

Replacement females are often viewed as the “next generation” of a cattle operation. It is the replacement’s duty to fill the position of females that were culled that year. This places tremendous responsibility on those replacements, as they must fill the shoes of the females that were culled. The females they are replacing have likely been in the herd for many years, and have produced many calves. Because of this, a female intended to fill that position should show potential to be very reproductively reproductive- one that will add great value to the operation. This week we will introduce our job description for replacement females.

For every replacement female in a cow-calf operation, we feel that the following criteria should be met. We believe that every replacement female should:

- * Have a good temperament
- * Have a strong immune system
- * Be feed efficient
 - have low nutritional requirements (doesn’t require high amounts of forage/feed to maintain production)
 - utilize available forage effectively and thoroughly
- * Reach puberty prior to the start of breeding season
 - have body weight of ~65% of mature weight at breeding
 - have body weight of ~85% of mature weight at calving
- * Have pelvic area and overall physical structure that will support pregnancy and calving
- * Conceive before the breeding season ends
- * Calve easily with no assistance needed
- * Recover from calving and breed back in the first 21 days of the breeding season
- * Raise and wean a healthy calf

Do you have these same expectations for the replacement females in your operation? If not, what do you expect from your replacements? What traits do you put most emphasis on when determining which replacement females are fulfilling their duty and which are not? Next week we will conclude our discussion on cattle job descriptions. We encourage you to begin thinking now of what a job description for the calves in your operation would look like.

Prices for feeder steers sold through the Superior Livestock Auction on Friday, January 30, 2015, are as follows: 485lb- \$293, 590lb- \$249, 685lb- \$216, and 765lb- \$205. The price for March 2015 750lb feeder steers on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange was \$205.35 on Friday, January 30, 2015.

Thanks,

Dr. Jesse Richardson, DVM

Henderson County Veterinary Hospital

903-675-5613

hcvethospital.com

hcvethosp@me.com