

Pricing Feed for the Cowherd

As we head into fall, cattle producers need to make plans for the nutritional needs of their cow herd. Feed prices are up, fueled by strong prices in the corn and oilseed markets. Secondly, cattle producer need to recognize this year going into fall we have abundant forage for fall and winter grazing. A dramatic change from last years drought scenario. Presently, the greatest factor that may cause feed prices to go higher will be what success farmers will have with fall corn and soybean harvest. If corn and bean yields reach predicted levels, feed prices are expected to be stable, but if harvest yields are disappointing, feed prices will probably increase.

As a cattle producer if you have abundant forage going into winter, the most cost effective means to supplement your cowherd will be with protein feeds. The recommended method to price protein sources is a cost per pound of crude protein system. To determine the price per pound of crude protein use these steps 1. determine the cost of feed on a hundred weight basis, 2. divide the feed price per hundred weight by the percent crude protein in the feed. The chart below shows various feeds and their prices per hundred weight and the cost per pound of crude protein.

| <u>Feed</u> | <u>Cost/100 lbs.</u> | <u>Cost/lb. Crude Protein</u> |
|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 20% Cube | \$48.8 | .44 |
| 38% Cube | \$12.9 | .34 |
| 16% Wheat mids | \$6.7 | .42 |
| 22% Corn gluten feed | \$6.5 | .30 |
| 12% Soy hulls | \$6.75 | .56 |
| 18% Alfalfa hay | \$7.50 | .42 |

In our example, the best buy is corn gluten feed followed by the 38% cube. Cattle producers start pricing feeds in early fall, consider contracting feeds if you find a good buy.

For more information on cattle nutrition, contact The Tulsa County OSU Extension Center (918) 746-3725.