

Whether you have been in the cattle business five years or twenty five years it is important to think about the long-term goals of your operation. This week we will provide a brief overview of the goals we recommend, and in the coming weeks we will discuss each goal in more detail. These goals are important because they are often the motivation that keeps the producer doing what he does every day. All are goals that a producer should keep in mind and implement if he/she plans to be in the cattle business for an extended period of time. Please note that they are all important, and are listed in no particular order.

The first goal to maintain is to have an operation that has a high level of economic sustainability. This term describes the ability of an operation to be profitable over time by taking advantage of the available resources. Economic sustainability is a valuable goal to have because if your operation is not generating a profit it will be difficult to keep production going year after year. A second goal to keep in mind is to produce cattle that are marketable. It is not wise to produce cattle that have no market when it comes time to sell them. The main source of income in a cattle operation is from cattle sales. If this area is subpar, profitability will likely follow suit.

Producers should also take into account the type and scale of their operation. What type of cattle producer do you plan to be- commercial, registered, seedstock, etc.? What size of operation do you hope to have one day? A <50 hd operation, >200 hd, or somewhere in between? Different operations require different things, so it is best to evaluate each type and size of operation before deciding which is the best one for you. The next goal ties in with the previous. Does your operation fit your time schedule? If not, changes may need to be made to the type and scale of your operation so that it is not demanding more of your time than what is available. The last but not least important goal to keep in mind is to have an operation that is enjoyable for you. Although there will be some difficult days and seasons, your operation should be pleasing as a whole. If your cattle operation is something that you dread now, some changes should be made or this will only get worse on down the road.

In the coming weeks we will discuss each of these goals at a greater length. In the meantime, we encourage you to begin thinking about the role that each of these suggestions has in your operation, and what you can do to make these a priority.

Thanks,

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