

ANS 4243C
Beef Cow/Calf Management
Fall 2025

Instructor:

Dr. Todd Thrift
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Teaching Assistants:

None

Schedule:

Lectures: T R Period 3 (9:35 - 10:25 am) BTU south

Discussion: R Period 8-10 (3:00 - 6:00 pm) BTU south

Office Hours: Open door policy

Course Description:

Beef cow/calf management is a senior level “capstone” course for the Beef Industry curriculum in the Animal Sciences Major. It is designed to assimilate information learned in prerequisite courses into management systems. The course will focus on the commercial cow/calf production with emphasis on application of nutrition, reproduction, genetics, health, marketing, and financial management.

Course Objectives:

1. To gain an understanding of the beef cattle industry in the state of Florida, the United States, and the World.
2. To describe roles of the major beef breeds as well as equipment, identification, nutrition, reproduction, genetics, health, marketing, taxation, and management concepts relative to the beef cattle industry.
3. To understand the future direction of the beef cattle industry and how change may affect beef production.

Grading Policy:

1. Final course grade will be based on percentage of total points earned (total points will be based on hour examinations, homework, magazine article reviews, and final examination).

	Points		Percentage
Hourly exam 1	150		37.5
Hourly exam 2	150		37.5
Homework (~5 assignments)	50		12.5
Magazine article reviews (10)	50		12.5
Total	400		100

Final Grade (non-negotiable)

> 90.0 =	A	72.5 - 77.4 =	C
87.5 - 89.9 =	B+	70.0 - 72.4 =	C-
82.5 - 87.4 =	B	67.5 - 69.9 =	D+
80.0 - 82.4 =	B-	60.0 - 67.4 =	D
77.5 - 79.9 =	C+	60.0 - 62.5 =	D-
		< 60.0 =	E

2. Final examination, which all students must take, will be given on a date and during a time period specified in the University Class schedule.
3. Hour examinations will be given at specified intervals during the semester. If the hour exam is not taken at a specified time due to illness, the student must provide the instructor with a signed doctors excuse.
4. Unannounced pop quizzes may be given in lecture or lab. Quiz points will be bonus points. No make up quizzes will be given.
5. Attendance to lecture or discussion is not required. No penalty will be imposed for absence; however, students are responsible for material covered in class.
6. Review and summary of a popular press article will be required weekly. The summary should be handwritten (must be readable and neat), between 3/4 to 1 page in length, due on **THURSDAYS** at the **BEGINNING** of lab. The summary must review the facts presented in the article **and should end with a couple of sentences on how the information presented might apply to the Florida Beef Industry.**

Acceptable magazines for review are listed below (This list is not inclusive and other magazines are acceptable as long as they apply to the beef industry).

Agricultural Research	Feedlot	Meat International
Angus Journal	Feedstuffs	National Cattlemen
Angus Beef Bulletin	Gelbvieh World	Progressive Farmer
Beef	Gulf Coast Cattleman	Santa Gertrudis USA
Beef Today	Hay and Forage Grower	The Cattleman
Braford News	Hereford World	The Florida Cattleman
Cattle Today	Limousin World	The Beefmaster Cowman
Drovers Journal	Livestock Weekly	Western Livestock Journal

Text: No text is required. Supplemental reading may be handed out during class or lab.

Tentative Course Outline:

Date		Subject
08/21	Lecture	Introduction/Syllabus Overview How did the FL beef cattle industry get started? -History of beef industry in FL
08/21	Lecture	How did the rest of the beef industry evolve? -History of the Beef Industry in the United States
08/26	Lecture	How is the beef industry structured? -Overview of beef cattle industry –structure, industry targets
08/28	Lecture	How is the beef industry structured? -Overview of beef cattle industry –structure, industry targets
08/28	Lecture	Where are the cows in FL, the US, and World? -Global beef production -Comparison and contrast of beef production practices
09/2	Lecture	Why isn't the beef industry vertically integrated? -Discussion of industry structure, current and future trends How are cattle different than other creatures? -Common cattle characteristics What traits are important in beef production? -Placing selection emphasis on different traits
09/4	Lecture	What is a genetic antagonism? -Common antagonisms that hinder selection progress
09/4	Lecture	Should all of my calves grade choice? -Utilization of carcass data to make selection decisions
09/9	Lecture	Is my cow too big? -Discussion of cow size and milk production
09/11	Lecture	How heavy should my weaning weight be? -Economics of weaning weight and value of gain -Discussion on age at weaning What are the implications of high reproductive rates and heavy calf crops? -Cost and benefits of improving lbs calf weaned/cow exposed

09/11	Lecture	Which breed do I choose? -Breed evaluation/utilization -Breed vs Type
09/16	Lecture	Which breed do I choose? -Breed evaluation/utilization -Breed vs Type -Functional traits
09/18	Lecture	What is hybrid vigor and how can I take advantage of it? -Discussion of crossbreeding potential
09/18	Lecture	Should I straightbreed or crossbreed? -Planning a breeding program
09/23	Lecture	Should I straightbreed or crossbreed? -Planning a breeding program
09/25	Lecture	What is a composite? -Discussion of alternative mating plans
09/25	Lecture	How much ear do I need in my cow? -Discussion of adaptability to hot humid conditions
9/30	Lecture	Which heifers should I keep as replacements? How old are my cows? -Determining age of cows
10/2	Lecture	What are the keys to good reproductive success in my cowherd? -Calving span, %Calf Crop,
10/2	Lecture	How should I sell my calves? What is a slide? Should I retained ownership? What is a breakeven?
10/7	Lecture	When should my cows calve? -Calving season selection and management
10/9	Lecture	What is the Non fed Beef Quality Audit? -BQA application to cull cow management
10/9	Lecture	How should I manage my heifers? -Replacement heifer selection and management
10/14	Lecture	How should I manage my heifers? -Replacement heifer selection and management

10/16	Lecture	Should I purchase or raise my replacement heifers? -Economics of replacement females
10/16	Lecture	How am I ever going to pass this test? -EXAM 1 SUBJECT TO CHANGE
10/21	Lecture	Replacement female options continued
10/23	Lecture	How do I use data to help me make selection decisions? -Utilizing EPDs, frame score, weights, carcass data, etc.
10/23	Lecture	How should I manage my bulls? -Bull management for commercial cow calf producers -Utilization of yearling bulls -Utilization of un-adapted bulls -Breeding soundness of bulls
10/28	Lecture	Bull Management cont
10/30	Lecture	How do I use data to help me make selection decisions? Cont. -Utilizing EPDs, frame score, weights, carcass data, etc.
10/30	Lecture	How do I use all this data to pick a bull?
11/4	Lecture	How do I use all this data to pick a bull?
11/6	Lecture	How do I use all this data to pick a bull?
11/6	Lecture	How do I use all this data to pick a bull?
11/11	Lecture	What vaccines should I give my cows? -Vaccination theory -Bovine diseases -Designing a herd health program
11/13	Lecture	What is Beef Quality Assurance? -Culling cows
11/13	Lecture	What is Beef Quality Assurance? -Avoiding antibiotic and chemical residues
11/18	Lecture	What is Beef Quality Assurance? -Proper injection administration -Processing map

11/20	Lecture	What is Beef Quality Assurance? -Biosecurity
11/20	Lecture	What is Beef Quality Assurance? -wrap up and homework
11/25	Lecture	How much leftover turkey can I eat? -Thanksgiving Break
11/27	Lecture	How much leftover turkey can I eat? -Thanksgiving Break
12/2	Lecture	What are the hot issues? Where is the beef industry headed? -Overview of beef issues, i.e., food safety, environment -Future trends in the beef industry
12/4- 12/5	Trip	Tentative field Trip to South FL
12/8	FINAL	When is this ever going to end? -FINAL EXAM 10:00am -???????????????

Academic Policies and Resources

Academic policies for this course are consistent with university policies. See

<https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>

Campus Health and Wellness Resources

Visit <https://one.ufl.edu/whole-gator/topics> for resources that are designed to help you thrive physically, mentally, and emotionally at UF.

Please contact [UMatterWeCare](#) for additional and immediate support.

Software Use

All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Privacy and Accessibility Policies

[required for online courses, list all technology used]

- Instructure (Canvas)
 - [Instructure Privacy Policy](#)

- [Instructure Accessibility](#)
- Zoom
 - [Zoom Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Zoom Accessibility](#)