



Beef Bull Monitoring 2021

Background Information

Reproduction is a primary determinant of cow calf production efficiency. Breeding soundness exams (BSE) are helpful in identifying bulls with poor fertility prior to the breeding season. However, BSEs are not reliable in identifying the potential for breeding impediments that develop during the breeding season such as injury or foot rot which can have devastating effects on pregnancy rates. In addition, BSEs do not adequately evaluate libido and mating ability of bulls which has been shown to directly impact pregnancy rates.

Purpose of the research

Evaluate on-animal sensors (OAS – aka “Smart Tags”) to identify breeding impediments that may occur during the breeding season and measure the libido of bulls in multiple sire pastures.

Eligibility Criteria

- 60-70 days-controlled breeding season. Multiple sire (preferred) breeding groups with a bull to cow ratio of 1:25 to 1:35. (Minimum herd size 50 cows with 2 bulls).
- Provide access to bulls before breeding, access to herd visits during breeding, and cows for pregnancy check (35 to 60 days after the end of breeding).
- Minimal records required: Individually identified cattle (i.e. ear tags) cow age and calving date, bull age.



What will happen during the study?

Before breeding begins:

- An initial visit to address questions and concerns, walk pastures, and discuss options.
- At least 10 days prior to the start of breeding, research team will perform an initial BSE, fit animals for devices (one GPS collar and one accelerometer ear tag), and gather preliminary data.

During breeding:

- Turnout of bulls as you would any breeding season.
- Daily (whenever possible) monitoring of bulls to identify possible lameness or other issues during breeding (performed by the producer). Record keeping of health issues, pasture changes, etc.
- Twice weekly visits by research team to observe breeding behavior, check on devices, and locomotion score bulls (just visual in the pasture).
- If a bull develops any health problem, we ask that you record the observation in the daily survey and notify us immediately. The research team/local veterinarian will assess the severity and provide a full diagnosis of the problem.

After Breeding

- At the end of the breeding season bring bulls through the chute to remove the sensors.
- Pregnancy check 35-60 days following the breeding season (performed by research team).

Contact:

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