

# Making it Through the Drought

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**Extension Beef Cattle Specialist**



# U.S. Drought Monitor

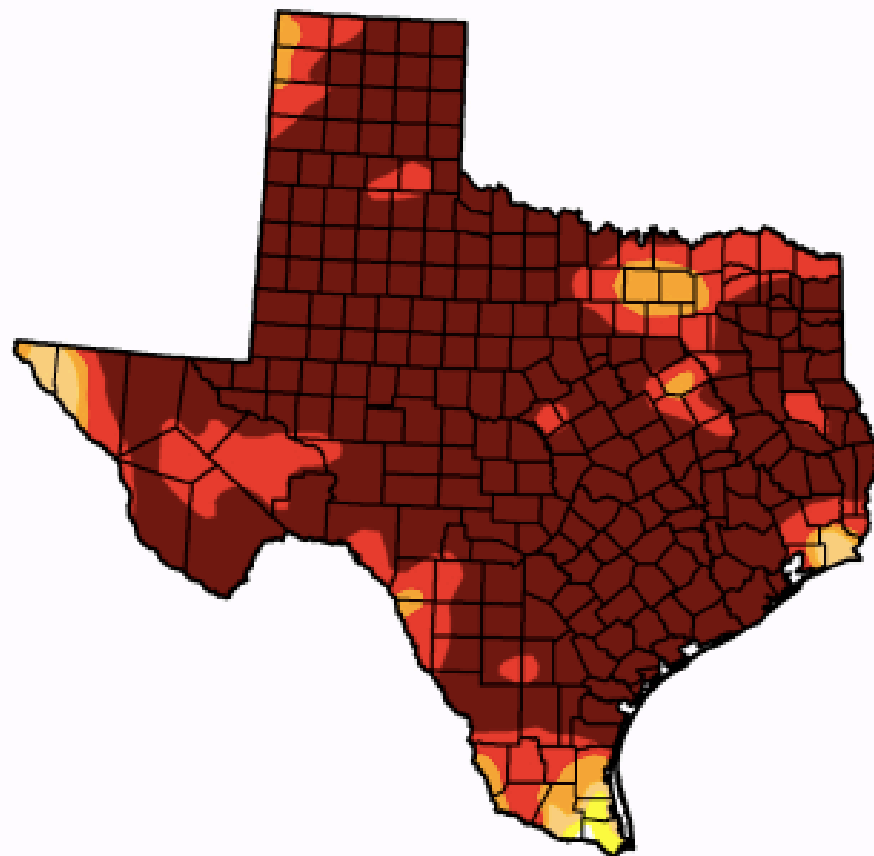
## Texas

August 9, 2011

Valid 7 a.m. EST

*Drought Conditions (Percent Area)*

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.07	99.93	99.48	97.99	94.27	78.26
Last Week (08/02/2011 map)	0.07	99.93	99.48	98.67	91.73	73.49
3 Months Ago (05/10/2011 map)	0.00	100.00	97.78	93.89	82.06	47.55
Start of Calendar Year (12/28/2010 map)	7.89	92.11	69.43	37.46	9.59	0.00
Start of Water Year (09/28/2010 map)	75.57	24.43	2.43	0.99	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago (08/03/2010 map)	89.46	10.54	2.45	0.22	0.00	0.00



Intensity:

-  D0 Abnormally Dry
-  D1 Drought - Moderate
-  D2 Drought - Severe
-  D3 Drought - Extreme
-  D4 Drought - Exceptional

# BROWNING

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NEWSLETTER

## Climate Change and Its Impact on Texas & the Southwest

TEXAS A & M SPECIAL EDITION



Mid-Summer\*



Late Summer/Autumn\*

**A La Nina may develop again in late Fall, Winter and Spring**

FIGS.3-4

\* Moderate eruptions in the Pacific Northwest will bring more moisture to the West.

© Browning maps

Cool	Hot	Warm	Dry	Wet
2°C or more lower than normal temps.	5°C or more higher than normal temps.	2-4°C or more higher than normal temps.	75% or less of normal moisture	125% or more of normal moisture

# What now?

- We have about 40 days of good warm season forage growing conditions left
- Winter forage?
- **If you are going to hold on, plan on feeding cattle until April 1**
  - 225 days
- **What will it cost you?**
  - **Dry cow, \$60 roll hay=\$1.50/day**
    - Add another \$1.00/day in supplement

# Have a plan!!

- The goal is to protect this year's income and next year's calf crop.
  - The future of the ranch
- We don't want to go into this with our eyes closed and with unrealistic hope
  - continue to sell cows to pay the feed bill
  - Nothing left to start over with

# Body Condition Scoring of Cattle

A photograph of a herd of cattle grazing in a field, overlaid with a blue tint. The text "Body Condition Scoring of Cattle" is centered at the top in a yellow, serif font. Below it, the acronym "BCS" is written in a large, yellow, serif font with quotation marks, positioned over the middle of the herd.

“BCS”

# Priorities of a Lactating Cow

**Calf**



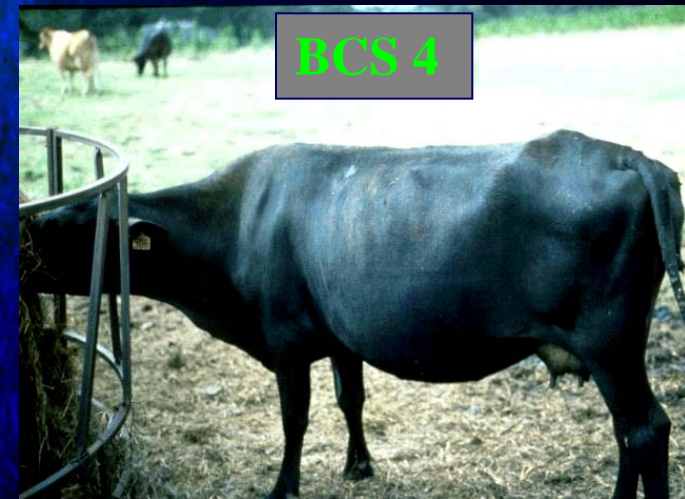
**Cow's Body Condition**



**Reproduction**

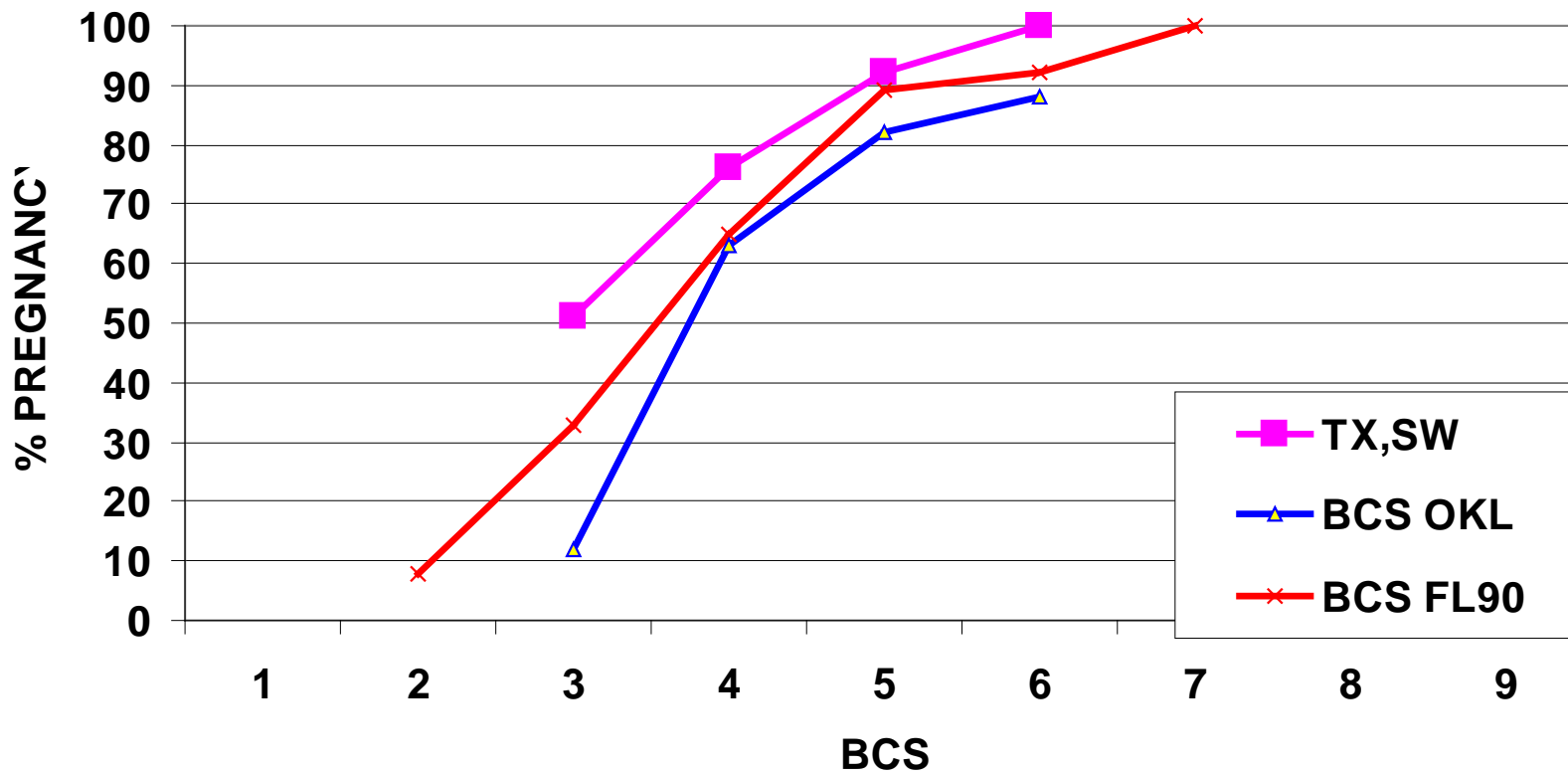
# Evaluate Body Condition

- We know that cattle should be at least a Body Condition Score of 5 at calving

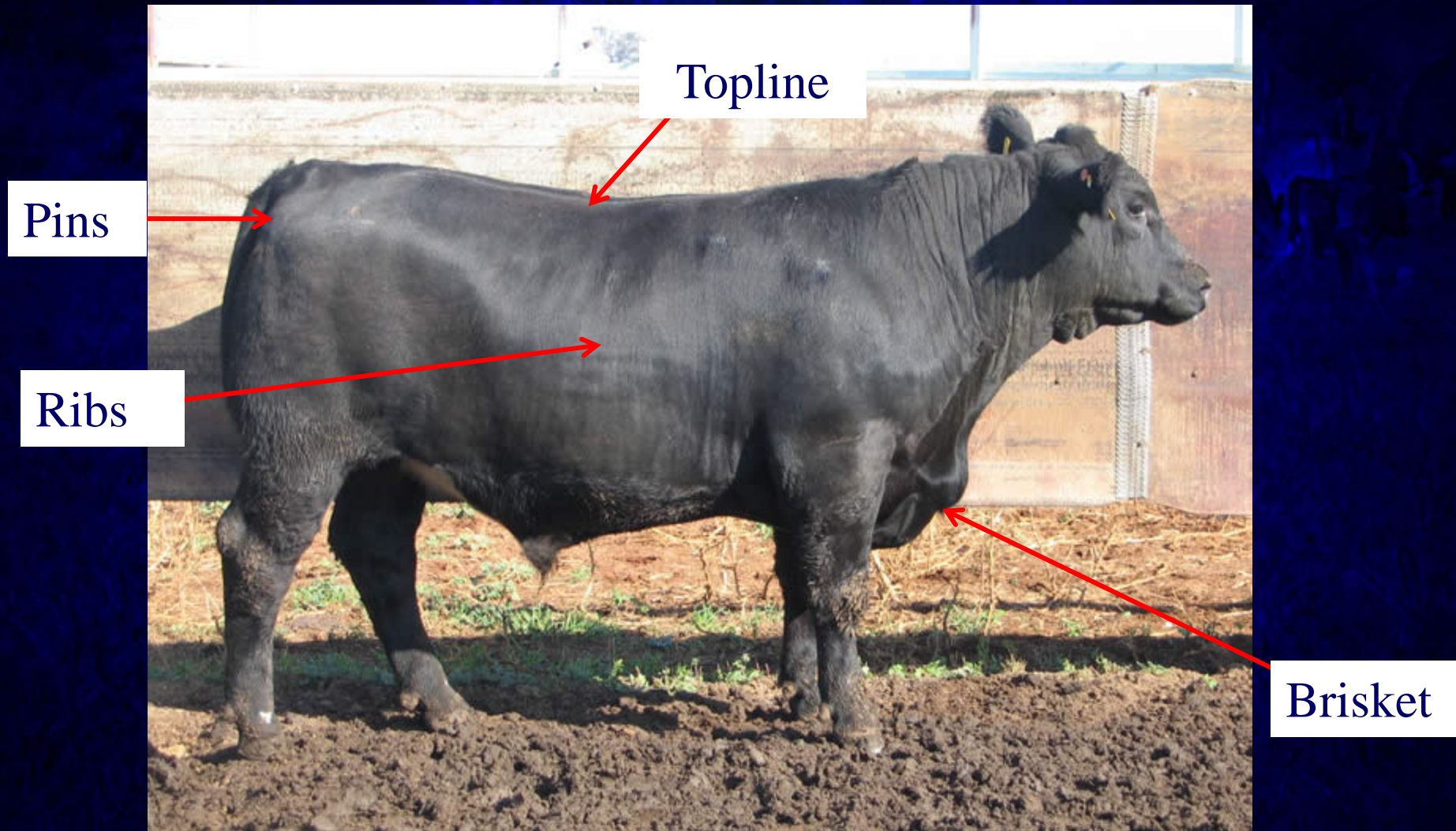




## EFFECT OF BODY CONDITION SCORE (BCS) ON % PREGNANCY



# Areas to Evaluate Condition



# BCS of 2



Little evidence of fat deposition. The spinous processes feel sharp to touch.

# BCS of 3



Beginning of fat cover over the loin back and foreribs. Spinous processes can be identified by touch and may be visible.

# BCS of 4



Foreribs are not noticeable, 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> ribs can be seen. Individual spinous processes not visible. Hooks and pins not as sharp.

# BCS of 5



12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> ribs are no longer visible. Areas on each side of the tail head are fairly well filled. Hooks and pins are not as prominent. Hindquarters are beginning to fill.



**BCS = 5 - 6**

## **BCS of 5 to 6**



**Ribs are fully covered. Hindquarters are plump and full. Beginning to take on an overall smooth appearance.**



# BCS of 5 to 6



# BCS of 6 to 7



Smooth appearance. Abundance of fat cover on either side of the tail head. Begin to see patchiness develop.

# BCS of 6 to 7



# BCS of 8



Animal begins to take on a smooth, blocky appearance. No longer can see the bone structure. Fat cover is thick and patchy.

# BCS of 8

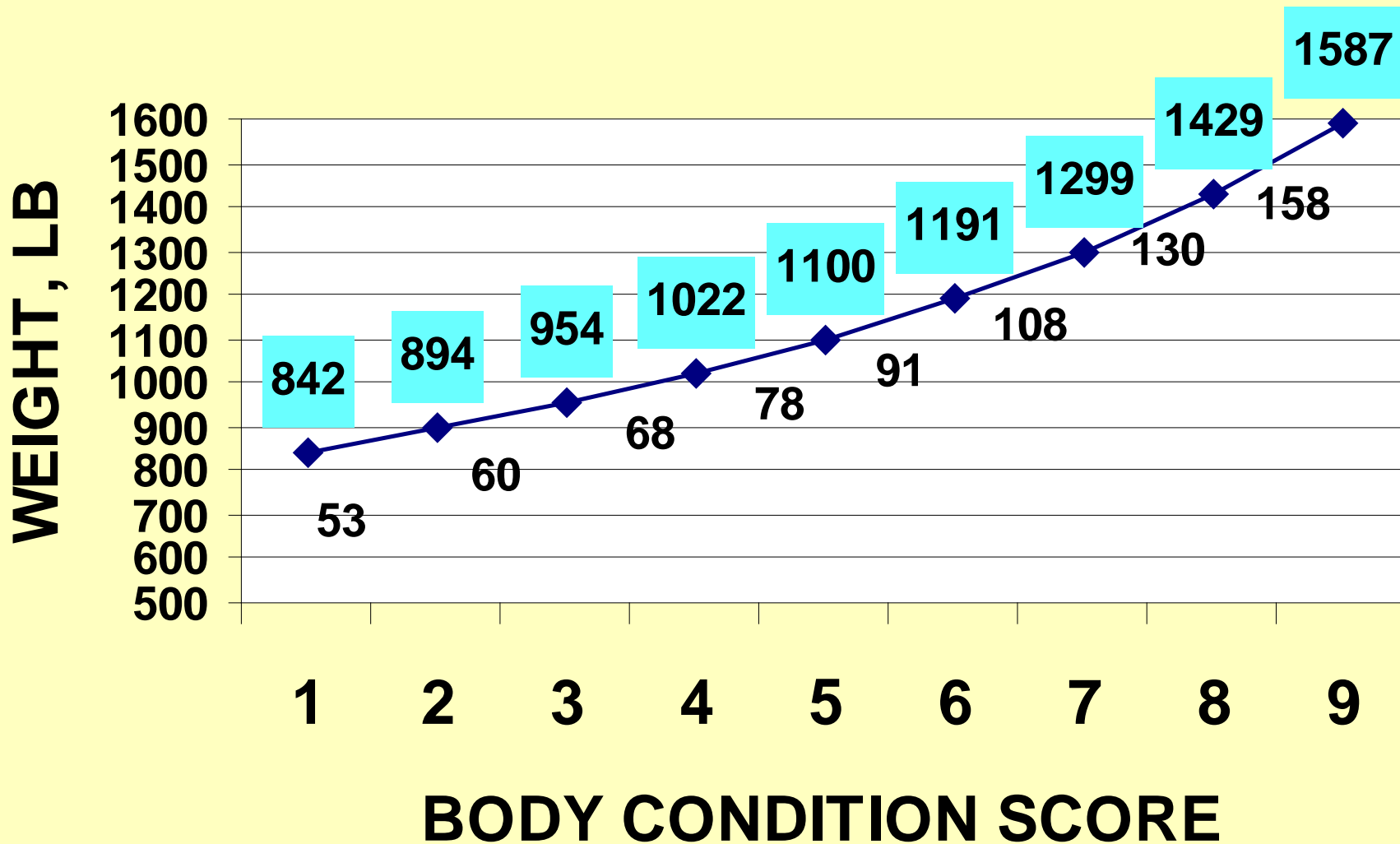


# BCS of 9

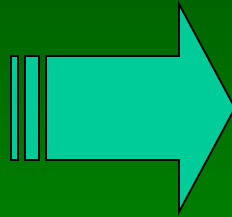


Bone structure not seen or easily felt. “Globs of fat” down the top, around the tail head, and down the rump.

# VARIATION OF WEIGHT FOR A 1100 LB COW AT BCS 5



# Capturing Value through Cull Cow Management



Beef Quality Assurance



Do we only grind cow  
beef?



**XL**

XL FOUR STAR BEEF, INC.  
2435 Gomez Ave  
Omaha, NE 68107  
PRODUCT OF U.S.A.

KEEP REFRIGERATED  
OR FROZEN

13004  
FAIR STAR  
★★★★  
BEEF

13004  
NET WT (LBS)  
66.70LBS  
NET WEIGHT

- Average year - Cull cow/bull sales are 10-20% of a cow/calf operation's gross revenue



# What determines value?

## *Cull cows/bulls*

- Dressing percent (carcass wt./live wt.)\*100
- Live weight
- Body condition
- Health
- Muscling
- Blemishes
- Quality

# What determines value?

## *Cull cows/bulls*

- Dressing percent
  - gut fill
  - finish
- Live weight
  - Light carcass discounts
  - Processing efficiency (packer)
- Body condition
  - No place for fat cows/bulls



# Slaughter Cows

## Carcass Weight vs Dressing Percent

Live Weight, lb	35%	40%	45%	50%
	Carcass Weight, lb			
900	315	360	405	450
1000	350	400	450	500
1100	385	440	495	550
1200	420	480	540	600
1300	455	520	585	650

$$\text{Dressing Percent} = (\text{Carcass Weight} / \text{Live Weight}) * 100$$

# What determines value?

*(continued)*

- **Health**

- Potential for condemnation
  - USDA inspector
  - Obvious defects ---- sell ASAP!!
    - Commission Co. or Direct??
    - Who's most willing to assume the risk?



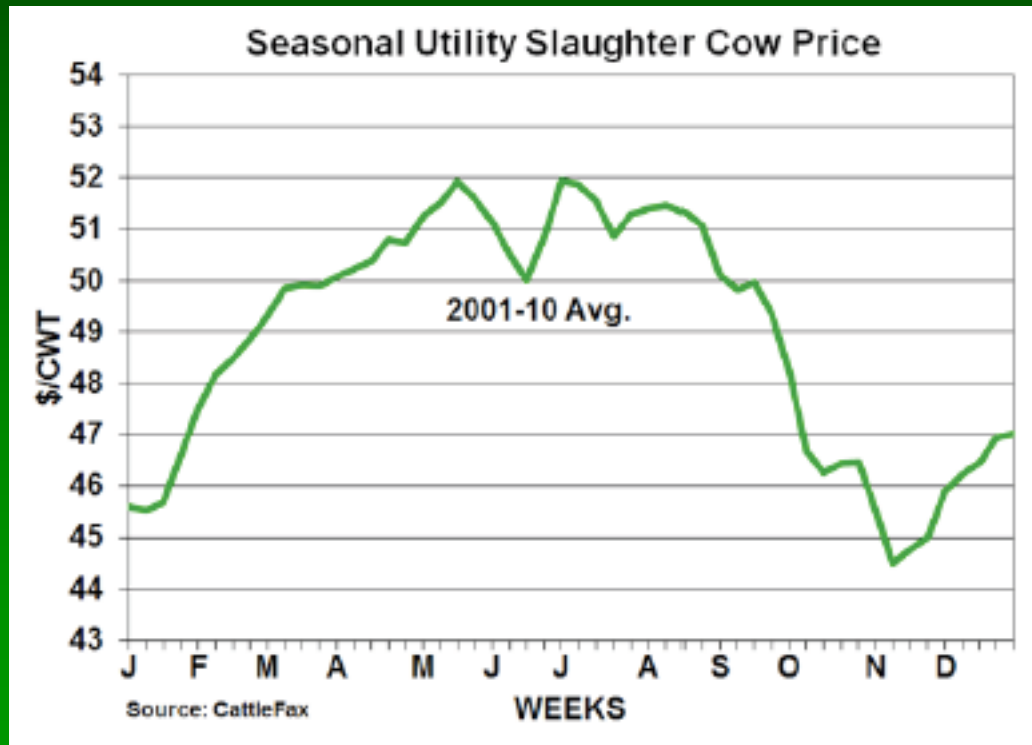
- **Muscling** >>>> lean yield

- **Blemishes**

- Brands, scars
- Parasite damage



# Seasonal Price Index Packer Cows



CattleFax, 2011

# Packer Cow Grades

Cow Grades	Dressing %	Lean Content of Trimmings	BCS
Commercial	55-60%	70-80	5-9
Breaking Utility	52-54%	76-82	6-9
Boning Utility	50-52%	78-83	5-9
Cutter	45-49%	88-90	4-5
Canner	40-46%	90-92	1-3

**August 13, 2011**

Good lean utility and commercial, \$49.00-56.00;  
Cutters, \$57.00-63.00  
Canners \$39.00-47.00



# Commercial



# Breaking Utility



# Boning Utility



# Cutter



# Canner



# Cow Beef



- Products
  1. Whole Muscle Cuts
    - ✓ Breaking Utility
    - ✓ Commercial
  2. Trimmings
    - Sold on lean content
      - 50, 100 lb box
      - 2,000 lb combo

# Packer Cow Grades

Grade

Fabrication

Commercial

Utility

Breaker

Boner

Cutter

Canner

Primals (rib, loin, round)

Whole muscles

Lean trimmings

Lean trimmings

# Cull Cow Management





66%

"Sixty six percent  
of the cows  
harvested in the  
U.S. had at least 1  
bruise"

2007 National Market Cow and Bull Beef  
Quality Audit





## Handle with Care

- gathering
- in the pens
- loading
- hauling
- at Auction barn
- on the truck
- at Packing Plant

# Culling Management

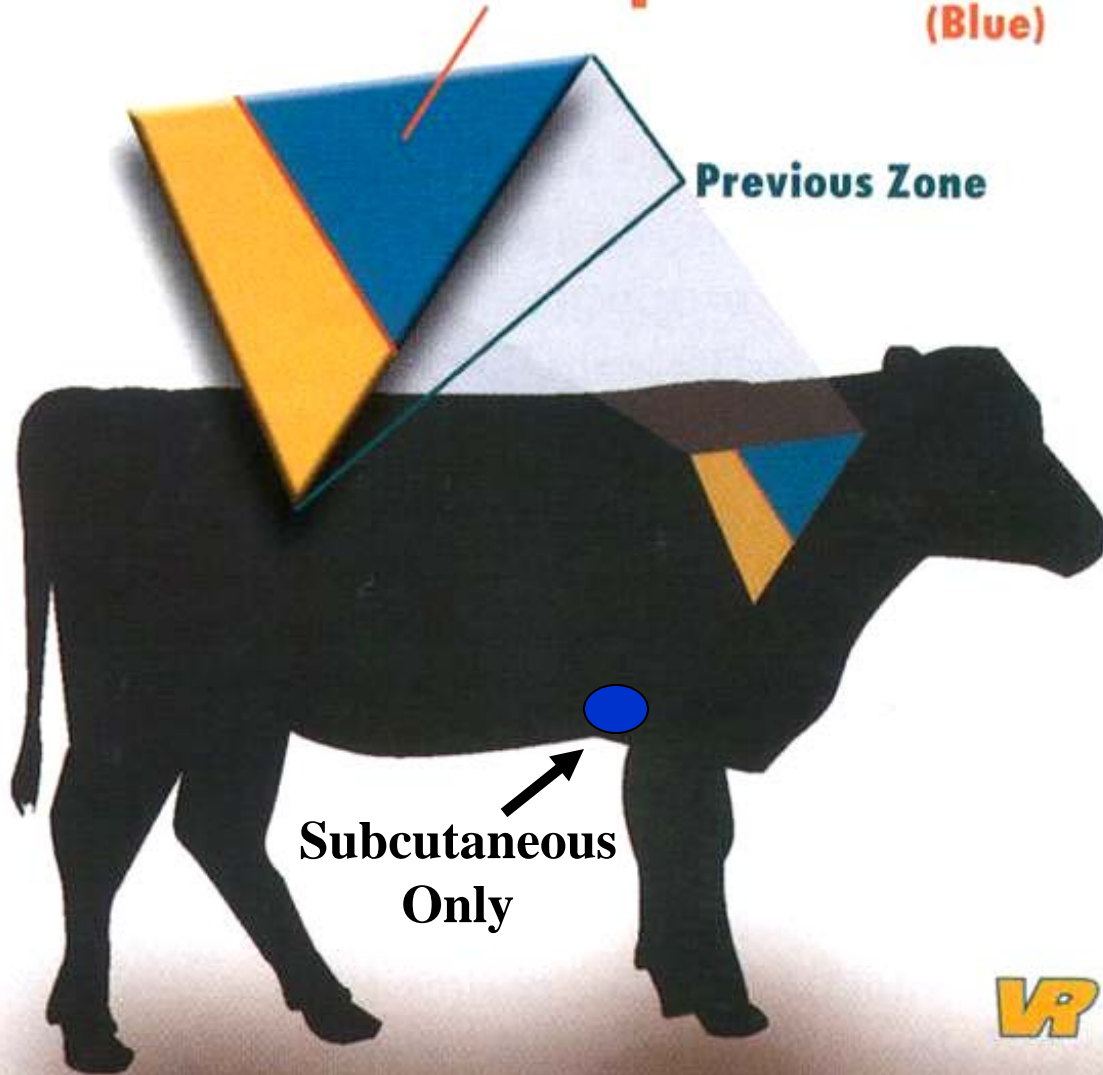
- Prevention of:
  - Lameness
  - Bruising
  - Hide damage
- Minimizing the consequences of:
  - Body condition
  - Bad eyes
  - Branding







# New Injection Zone (Blue)



# Avoiding Antibiotic Residues

- Is antibiotic warranted?
  - Consult with your veterinarian
    - Vet/Client/Patient relationship (as per TBQP program)
- Use only labeled products
- Dose according to label
- Use labeled ROA
  - never more than 10cc per injection site
    - Unless labeled
  - IV>SQ>IM
- Move all injections to the neck
- Follow withdrawal times
  - Maintain good treatment records



# SHOT UP AND SHOT DOWN

Livestock has been notified that there have been several cows and bulls that have been sold that either had buckshot or birdshot in the animals. The incidence of buckshot and birdshot found in carcasses is robbing the industry of profits, customers and competitive advantage. Do not ever use or allow employees to use any type of shotguns or pistols with rat shot to get cattle to go where you want them to. Also discuss this matter with all hunters that are allowed to hunt on your property to make them aware of the situation and surroundings before they pull the trigger. This is not a new problem but one that can be stopped one producer at a time. I have attached a handout from the National Cattleman's Beef Association for your review.





You

can be

a Packer Cow  
Buyer



\$30-\$45/cwt

Too small  
Too thin

Hide damage  
Light Carcass

"No Yield"



**\$57-\$68/cwt**

# To maximize Cull Cow value:

1. Don't hold on and decide to sell when they are too thin (BCS  $\geq$  3)
2. Avoid geriatric candidates (frail cattle)
3. Market crippled cattle direct to packer
4. Sell cows *before* they get too fat
5. Sell during limited supply times (spring)
6. Handle with care
7. Observe withdrawal times

# Thank You

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