

Fall is upon us and that means it is now as important as ever to begin the process of developing a management plan for the care of newly acquired high-risk calves that are to be fed through the winter months. High-risk calves are those with an unknown history that are often purchased from unknown sources. Calves purchased from a sale barn would fall into this category. Because origin of the calves is unknown, it is likely that vaccination records and procedures done are also unknown. If high-risk calves are purchased, proper protocol for backgrounding these calves should be followed to ensure they are healthy before integrating them with the rest of your herd.

Upon arrival at the ranch, all high-risk calves should receive a round of vaccinations. This should include blackleg, a respiratory vaccine that targets IBR, BVD, PI3, and BRSV, and a long acting antibiotic such as Micotil or LA 300. Calves should also receive a dewormer, and be castrated and dehorned. All of the newly acquired calves should be quarantined from the rest of the herd for two weeks. During this time period, a feed supplemented with Chlortetracycline (CTC) or tilmicosin should be supplied to aide in calf health and immunity. After the two week quarantine period, if all cattle are doing well with no evidence of contagious disease, the calves may be put with and cared for like the rest of the herd.

Proper care and management of high-risk calves is imperative, as it provides the highest return possible. Though this e-mail does not contain information about proper nutrition or husbandry tactics, they are very important for high-risk calves. For further information or details about the backgrounding of high-risk calves, please contact us.

Thanks,

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