



Value Added Calf Programs for New Mexico Livestock Producers

Guide B-220

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New Mexico livestock producers often evaluate opportunities to market their calves in a more aggressive manner. Due to the thin margin associated with range livestock production throughout New Mexico, any additional revenue generated may be essential. Projections for the 2008 production year estimate that the average return on a per-animal unit in New Mexico will be less than \$13 (Hawkes and Libbin, 2008). This net profit value is not an effective level of sustainability in the industry as costs continue to rise.

One way to potentially increase the value of each calf marketed annually is the Value Added Calf Program (VAC), available from Superior Livestock. Other programs are available for livestock producers as well. This program, in addition to providing genetic information for each lot of calves sold, provides information that dictates which of the VAC programs the producers participated in, if they indeed did. The VAC programs are defined as follows:

VAC Pre-Con (VAC program 1)

This program is made for calves from various sources that have a weaning period of 60 days. The vaccines that are included are Clostridial 7-way, IBR, PI3, BVD, BRSV viral vaccine, and Pasteurella Haemolytica and/or Multocida. Program 1 is inclusive of the vaccine program as well as the minimum 60-day weaning period.

VAC 34 (VAC program 2)

The VAC 34 program is employed where calves have been vaccinated while still on the mother cow. The vaccination schedule should begin at approximately 2–4 months of age with vaccines that include Clostridial 7-way (modified live or chemically altered), IBR, PI3, BVD, BRSV viral vaccine, and Pasteurella Haemolytica and/or Multocida. Only one dose is needed to comply with the guidelines established in VAC 34. A retention period is not necessary for producers employing calves in this program.

Table 1. Summary of VAC Program Cost

VAC Program	Cost per head
VAC Pre-Con	\$5.12
VAC 34	\$5.12
VAC 45 Option 1	\$5.12
VAC 45 Option 2	\$14.78

VAC 45 (VAC program 3, option 1)

The first vaccination schedule should begin at approximately 2–4 weeks prior to weaning. The second should be administered at weaning. There should be a minimum of 2–6 weeks between vaccinations. Two doses of Clostridial 7-way, IBR, PI3, BVD, BRSV viral vaccine (modified live or chemically altered), and Pasteurella Haemolytica and/or Multocida must be administered for calves to comply with VAC 45 option one. The producer is required to retain ownership for 45 days after weaning.

VAC 45 (VAC program 3, option 2)

The first vaccination is applied at weaning. The booster should be administered 2–4 weeks later. There should be a minimum of 14 days between the booster and shipment of the calves. Two doses of Clostridial 7-way, IBR, PI3, BVD, BRSV viral vaccine (modified live or chemically altered), and Pasteurella Haemolytica and/or Multocida must be administered for calves to comply with VAC 45 option one. The producer is required to retain ownership for 45 days after weaning.

The cost of each program is represented in Table 1. These are the sum totals of all costs, including vaccinations, associated with each of the four VAC programs.

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References

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