

ANS 4245
Beef Stocker and Feedyard Management
Spring 2026

Instructor:

Dr. Todd Thrift
210C Animal Science Bldg., North (Bldg. 459)
392-8597 office
tthrift@ufl.edu

Teaching Assistants:

Schedule:

Lectures: T R Period 4 (10:40 - 11:30 am) South BTU classroom

Office Hours: Open door policy

Course Description:

Beef Stocker and Feedyard 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. Special attention will be given to address beef production from post weaning to the consumer.

Course Objectives:

1. To gain a better understanding of the business of managing cattle in different post weaning systems.
2. To learn to use information to make decisions on retained ownership, breakeven calculations, feedyard closeouts, and data management.
3. To understand complexities of post weaning beef systems.
4. To understand post weaning cattle management and its impact on profitability.

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
Final exam	200	36.4
Homework (~10 assignments)	300	54.5
Magazine article reviews (10)	50	9.1
Total	550	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. Unannounced pop quizzes may be given in lecture. Quiz points will be bonus points. No make up quizzes will be given.
3. Attendance to lecture is not required. No penalty will be imposed for absence; however, students are responsible for material covered in class.
4. Review and summary of a popular press article will be required weekly. The summary should be typed or handwritten (must be readable and neat), between 3/4 to 1 page in length, due on **THURSDAYS** at the **BEGINNING** of class. The summary must review the facts presented in the article **and should end with a couple of sentences on how the information presented might be related to the Florida Beef Industry.**

THE ARTICLE MAY COME FROM ANY MAGAZINE BUT MUST FOCUS ON POST WEANING MANAGEMENT OF BEEF CATTLE.

In addition at the top of your WEEKLY article you must have listed the following:

Current LIVE (FAT) cattle price

Current FEEDER cattle price

Current CORN price

Current Choice/Select spread

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.

RISK ASSOCIATED WITH THE USE OF LIVESTOCK:

Working with livestock is inherently *risky*. Many of these animals are capable of injuring people, especially when they are in the *fight or flight* mode inspired by a stressful situation. The instructors will work to provide students with the ability to manage livestock with minimal stress, thus lowering the risk of injury to people and animals.

IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT STUDENTS FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS!

Tentative Course Outline: Subject to change

Date	Subject
1/13	Introduction/Syllabus Overview How did feedlot industry get started? -History of the feedlot industry
1/15	Should I precondition/ background my calves? -Overview of preconditioning economics
1/20	Where do I find price information to know what my calves are worth? -Mandatory price reporting, USDA reports, Cattle on Feed
1/22	Should I retain ownership of my calves? -calculation of a breakeven -understanding partnerships
1/27	What implants should I use? -overview of the impacts of implants on performance and carcass
1/29	How do I predict performance on calves? -Effect of age, sex, flesh, genetics, previous nutrition, shrink, season
2/3	What type of calves should I feed to make money? -factors affecting profitability of feeder cattle -feeding calves vs yearlings, heifers vs steers, beef vs dairy
2/5	Is the stocker segment really needed? -Native vs Wheat vs Summer Grass vs Drylot
2/10	Where can I purchase calves when it seems like none are available? -feeder cattle procurement
2/12	How do I interpret carcass data? -Interpretation of carcass data
2/17	Should I feed cattle for a special market? -CAB, CHB, All natural, Organic
2/19	Why do my calves keep getting sick and dying? -Control of bovine respiratory disease -sick vs healthy calves -symptoms of a sick calf
2/24	What can I use to treat my sick calves? -drugs used in feedyard practice.

2/26	What do all these numbers mean? -Interpretation of feedyard closeouts
3/3	What is the Beef Quality Audit? -Discussion of the current quality audit and historical trends
3/5	Feedlot Breakeven Analysis
3/10	Feedlot Breakeven Analysis
3/12	Feedlot Breakeven Analysis
3/17 and 3/19	Spring break
3/24	How do I choose a feedyard? - Custom feeders vs Company ownership - Customer development
3/26	What is TQM?
3/31	Is there a magic feed that will make my cattle grade better? -Effects of diet composition on carcass grade.
4/2	Should I sell my calves live? - Selling on a grid or live - Market alliances, contracts, forward contracts and formulas
4/7	Aren't these packers corrupt? - Packer concentration, forward contracts, and formulas
4/9	What is the role of the consulting vet and nutritionist?
4/14	Why do all my cattle have long toes? Droopy ear? Snotty noses? -acidosis and BRD
4/15	Should I feed steers or heifers? -differences in performance between steers and heifers
4/22	When is this ever going to end? -In class exam 10:30 am-?

Grades and Grade Points

For information on current UF policies for assigning grade points, see

[https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/.](https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/)

Attendance and Make-Up Work

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments and other work are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

[https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/.](https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/)

For online course with recorded materials a statement informing students of privacy related issues such as:

Our class sessions may be audio visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

Online Course Evaluation Process

Student assessment of instruction is an important part of efforts to improve teaching and learning. At the end of the semester, students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course using a standard set of university and college criteria. Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals.

Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via

<https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Academic Honesty

As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity." You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

It is assumed that you will complete all work independently in each course unless the instructor provides explicit permission for you to collaborate on course tasks (e.g. assignments, papers, quizzes, exams). Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold

the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For more information regarding the Student Honor Code, please see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>.

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.

Services for Students with Disabilities

The Disability Resource Center coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes registering disabilities, recommending academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services and mediating faculty-student disability related issues. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation 0001 Reid Hall, 352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>

Campus Helping Resources

Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general wellbeing are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance.

University Counseling & Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Road, 352-392-1575,
www.counseling.ufl.edu

Counseling Services

Groups and Workshops

Outreach and Consultation

Self-Help Library

Wellness Coaching

U Matter We Care, www.umatter.ufl.edu/

Career Connections Center, First Floor JWRU, 392-1601, <https://career.ufl.edu/>.

Student Success Initiative, <http://studentsuccess.ufl.edu>.

Student Complaints:

Residential Course: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-studentconduct-code/>.

Online Course: <https://pfs.tnt.aa.ufl.edu/state-authorization-status/#student-complaint>