Livestock Update Webinar
Nutrition Update 4/24/20

Dr. Bain Wilson  tbwilson@vt.edu
Challenges with Cow/Calf Nutrition

- Past year was extremely dry with limited availability of pasture and hay
  - Potential for cows to be in low BCS heading into winter
    - How do they look today?
  - Cows in poor body condition
    - Can negatively affect conception rates
    - Milk production
    - Development of the next calf while *in utero*

- Cows need to be in moderate BCS heading into breeding season
  - If thin, get them on a positive plane of nutrition
    - Can use commodity feeds or fat supplements if extremely thin

- Spring-calving cows are near peak nutrient requirements
Beef Cow Nutrient Requirements

Spring-calving 1,300 lb. cow 20 lb. peak milk production

Nutrient Requirement, lb.

Month Since Calving

Potential Time of Hay Feeding

TDN CP

Turn out

Calving 2/15/20

Breeding 5/5/20 to 7/24/20

Weaning 9/7/20

NRC, 1996
Beef Cow Nutrient Requirements

Fall-calving
1,300 lb. cow
20 lb. peak milk production

Nutrient Requirement, lb.

Month Since Calving

Potential Time of Hay Feeding

TDN CP

Turn out

NRC, 1996

Calving 9/15/20
Breeding 12/4/20 to 2/22/20
Weaning 4/7/20

Weaning 4/7/20
Body Condition Score

- **BCS 4**
- **BCS 5**
- **Moderate BCS**
- **BCS 6**
- **BCS 7**
### Relation between Cow BCS and BW

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Adapted from Lemenager, 2016 NRBCM Seminar
Challenges with Cow/Calf Nutrition

- This is time of year for high magnesium minerals
- Don’t get cheap with mineral program because of COVID
- May be tough for spring-calving cows to meet all of their requirements early in grazing season
  - Rapidly growing pastures are low in dry matter
  - Save best forages for spring-calving cows heading into breeding season
  - Be cognizant of additional nutrient requirements of first-calf heifers and 3 year old cows
- Fall-calving cows are at lowest requirements after weaning
  - Should be able to rebuild body condition on pasture
Other Challenges

- **Availability of feed**
  - Limited availability of DDGS with shutdown of corn dry mills
    - Related to low demand for ethanol to blend with gasoline
    - DDGD that are available are less affordable
  - Future disruptions in other commodities like corn gluten feed, soybean meal, soy hulls?
  - Be cognizant of local availability and prices of feedstuffs
    - Buy early so alternative feeds can be sourced

- **Holding livestock can be difficult**
  - Be aware of maximums for fat thickness for market livestock
  - Can limit fed to maintain quality and decrease daily feed costs