

News Column

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COW/CALF MANAGEMENT – FEBRUARY 12

My dad was a great cook,...at least that's what I thought when I was five years old. He made Campbell's chicken noodle soup or Campbell's vegetable beef soup, and bologna sandwiches for us every day for lunch. Occasionally he would fry eggs – over easy.

Those are the only things I remember Dad ever cooking,...unless you count the nightly popcorn that he made for himself. He was good at that too, pouring just the right amount of oil and popcorn in a thin metal pan, then sliding the pan back and forth across the gas burner on the kitchen stove to keep the popcorn kernels moving so they would pop and not burn. He never failed when making popcorn.

Like my dad, I'm a decent cook,... if the recipe is simple. I can fry bacon and make hamburgers, and I'm starting to get good at slow cooking a pork roast in a crock pot. I'm not especially good at actually following a recipe though, and that's why the recipe has to be really simple.

When I think of ways to make money in the cattle business, I like simple recipes there too. Anyone who will listen has probably heard me rant about matching cowherd size to available crop residue instead of owning the maximum number of cows for which you can locate pasture. I like cheap winter feed as the first ingredient in my cow profit recipe.

The Cow/Calf Management meeting we will host at McCormick Elementary School in Olsburg on February 12 will focus on cow herd profitability. We have asked speakers to discuss

topics that will make you money – value added programs, parasite control, vaccination programs, and implants.

Dr. Ken Odde from the KSU Department of Animal Science will discuss his research and analysis of various value-added programs. Dr. Odde will walk us through the requirements of many of the popular value-added programs so producers can decide if one of them might work for them.

While looking at value-added opportunities, we invited Gary Fike, Riley County Extension Director, to review data on one of the easiest to implement value-added programs — implants. Some might not think implants should qualify as a value-added program, but if it is making each calf worth more money, that's definitely added value.

Sometimes we have to spend a little money to make more money, so we will also look at parasite control programs and vaccination protocols. KSU Beef Veterinarian Dr. A.J. Tarpoff and Dr. Tim Parks of Merck Animal Health will cover those topics.

Merck Animal Health and Union State Bank of Olsburg are covering much of the cost of the meeting, so the registration fee, including supper, is just \$5 per person. Reservations are needed by February 5 and can be made online at www.pottawatomie.ksu.edu.

The meeting starts with supper at 5:30 p.m. and, as I mentioned before, will be held on Wednesday, February 12 at McCormick Elementary in Olsburg. I hope to see you there.

If you have questions, you can reach me at the Riley County Extension Office at 785/537-6350. Or, you can send e-mail to gmcclure@ksu.edu.

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