



Western Beef Development Centre

2002 WESTERN BEEF DEVELOPMENT CENTRE COWHERD REPORT

Introduction

The Western Beef Development Centre (WBDC) is an organization dedicated to:

1. providing relevant information to cattle producers and
2. demonstrating new production and management practices that may benefit the Western Canadian cattle industry.

The WBDC leases the Termuende Farm, which is located just east of Lanigan, SK, from the University of Saskatchewan. 300 Black Angus cows, 2000 acres of forage and crop land and a one-time feeding capacity of approximately 1200 head make up the Termuende Farm.

This fact sheet details the economics of the Western Beef Development Centre (WBDC) cowherd for the 2002 fiscal year -- April 1st 2002 to March 31st 2003. The WBDC herd consists of 250 Black Angus and Black Angus X Hereford cows and 50 Exotic X Cows.

Calving

292 cows calved at the Termuende Farm between March 29th and June 1st 2002. The end result of calving was 291 live calves, of which approximately 190 were sired by Black Angus bulls and 101 sired by Gelbvieh bulls. 286 cows calved unassisted, 2 cows required easy pulls and 4 cows calved with the assistance of hard pulls. The average birth weight for calves born during this period was 87 lbs/head. See Table 1 for a more detailed breakdown of calving and weaning performance.

Dam Age	# of Calves	# Calves Born Each Period			Avg. Date Each Age	Avg. Actual Wean Weight Less 3% shrink
		1st 21 Days	21 - 42 Days	42- 63 Days		
3	154	93	52	9	20/04/02	476.3
4	41	21	13	7	23/04/02	455.9
5	75	44	26	5	21/04/02	477.2
7	21	7	13	1	27/04/02	502.5
9	1	1			09/04/02	497.6
Total	292	166	104	22	21/04/02	475.3

Average Days of Age at Weaning	163.6
Weight Per Day of Age at Weaning	2.91
Average Daily Gain	2.37
Average Birth Weight	86.9
Average Adjusted 205 Day Weight	590.3

Calves Born During First 21 Days	56.8%
Calves Born During First 42 Days	92.5%
Calves Born During First 63 Days	100.0%

Breeding

On June 28th 2002 the bulls were turned out with the cows and exposed for a 45-day breeding period. The average cow: bull ratio amongst mature sires was approximately 42:1. Yearling bulls were each exposed to 10 cows. 4 bulls were used as replacements when hoof rot and other injuries occurred.

The cowherd was pregnancy checked October 19th 2002. 37 of 291 cows pregnancy checked were open (12.7%).

These 37 open cows were exposed to 2 bulls for 31 days (October 22nd to November 22nd 2002), and then re-pregnancy checked in late January. 78% of the exposed cows were re-bred (29 of 37) and sold as fall calving cows for an average price of \$1186/head on March 31st 2003.¹

¹ See WBDC fact sheet "Ever Thought of Re-Breeding Your Open Cows" for more information on the economics associated with attempting to re-breed these open cows.

Weaning

The calves were weaned on October 1st & 2nd 2002. 164 steer calves had an average weaning weight of 493 lbs/head and were valued at \$121/cwt. The heifer calves weighed 459 lbs/head and were valued at \$112.50/cwt. Refer back to Table 1 for additional details on weaning performance. The cowherd had an average actual weight of 1283 lbs/head at weaning (ranging from 982 – 1702 lbs/head). The shrunk weaning weight of the calves (477 lbs/head) as a percentage of shrunk cow weight (1219 lbs/head) was 39.1%.

Winter Feeding & Grazing

In total, the WBDC cowherd was on feed for 44,815 days, which results in an average ration cost of \$1.16/day during the feeding periods. The cowherd also grazed for 69,777 grazing days. Grazing was typically valued at \$0.75/day.

Replacement Breeding Stock

To maintain a herd of 300 bred cows, 51 May/June calving cows were purchased for \$1404/head in December of 2002.

Listed in Table 2 are the costs of production and returns for the WBDC Cowherd during fiscal 2002.

Table 2. 2002 WBDC Cowherd Cost of Production			# of Cows April 1st 2002	300
			Lbs. Weaned	138,807
Value of Production	# of Head	Total \$	\$/Cow	\$/Lb of Weaned Calf
Weaned Calves (291 hd - 477 lbs/hd. @ \$1.176/lb.)	291.00	163,169.00		1.18
Cull Cow Sales	20.00	15,750.13		
Bred Cows Sales	29.00	34,400.09		
Less: Purchase of 51 Bred Cows	51.00	71,604.00		
Inventory Adjustment		14,404.00		
Total Value of Production		156,119.22	520.40	1.12
Production Costs		Total \$	\$/Cow	\$/Lb of Weaned Calf
Winter Feed/Bedding (44,815 feeding days)		51,904.01	173.01	0.37
Grazing (69,777 grazing days)		52,500.00	175.00	0.38
Vet		6,000.00	24.00	0.04
Fuel		4,500.00	15.00	0.03
Machine Repairs		4,500.00	15.00	0.03
Building Repairs		1,200.00	4.00	0.01
Utilities/Miscellaneous		6,675.00	22.25	0.05
Manure Cleaning		1,500.00	5.00	0.01
Accounting		600.00	2.00	0.00
Operating Interest		450.00	1.50	0.00
Salaries and Benefits		34,500.00	115.00	0.25
Taxes/Insurance/Licenses		3,900.00	13.00	0.03
Depreciation		15,000.00	50.00	0.11
Capital Interest		4,500.00	15.00	0.03
Total Production Costs		187,729.01	625.76	1.35
Return to Equity		-31,609.79	-105.37	-0.23