

Studies show that cattle that are productive when they are young will likely mature into cattle that will be productive adults. For this reason, it is wise to monitor the performance of the calves in your operation. By keeping records on your calves, you can track their performance and use that as a guide when determining their fate- whether it be as replacements, stocker calves, potential breeding bulls, or calves that will be sold at weaning. To help you gauge the performance of your calves, we have formulated a job description for calves from birth to weaning.

We believe that each calf in your operation should:

- * Be born with no assistance required
- * Have natural instinct to nurse after birth
- * Have a strong immune system
- * Learn from adult cattle in the herd how to properly graze and forage
- * Be feed efficient
 - Gain weight effectively and efficiently
- * Quickly learn how to eat and drink from bunks
- * Stay physically sound

Please note that for the most part we did not include many phenotypic traits on any of the four job descriptions provided. Though phenotype is important, we believe that cattle should first be productive. You may have a cow that looks perfect, but if she does not perform and produce according to your operational needs, she is essentially useless. We encourage you to continually keep these job descriptions in mind, and alter them to fit your operational goals. Ask yourself "Are my cattle being employees that are helping or hurting my business?"

Prices for feeder steers medium and large 1 sold through the Oklahoma National Stockyards on Tuesday, February 3, 2015, are as follows: 444lb- \$310.5, 540lb- \$279.13, 619lb- \$246.45, and 739lb- \$216.8. The price for March 2015 750lb feeder steers on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange was \$199.17 at closing Tuesday, February 3, 2015.

Thanks,

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