

# Cost Effective Vaccines That Save You Money

Phil Rucker, Livestock Agent, Davie and Yadkin County

A herd health management plan is vital to profitable beef production. The investment in disease prevention is less than the cost of disease treatment. We vaccinate cattle to decrease the incidence and severity of disease, decreasing the associated treatment costs and production losses. Don't wait until a disease outbreak occurs before implementing a sound herd health program.

A common question I'm asked is what vaccines are necessary to keep cattle healthy. There are too many details, products, scenarios and different lines of thinking to cover in a limited amount of space and time. This article will help answer some questions, but the details of what products to use and when to administer them are best decided by the producer and his or her veterinarian.

A cost effective (not cheapest) vaccination program is one that is customized for your operation, keeps your cattle as healthy as possible, improves performance and enhances the marketability of your cattle. Preventing diseases through the use of a herd health management plan saves time and money. For best results, work with a veterinarian, familiar with your beef cattle operation, to design a vaccination program that fits your particular operation, to get the most out your vaccination program.

Items to consider when establishing a vaccination program include type of cattle operation (cow-calf, stocker, registered seedstock, etc.), frequency of introducing new stock, buyer specifications, shipping destination, and interstate shipping requirements. You also must consider the animal's stage of production: calf, weanling, pre-breeding, bred, bull, etc. Do I use Modified Live (MLV), Killed or Intranasal products? The list of considerations goes on and on.

A basic vaccination plan will cover Clostridial diseases (Blackleg) as well as upper respiratory diseases: IBR, BVD, PI-3, BRSV and possibly Lepto and Vibrio. Cows and replacement heifers should be vaccinated prior to the start of the breeding season with upper respiratory vaccines to provide protection against some of the viruses that can cause reproductive problems. Bulls need the basic program as well as Lepto, Vibrio and Trich, if your veterinarian determines a need. Stockers need the basic program as well as additional vaccinations required by the buyer and shipping regulations. There are many other diseases you can vaccinate against but work with your veterinarian to see if they are needed to avoid wasting money.

## Tips To Improve The Efficiency Of Your Vaccination Program

- For best results, always follow the manufacturer's recommendations (label directions) for dosage, method of administration, number of times given and proper storage. Vaccines can fail if not handled, administered and/or stored properly.
- Reduce stress when handling your cattle. Stress reduces cattle's ability to process vaccines.
- Provide a good nutrition program for your cattle.
- Consult with your veterinarian before using MLV products. Especially in a cow-calf operation.
- Follow BQA protocols to insure proper administration procedures.
- Ask your veterinarian about vaccinating calves less than 4 months old.



By establishing a vaccination protocol with the assistance of your veterinarian, you can insure the health and well-being of your cattle and help them reach their full potential. Experiencing a health disaster certainly drives home the point that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

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# Extension

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## Cattle Call



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### Get Your Hay Equipment Ready for the Field

*John Cothren, Livestock Extension Agent, Wilkes County*

Hay season is just around the corner. If you haven't already, now is the time to pull out the equipment and get it ready for the hay field. Following preventative maintenance suggestions can reduce stress from downtime and ensure safe working conditions. Consider these practices when completing maintenance:

- Replace broken or worn parts to feed material properly into the bale chamber.
- Replace bent or loose blades on rotary cutters that are more prone to thrown objects.
- Ensure proper clearance between crimping rollers on mower conditioners.
- Do not overlook lubrication. Even though you may have greased all bearings and shafts thoroughly at the end of last season, pump in fresh grease now. This will force out all the moisture, which may have condensed inside during the winter. Wipe all grease fittings clean before applying grease gun; otherwise you may force dirt directly into the bearing along with grease.
- Always lubricate sprockets and chains when the machine is turned off.
- Whether in the shop or out in the field, always ensure the PTO is disengaged and the engine shut off before dismounting to service or adjust the equipment.
- With mowers, square bales and all equipment, wait until all components have stopped moving before work occurs
- Always lock and block the rear gate of a baler if you must be underneath it.
- Be prepared for a fire. Carry a Class ABC fire extinguisher on ALL tractors. Ensure extinguisher are charged and in working order.
- Keep all shields and safety guards in place. Replace immediately after maintenance is complete (don't wait until you are ready to go to the field).
- Consider removing dirt and debris with compressed air; water will cause rust and can reduce life of bearings and moving components.
- Check implement tires carefully. After several months of not being used repairs may be necessary.



#### Upcoming Events

**May 20<sup>th</sup> – Small Ruminant Grazier's Work Shop: 9:30 am-3:30 pm at the WNC Livestock Center in Canton, NC 9:30 registration, 10:00 Welcome**

- **The Opportunity for Small Ruminant Production in WNC**
- **Improving Grazing Management for Sheep and Goats**
- **Fencing Solutions for Small Ruminants**
- **Sheep/Goat Marketing Options-Panel Discussion**
- **3:00 PM Closing comments and evaluation**
- **4:00 PM Optional Sheep and Goat Production Tour**

- Go over all your machinery and tighten bolts, nuts and cap screws that have worked loose. This simple precaution can prevent serious and costly damage.

Regular maintenance and care extends the life of your equipment and maintains the value.