

As fall approaches, many cattle producers are in the process of preparing to acquire calves to feed through the winter months. Before you begin to purchase these calves, it is important to develop a plan for management of these newly obtained, often high risk, calves. Failure to properly background these calves may result in loss of income due to sick calves, or even contamination of the entire herd. This week we want to remind you of some things that can be done to ensure those high risk calves stay healthy and are able to perform at their best.

High risk calves are those that have been purchased from unknown sources, and thus have unknown history. The most common type of high risk calves are those that come from sale barns. Once the calves have been purchased and brought back to your ranch they should be processed. Processing the cattle sooner rather than later will help jumpstart fighting any health problems that the calves may have been previously exposed to. The calves should each receive a round of vaccinations that consists of a blackleg, a respiratory vaccine that targets IBR, BVD, PI3, and BRSV, and a long acting antibiotic. The most effective initial respiratory vaccine for high risk calves is Inforce 3 intranasal vaccine. Some antibiotics that are commonly used in high risk calves are Noromycin 300, Micotil, or Draxxin. These products range in cost and length of efficacy, but have been proven to work well in calves whose previous vaccination history is unknown.

In order to prevent contamination of your herd, it is best to quarantine high risk calves from the rest of your herd for at least two weeks. The most efficient vaccination program is one where the calves receive a second round of vaccinations three weeks after the initial set is given. Then, if all of the cattle are doing well, with no evidence of contagious disease, they may be commingled with the rest of the herd.

If you plan to obtain high risk calves, and later resell them for a profit, they must receive optimum care. As a producer of these calves, you should do what you can to make certain that they are getting the best management and care, which will in turn, increase your chances of making a profit. Please note that appropriate management of high risk calves also relies on adequate nutrition and ideal husbandry tactics. If you have any questions about these aspects of backgrounding high risk calves, please contact us.

Bayer has recently cleared a new product called "ZELNATE". This product is a non-antibiotic, immunostimulant, that works to help animals respond to challenging or high risk situations. Because ZELNATE contains no antibiotics, it works by enhancing the animal's own defense system to help fight infectious disease. If you have any questions about using ZELNATE in your herd, contact us, or visit [zelnate.com](http://zelnate.com).

Prices for feeder steers medium and large 1 sold through the Oklahoma National Stockyards on Monday, August 10, 2015 are as follows: 485lb- \$286.47, 589lb- \$241.41, 680lb- \$231.70, and 774lb- \$218.30. The price for October 2015 750lb feeder steers on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange was \$208.37cwt on closing Monday, August 10, 2015.

Thanks,  
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