

South Dakota State University
**Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional
Repository and Information Exchange**

South Dakota Cattle Feeders Field Day Proceedings
and Research Reports, 1971

Animal Science Reports

1971

Weaning Age and Management Systems for Fall Born Beef Calves

William McCone
South Dakota State University

Follow this and additional works at: http://openprairie.sdstate.edu/sd_cattlefeed_1971

 Part of the [Animal Sciences Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

McCone, William, "Weaning Age and Management Systems for Fall Born Beef Calves" (1971). *South Dakota Cattle Feeders Field Day Proceedings and Research Reports, 1971*. Paper 5.
http://openprairie.sdstate.edu/sd_cattlefeed_1971/5

This Report is brought to you for free and open access by the Animal Science Reports at Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in South Dakota Cattle Feeders Field Day Proceedings and Research Reports, 1971 by an authorized administrator of Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange. For more information, please contact michael.biondo@sdstate.edu.

South Dakota State University
Brookings, South Dakota

Department of Animal Science
Agricultural Experiment Station

A.S. Series 71-19

Weaning Age and Management Systems
for Fall Born Beef Calves

William McCone

Twenty-eight registered Angus and Hereford cows calved in September, 1970. The cows calved on pasture and remained on pasture until late November. From November 10 to December 28 the cows were bred for 1971 and started on a self-fed diet. The remaining 14, or one-half of the calves, were allowed to continue nursing the cows, but the calves also had access to a calf creep with the same diet used for the weaned calves. At the start of the experiment the calves were randomly divided by sex, breed and age. At this time, December 30, 1970, the average age of all calves was 106 days and they averaged 218 lb. in weight.

Both management systems produced 205-day-old calves that were in thrifty condition and of desirable weights. The rate of gain for each group was very similar in that the calves left nursing their mothers gained 2.22 lb. per head daily and the earlier weaned calves gained 2.24 lb. per head daily. One of the objectives of this trial was to obtain data which would indicate if a fall born calf should be weaned early and depend on gains from a creep feed or if it is desirable to feed a nursing cow the extra required amount to provide milk for a calf. This experiment showed that the total feed cost was \$42.68 for a cow and her calf which had been weaned early. Total feed cost to winter a cow and her nursing calf was \$44.31. The relatively small difference in winter feed cost was \$163 less for a cow and her calf which was weaned early as compared to a cow with a nursing calf.

The diet used and self-fed to all calves of both groups was as follows:

	<u>Pounds</u>
Cracked shelled corn	700
Rolled oats	450
Wheat bran	200
32% protein pellets	250
Chopped brome-alfalfa hay	<u>400</u>
Total mixture	- 2,000

Prepared for the Fifteenth Annual Cattle Feeders Day, October 1, 1971.

Table 1. Weaning Age and Management Systems for Fall Born Beef Calves
(1970-71)

	Calves nursing cows	Calves weaned
<u>Calf Data</u>		
Lot number	1	2
No. calves (bulls + heifers in each lot)	14	14
Age in days at start	107	105
Days on trial (Dec. 30 to April 8)	99	99
Age in days at finish	206	204
Avg. initial weight, lb.	216	219
Avg. final weight, lb.	436	441
Avg. total gain, lb.	220	222
Avg. daily gain, lb.	2.22	2.24
Avg. daily feed, lb.	6.99	11.00
Creep feed per cwt. gain, lb.	314.42	490.82
Creep feed cost per cwt. calf gain, \$	7.54	11.78
Creep feed cost per calf, \$	16.59	26.15
	Cows nursing calves	Dry cows
<u>Cow Data</u>		
Number of cows	14	14
Avg. age of cows (years)	5.9	6.9
Avg. initial weight, lb.	1085	1094
Avg. final weight, lb.	1066	1001
Weight loss per head, lb.	19	93
Avg. daily feed, lb.		
Brome alfalfa hay	17.6	16.7
Corn silage	26.0	none
Feed cost per cow for 99 days, \$	27.72	16.53

Feed prices: Brome alfalfa hay, \$20.00 per ton; corn silage, \$8.00 per ton; creep feed, \$2.40 per cwt.