

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE AND DETERMINE FEEDER CALF PRICES

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I. Uniformity and quality are the most important factors in determining the prices of feeder calves.

- Uniformity means that they be all heifers or steers (no bulls) in each load of cattle.
- No horns allowed. Horned calves will bring two to four cent discount (maybe sometime more)
- The calves should be uniform in genetics. No half-Brahman, no #2 cattle mixes with loads of mostly #1 muscling calves, medium and large frame calves with no small frame on loads, cattle bred right with right kind of bulls, i.e. high E.P.D. and high carcass quality.
- Brahman calves and half Brahman calves should be sold together in lots or loads and will bring approximately seven cents to ten cents under #1 Florida crossbred calves if they are right kind. Some extremes in quality could be much more.

II. Florida crossbred heifers will bring a premium over feeder heifer calves if the genetics are right with the demand for replacement heifers.

- The normal discount prices heifers sell under steers is ten cents to 14 cents per lb. This discount could drop to the 6 or 10 cents range if they are sold as replacement quality heifers.
- Replacement heifers should be the right genetics that meet requirements. If heifers are going out of Florida, 1/4 or less ear and all sired by high E.P.D. bulls is essential in the marketing of replacement heifers.
- Challenging the Florida cattleman to develop this type heifer market.

III. Good herd and health management build reputation for cattle owners which will influence and increase prices.

- We are in an age of communication. Adjustment and adaptation is imperative. Cattlemen who have health problems which show up after cattle have reached destination will cause all Florida cattlemen to suffer.
- All calves should have a complete vaccination program at least 60 days before marketing. Requirements: IBR-PI3; BRSV; Mix 7-way bactrin with H. Somnus, and Lepto, if needed.
- All heifers calthood vaccinated for Brucellosis 60 days before shipment.

We at Braswell Cattle Company know within 72 hours after arrival what the health of the calves are, for the reputation of producers for whom we market cattle and also for our reputation. We make it our business to know of any health problems. Down through the years our death loss on cattle going west or north is less than 1/2 of one percent. That means higher prices to our cattle producers and a tribute to them and their management.

To sum up all of this: Feeder cattle should be marketed and not just sold! To sell cattle - they are gotten rid of for profit or loss. To market cattle - Cattlemen get rid of them but they know what they are selling and have built a reputation.