

Pregnancy Testing - Beef Cows

The ideal time for most producers to pregnancy test is 60 days after bulls have been removed from the cow herd. The fetus at this time will be the size of a softball or larger making it easy to manually detect and palpate. The earlier open cows can be detected, the sooner they can be culled and marketed.

Cull cows generally make up one-fourth of the income generated by a cow herd. The typical low month for open cow prices is November; the high time for cull cow prices is generally March and April.

For producers with excess hay or pasture holding cull cow and marketing on the spring market can boost ranch income. This works especially well with thin cows whose condition will improve after weaning.

In summary, pregnancy test cow herds early, then develop a plan for marketing open cows to maximize cow herd income.