

Last week we introduced the concept of having a written job description for your cattle. This not only helps a producer decide what his goals are for his operation, but can help him better measure how his cattle are performing. The more thorough the job description, the more likely a producer will be to eliminate the cattle that do not meet the requirements. This is because the job description helps expose the shortcomings of cattle that are not producing well. By serving as a type of culling protocol, this then leaves the producer with productive cattle that will meet his expectations, and in turn, help him achieve his goals. But what would a job description for cattle look like? This week we will begin answering this question by providing a job description for one of the types of cattle in your operation.

Because a typical cow-calf operation is comprised of more than one type, gender, and age of cattle, it is most effective to create a job description for each of these groups. Please keep in mind that some requirements (such as temperament) may be desired on every job description- regardless of the animal's age or purpose on the ranch. The first job description we want to discuss is that for the adult cow in a typical cow-calf operation. Below we have listed some of the main expectations we have for this type of animal.

We believe that each adult female in your operation should:

- *have a good temperament
- *be feed efficient
 - have low nutritional requirements (does not require high amounts of forage/feed to maintain production)
 - utilize available forage thoroughly and effectively
- *be reproductively sound
 - calve in the first 21 days of the calving season each year
 - recover from calving and breed back every year
- *raise and wean a healthy calf each year
- *have a strong immune system

We understand that each producer's goals are different, however we believe that the traits listed above should serve as a basic guideline when formulating a job description for your own cattle. If you think of any additional traits that you expect from your adult cows, we would love to hear from you. We also encourage you to continue thinking about the other types of cattle in your operation, and what a job description for them might look like.

Prices for feeder steers medium and large 1 sold through the Oklahoma National Stockyards on Tuesday, January 13, 2015 are as follows: 473lb- \$303.87, 579lb- \$275.32, 679lb- \$237.33, and 770lb- \$227.15. The price for March 2015 750lb feeder steers on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange was \$211.42 on closing Tuesday, January 13, 2015.

Thanks,

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