
Tennessee Beef Evaluation Update

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Three loads of cattle belonging to 16 producers were shipped to Iowa last November to be fed out on the Tennessee Beef Evaluation. They were fed at the Brent Lorimor feedlot, a member of the Tri-County Steer Carcass Futurity Cooperative in Southwest Iowa. It was on average about a breakeven on the cattle this year, which was pretty good considering the fact that many cattle were losing \$100 per head or more across the country.

The steer cattle gained 3.82 and the heifers gained 3.00. On a dry matter basis, the feed conversion was 5.85 to 1 on the steers and 6.02 on the heifers. The feed cost of gain was \$26.86/cwt. and total cost of gain was \$42.52/cwt. The average profit was \$18.23 per head after all expenses including the value of 3 heifers that died from pneumonia. Our risk management program resulted in an average of \$65.52 per head added to the bottom line. In addition, the corn price was locked in at \$1.68 per bushel. When the return from feeding was converted back to feeder cattle value, it meant that on average they were worth \$115.37 when shipped. In other words, if we take what the cattle brought and deduct all expenses of feeding, hauling, interest, etc. and divide the result by the weight sent to the feedlot, the cattle were valued as feeders at \$115.37/cwt.

While making some money on the program is welcomed, the real reason for the Tennessee Beef Evaluation program is to obtain data on the cattle, so that management changes can be made in the breeding herd. In addition, the data has been used to help advertise or merchandise feeder cattle in sales the following year. The cattle graded 59 % Yield Grade 1 & 2s and 63 % low Choice or better. Seventy-three percent of the cattle were black hided and 14 % of those graded Certified Angus Beef (national average is (15 %). Four of the cattle graded Prime.

Each producer was provided detailed carcass and feedlot gain information on each animal shipped. There was a wide range in performance and grade as one might expect from a commingled set of cattle. The current plan is to again feed cattle with the Tri County Steer Carcass Futurity Cooperative in Southwest Iowa. The co-op receives much support and advice from Iowa State University. Depending on interest, we plan to ship cattle again in mid November. Cattle need to be weaned at least 30 days, double vaccinated according to protocol and weigh 600 to 800 pounds. Contact TCA or your County Agricultural Extension Agent if you have interest in the program and/or check out the web site at www.tnbeefcattleinitiative.org.