

Managed Intensive Grazing Heifer Checklist

How do your procedures measure up? Do they provide the opportunity for your heifers to grow into their genetic potential?

Let's consider procedures for managed intensive grazing. Compare your routines with the standards in this checklist. When making this evaluation I like to use these scores: 1=never, 2=seldom, 3=often, 4=usually, and 5=almost always.

_____ 1. I have a plan to transition heifers from a milk/grain ration to grass that avoids post-weaning slump.

_____ 2. I have selected grass species that will provide good quality feed throughout the grazing season.

_____ 3. I manage my paddocks by harvesting surplus forage and clipping so that the available grass is high quality.

_____ 4. I have arranged my paddocks, gates and lanes to make it easy to move animals into and out of paddocks. [Low stress on both humans and animals.]

_____ 5. I have reviewed with my nutritional consultant the ration for my replacement heifers to ensure an age-appropriate ration for each group.

_____ 6. I group replacement heifers by similar age and weight.

_____ 7. I have a written vaccination program to follow for all replacement heifers (IBR, PI3, BRSV, BVD –Types 1 & 2, leptospirosis, and clostridials).

_____ 8. I treat replacement heifers for internal and external parasites.

_____ 9. I routinely monitor growth. I use weight, height and body scores.

_____ 10. If replacement heifers are moving from grazing to confinement housing and feeding, I have a transition plan to maintain consistent growth.

_____ 11. By means of daily visual inspections, I monitor heifer well being and the availability of high quality feed making timely changes to maintain good health and growth.

The Northeast Pasture Consortium has consolidated many pasture-related resources at their website including both research and practical extension materials; <http://grazingguide.net/>

Sam Leadley, Calf & Heifer Management Specialist

smleadley@yahoo.com www.atticacows.com

For Calves with Sam blog go to dairycalfcare.blogspot.com

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