

Kansas Beef Producers Face Rising Feed costs and Market Volatility

The Situation

The production of cattle and calves is the top agricultural commodity in Kansas, generating over \$5 billion annually. Among all states, Kansas ranks 3rd in number of cattle on feed, number of cattle processed, value of cattle and beef exports, value of hides exported, and total beef production. Net margins remain tight in all sectors of the beef industry as feed costs are at historically high levels and are expected to remain elevated through 2012.

What We Did

Feed cost is currently one of the major concerns of Kansas Beef cattle producers. To address the problem of rising feed costs, a series of 13 beef meetings were held by K-State Research and Extension professionals across the state of Kansas to update beef producers on the latest information to help improve the economic situation for their farms.

Outcomes

A total of 495 people attended these meetings with 91% of those surveyed indicating that they will likely make changes to their operation based on the information that they received at the meetings.

When asked to estimate the economic impact of the information that they gained, 50% of producers indicated that their bottom line would improve by between \$100 and \$1,000. Another 19% of producers indicated that their return would improve by \$1,000 to \$5,000 with 8% of producers in attendance indicating

that they would increase profit by over \$5,000 due to implementing information gained at the meeting.

Producers benefiting from these meetings represent all sizes and types of operations. The majority of attendees owned cow herds with 19% owning more than 200 cows, 23% owning 100 to 200 cows, 27% owning 50 to 100 cows and 30% owning less than 50 cows. The stocker and feedlot owners ranged from smaller operations with less than 500 head to larger owners with over 3,000 head.

Success Stories

A beef producer in Lincoln County attended a meeting on the use of alternative feedstuffs for the cowherd. After the meeting, he began using corn gluten feed as a supplement and saved \$85.00 per ton on his winter feeding costs.

"I am going to consider using dried distillers grains in my operation"

"Excellent meeting, so many good topics that you could really sink your teeth into"

Contact:

Dr. Mike Tokach
State Extension Leader
232 Weber Hall
785-532-6533
mtokach@ksu.edu