

Livestock Health Series

Beef Cattle Herd Health Vaccination Schedule

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Introduction

A herd health management plan is vital to profitable beef production. Some producers, however, do not vaccinate until they experience a loss. The investment in disease prevention is less than the cost of disease treatment. Don't wait until a disease outbreak occurs before implementing a sound herd health program. For cattle to reach their performance potential, they must be healthy.

Many animal health problems can be controlled with good management, proper nutrition and vaccination against infectious diseases. Beef cattle vaccination programs vary, depending upon the type of operation and area of Arkansas. The purpose of this fact sheet is to provide the cattle producer with a basic herd health vaccination program. It is important to contact your veterinarian to determine if additional vaccinations are required for your area.

Table 1. Cattle Vital Statistics

Rectal Temperature	101.5 degrees F (38.5 degrees C)
Heart Rate (Beats/Minute)	60 to 70
Respiratory Rate	30 breaths/minute
Estrous Cycle	18 to 23 days
Estrus	12 to 18 hours
Gestation Length	285 days

Table 2. Vaccination Schedule: Cows and Bulls

Vaccine	Status	Schedule
IBR	Recommended	Annual (killed or intranasal)
BVD	Recommended	Annual
PI3	Recommended	Annual
BRSV	Recommended	Annual
Leptospirosis (5-Way)	Recommended	Annual (every 3 to 6 months in some areas)
Vibriosis	Recommended	Annual (30 to 60 days before breeding)
Trichomoniasis	Optional	Annual (30 to 60 days before breeding)
Pinkeye	Optional	As needed
Blackleg 7-Way	Optional	Annual
Anthrax	Optional	As directed
Anaplasmosis	Optional	As directed

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Table 3. Vaccination Schedule: Calves*

Vaccine	Status	Schedule
Blackleg 7-Way	Recommended	Prewearing
IBR-BVD-PI3	Recommended	Prewearing
Leptospirosis	Recommended	Prewearing
Brucellosis	Recommended	Heifers (4 to 12 months)
BRSV	Optional	As needed
<i>Pasteurella</i>	Optional	Prewearing
<i>Haemophilus somnus</i>	Optional	Prewearing
Pinkeye	Optional	As needed
<i>E. coli</i>	Optional	Vaccinate cows (twice 30 days before calving)
Anthrax	Optional	As directed
Anaplasmosis	Optional	As directed

*Do not use modified-live products on calves that are still nursing cows.

Table 4. Vaccination Schedule: Heifers

Vaccine	Schedule
Brucellosis	Calfhood (4 to 12 months)
IBR	Before breeding
BVD-PI3	Before breeding
BRSV	Before breeding
Vibriosis	Before breeding
Leptospirosis	Before breeding
Blackleg 7-Way	Before breeding
Anthrax	Optional as directed
Anaplasmosis	Optional as directed

Conclusion

Vaccination programs should always be customized for your operation. Items to consider while establishing a vaccination program include geographic region, type of cattle operation, frequency of introducing new stock, post-vaccination problems and export or interstate shipping requirements.

For best results, always follow the manufacturer's recommendations for dosage, method of administration, number of times given and proper storage.

Preventing diseases through the use of a herd health management plan saves time and money. For best results, work with a veterinarian who is familiar with your beef cattle operation. Justifying the cost of preventive management is sometimes difficult. The annual cost of a vaccine health program ranges from \$3 to \$10 per cow-calf unit. Experiencing a health disaster certainly drives home the point that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

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