

Marketing cattle involves more than just selling. The key to good marketing is to produce a product that the market desires, then market that product through an outlet and at the time that will result in each product being sold at its best price. To help you produce cattle that are marketable we will discuss the three key areas that impact the marketability of your product- type, outlet, and time.

The first step in marketing cattle is to produce the type of calf that the market desires. Keeping an eye on market trends can help you decide what types of cattle are bringing the most money. Many factors affect this outcome, including the breed, gender, frame size, color, weight, age, and whether or not the calf has horns. Preconditioning calves may also be a good marketing tool to implement. This is a vaccination, nutritional, and management program that helps prepare cattle to better cope with the adjustment of leaving their current location. Although preconditioning may add significant value to the calves, it also adds extra expenses. It is important to determine if the added expense is worth the value that may be gained by preconditioning your calves.

The next part of marketing to consider is the outlet through which you will market your cattle. Although your local sale barn may be the most convenient outlet, is it returning the most income compared to other available outlets? Private treaty and satellite auctions are not always as convenient as an auction barn, but the opportunity for higher income may compensate for the decreased convenience. Sales such as the NETBIO sale in Sulphur Springs are created specifically for preconditioned calves. There are numerous outlets available to market your cattle. Choose the one that you believe is most efficient and will result in the best price for your product.

The final key to effective marketing is to sell your cattle at the right time. Although this may be easier said than done, it can be done well if you keep a close eye on the trends of the market. By doing so you will be better able to assess the market and make the best decision about when is the right time to sell. Time of year also impacts market trends. If possible, manage your cattle in a way so that they will be marketed at the time that cattle prices are the highest.

Because marketing has such a large impact on the profitability of your operation it should be taken very seriously and not simply considered as “just selling calves”. To produce cattle that are marketable, utilize the resources that are available to you, closely watch the market, then make your marketing decisions accordingly.

Thanks,

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