 3 and 5 months of age and placed in a feedlot versus calves normally weaned at 7 months of age (Myers et al., 1999)

What to do with calves?

- Ship (weaned to grass and 45 days)
- Retain and put weight on them
- 350 lb calf x \$1.60 = \$560
- 60 days weaned x 2 lbs/day = 120 lbs
- 470 lb calf x \$1.50 = \$705

- Means gained \$145 in 60 days or \$2.42/day
- Need 11 +/- lbs/day. Ration is \$245/ton = roughly \$0.12/lb.
- Feed cost will be about \$1.35/day (total = \$81)
- If gains = 1 lb/day average
- 410 lb calf x \$1.55 = \$635 or a gain of \$75

Impact of Death Loss on 100 Calves (470 lbs) Weaned 60 Days

	Pounds	Lbs/head	ADG
2% Death	46,060	460	1.83
6% Death	44,180	442	1.53
10% Death	42,300	423	1.22

Early Weaning

- For every 2.5 days the calf is removed from the female the cow gains 1 more day of grazing.
- In general, not economical but can extend pasture use or be an alternative to selling COWS.
- Band-aid.

“Early” Weaning

Assuming 1 day extra grazing for every 2.5 days calf is removed

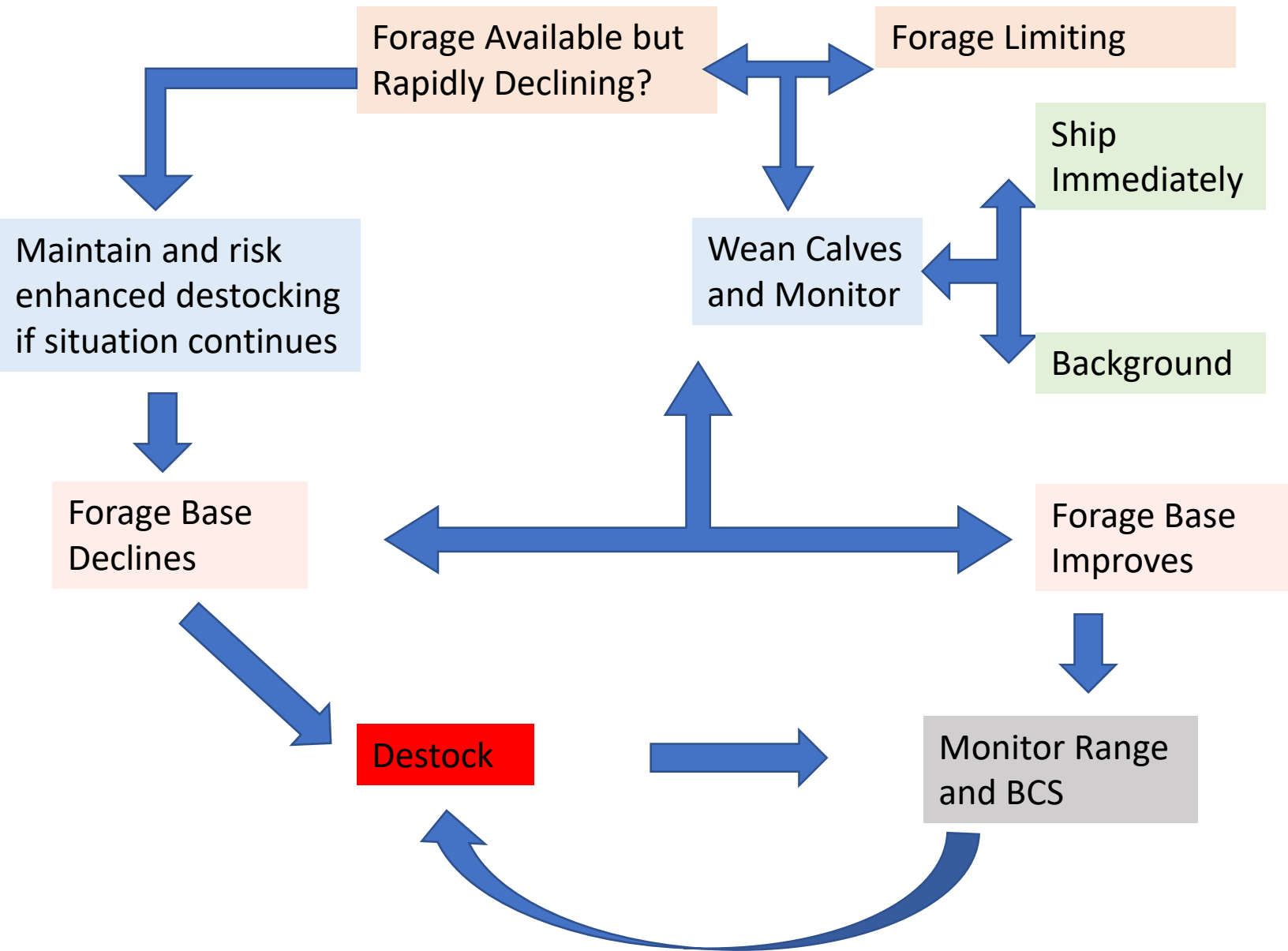
	30 Days	60 Days
Number calves weaned to run 1 cow for 6 months	15 Calves	7-8 calves
Number calves weaned to run 1 cow for 8 months	20 Calves	10 Calves
Number calves weaned to run 1 cow for 12 months	30 Calves	15 Calves

For every 100 calves weaned 60 days early, you save enough forage to save an additional 6 or 7 cows for 1 year.

Cull cows \$0.55-\$0.65

Calf Management

- Investment in facilities
 - Don't forget simple (electric fence)
- Grower yards
- Purchase rations
- If you don't have a good vaccination program, your risk is high
- Consult with your local County Agent to help with rations—source ingredients you have in your area!



How Your County Office Can Help

- Vaccination recommendations
- Contacts for grow yards or other resources
- Local commodity availability
- Developing rations
- Range monitoring and cow management
- Health considerations
- Emerging trends, issues, diseases, etc.

Questions?

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