

*Grant Dewell, DVM,
Veterinary Diagnostic and Production Animal Medicine,
Iowa State University*

Don't forget your vitamins (and your protein)

Farmers welcomed rain across the state through October with hopes that the drought is over. However nice the rain was, cattle producers are already locked into some drought effects as forage production in 2012 was limited. Drought conditions throughout the growing season adversely impacted the quality of forage. What hay was harvested will be poorer quality than usual, especially for CRP (Conservation Reserve Program) hay.

Proper nutrition this winter will be critical to having a healthy calf next spring. Calves that are weak and doing poorly are typically seen in years where forage quality is poor. Proper attention to nutritional requirements in the winter when the fetus is developing is

critical to minimizing calf losses.

Vitamin A is typically limited in hay, but deficiency is usually only seen in late winter as cattle can normally store a four-month supply in liver tissue from green forage. However, under drought conditions, forage is lacking in Vitamin A so cows will be going into winter with marginal liver stores.

Producers should double-check that supplements are providing adequate Vitamin A or consider an injectable product to increase liver stores.

Vitamin E will also be deficient in mature hay and should be evaluated for supplementation.

Generally, mineral composition of forages does not change under drought conditions.

However, CRP hay will typically have different types of grasses so there may be a different mineral profile compared to what you might see from traditional improved grass hay.

Protein is critical for fetal development and reproductive efficiency. Dormant forage will be lower in protein than normal. Historically, Iowa cow-calf producers probably fed excess protein during winter feeding. This year, most forages will be low in protein and producers should consider a supplemental protein source.

Talk with your veterinarian or Beef Extension Specialist for supplement recommendations that are specific for your herd.

Watch mailboxes in December for Ag Census

The 2007 U.S. Census of Agriculture revealed that nearly one-third of all U.S. farmers raised beef cows. After nearly three years of a growing drought over the southern plains and Midwest, we will see the full impact after the 2012 Census of Agriculture is taken.

The National Agricultural Statistics Service will begin mailing the Census forms in late December to collect data for the 2012 calendar year. Census forms are due back by Feb. 4, 2013.

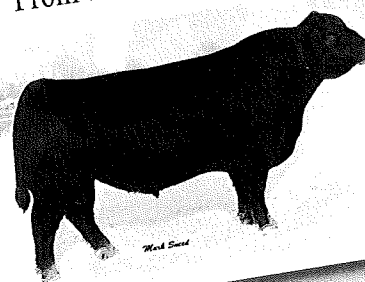
This year, farmers can also choose to fill out their census form online via a secure website noted on the mailed form.

Although the initial 24-page form might look daunting, "It goes pretty quickly if you follow all the skips that don't apply to your farm," says Greg Thessen, director of the NASS Iowa field office.

Census of Agriculture information is used by farmers to track national trends as they make enterprise decisions. It's also used by businesses and government agencies to plan farm services in the future, and it will be used by members of Congress as they make decisions about the U.S. farm program in the future.

Wical's Angus 20th Annual Private Treaty Production Sale Sunday, Nov. 25 2012

From 10:00 a.m. til 3:00 p.m.



Sale feature will be the full sister to the 2012 ICA top-selling bull that sold at the Tama sale, selling to Noelck Farms, Hampton, IA for \$10,000!

Featuring:

Registered Angus heifers and show steers from the top A.I. sires in the breed: Smart Stack, Sitz Upward, WAR Party, Sydgen Mandate and Regis.

at the farm - 1/2 mile east of Grundy Center on Hwy 175

24211 Diagonal Rd • Grundy Center, IA 50638
Steve Wical 319-824-3101 or 319-239-4278