

Building Herd Performance through Heifer & Cow Management

Kalyn Waters

Holmes Co Extension Director and Ag Agent

February 10th, 2016



2016 cow-calf profit predicted
to average \$295 per cow
A 40% decline from the average
profit of \$495 per cow in 2015

MANAGEMENT

A photograph of a sunset over a green field with several cows. The sky is filled with large, billowing clouds in shades of orange, yellow, and blue. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow. In the foreground, several cows of various colors (brown, black) are grazing in the field. The text is overlaid in the center in a large, white, serif font.

**You Can't Manage
What You Don't
Measure**

**Herd
Performance**



Nutritional



Reproductive



Genetic

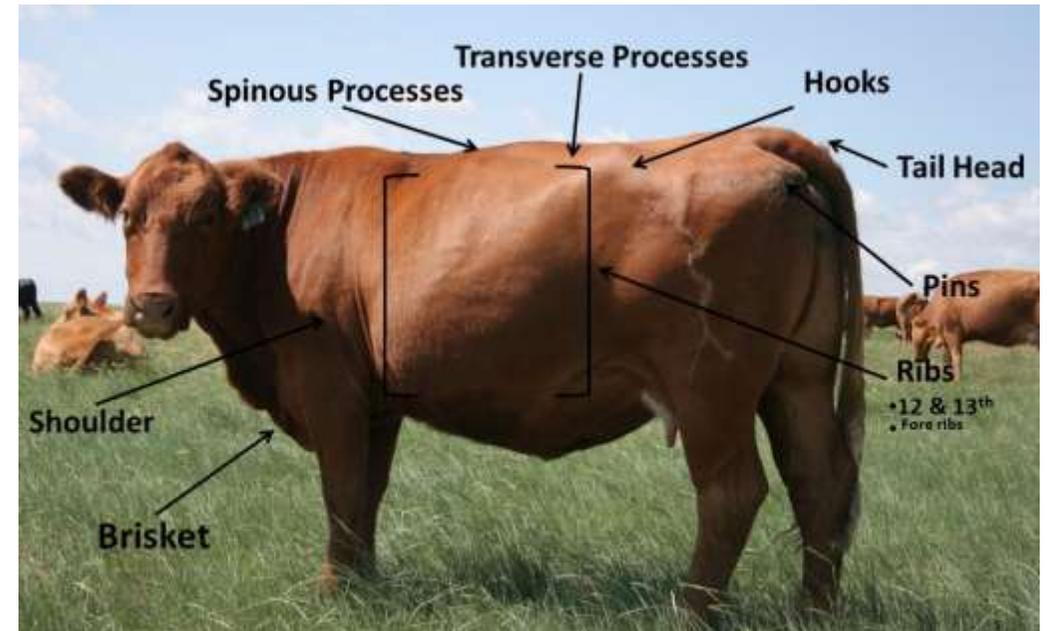
Nutrition



- **Body Condition Score**
- **Winter Supplement**
- **Mineral Program**
- **Management of feed cost**

Body Condition Score

- Body condition score (BCS) is an indicator of body energy reserves (Wagner et al., 1988; Houghton et al., 1990)
- Increasing BCS by 1 point = 75 to 100 lbs of body weight
 - Dependent on frame size
- Manage cows according to BCS and nutrient requirements
 - 1st calf heifers and thin cows
 - Maintenance diet herd
 - Calving season

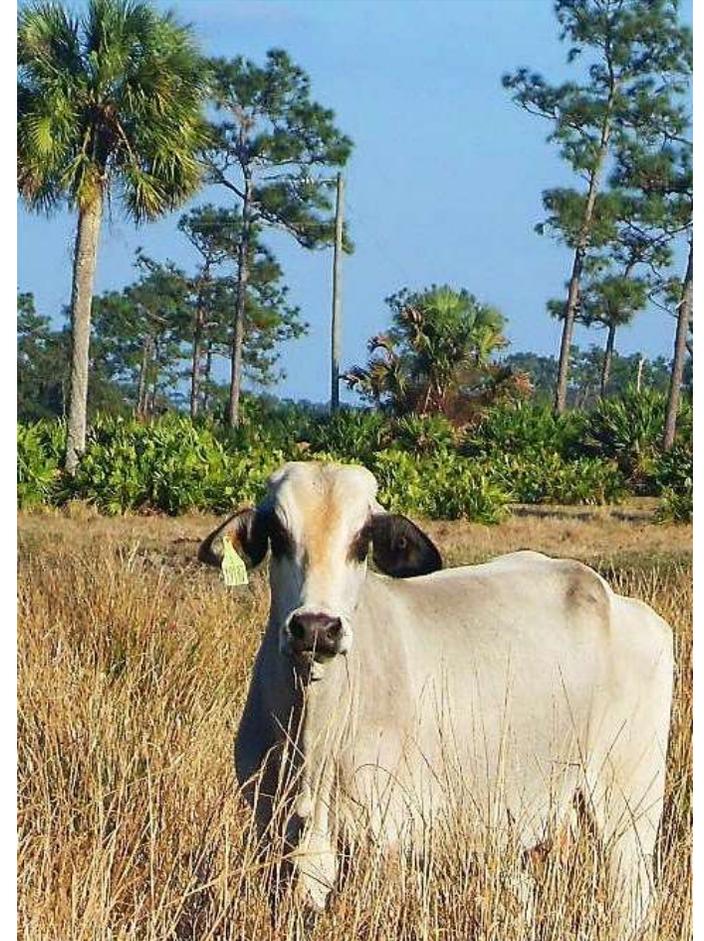


**Cows that calved in
a **BCS 5**
stay in the
annual production
cycle**



Management

- **Manage herd to maintain BCS of 5+**
 - **Whole herd count every two week**
 - **Count number of cows >4**
 - **TARGET: 15% or less**
 - **Track % Change**
 - **Sort by age/calving season**
 - **Have a plan**



Reproduction



- **Breeding Season**
- **Calving Distribution**
- **Pregnancy Checking**
- **Artificial Insemination (AI)**

Breeding Season



***Breeding Season =
Calving Season***

Management

Pulls the Bulls or Not?

50 Head	Breeding Season	No Breeding Season	Difference
Annual Preg Rate	90%	85%	
% Calf Crop	95%	92%	
HD Weaned	42.75	39.1	3.65
Weaning WT	485	450	35
Lbs Calf Sold	20733.75	17595	3138.75
\$1.66/lbs	\$34,418.03	\$29,207.70	\$5,210.33
Trips to Sales	1	4	



Management



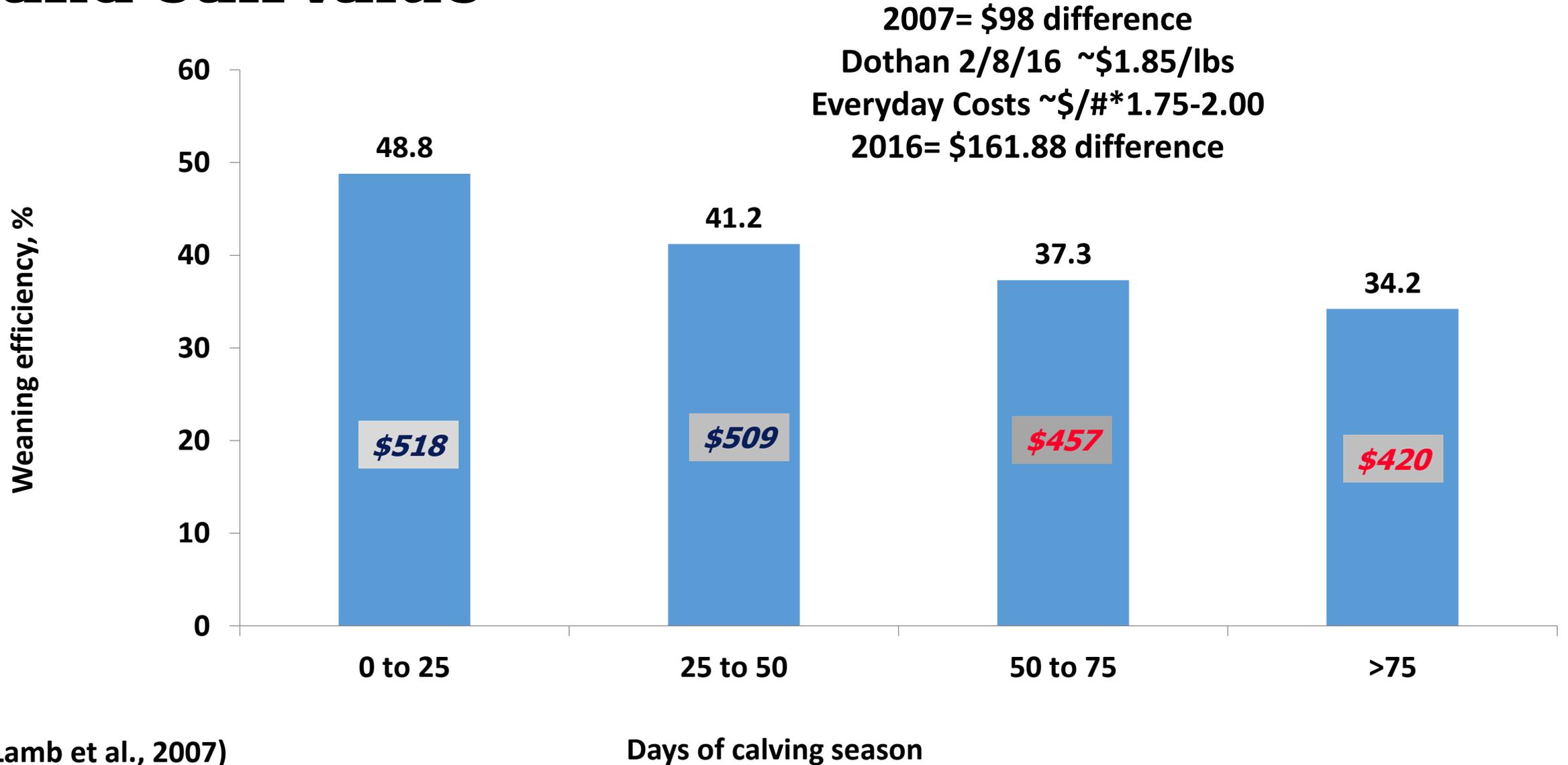
- **365 Day Breeding Season Management**
 - **Small changes are big**
 - **Preg Check and Semen Check**
 - **Replace 1 or 2 outliers a year**
 - **Cull unproductive cows**
 - **Manage through nutrition**

Nutrient Requirements by Production Phase

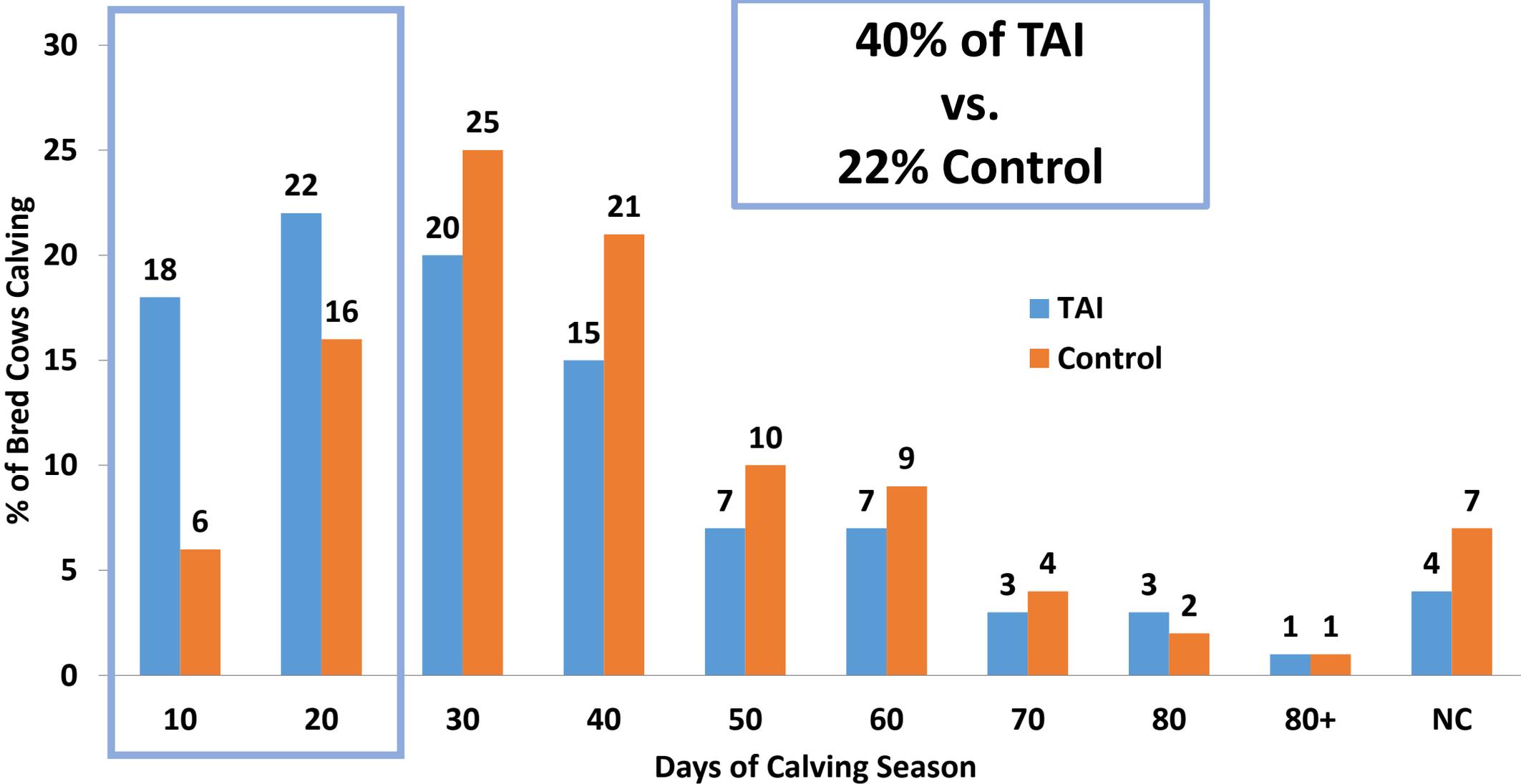
	Mature Cow		1 st Calf Heifers	
	TDN	CP	TDN	CP
Calving	59.2%	10.5%	60.6%	10.5%
Breeding	55.1%	8.7%	57.0%	8.9%
Dry/Bred	47.4%	6.6%	50.9%	7.3%
Heavy Bred	54.6%	8.6%	58.3%	9.0%

- On a dry matter basis
 - Based on dry matter intake of 2.0% of body weight
-

Relationship between Calving Distribution and Calf Value



% of Cows calved by 10-d increments of the calving season.



Natural Service Synchronization

- Use hormones to synchronize estrus
- Turn bulls out
- Goal to increase the number of cows calving in first 21 days of calving season



Management

Calving Distributing

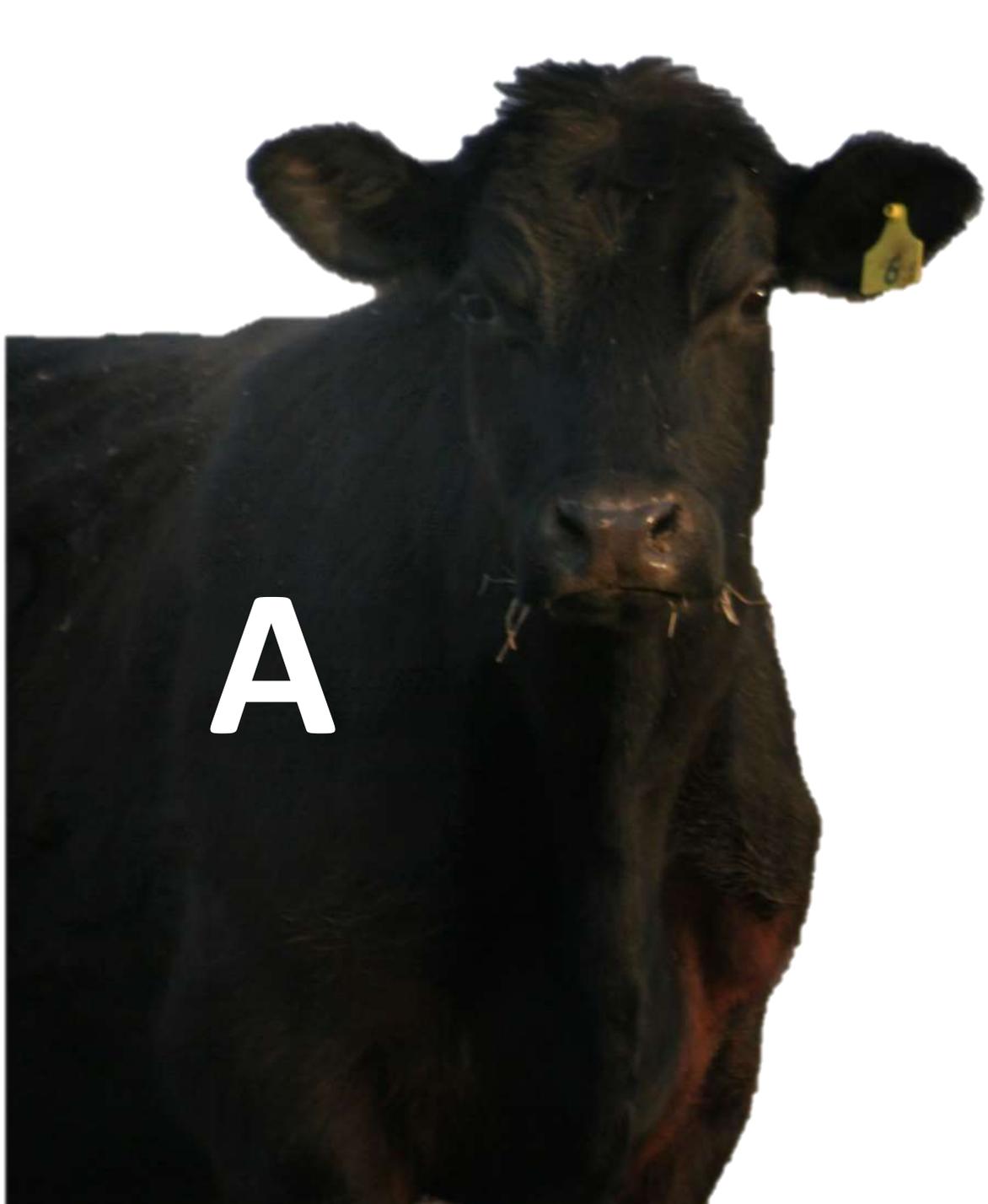
- **Number of calves born in 21 day period**
 - Start of breeding season +21 days
 - 3rd mature cow has calved
- **TARGET: 50% in first 21 days of calving season**
 - 21 day calf counts for 63 days (3 estrous cycles)



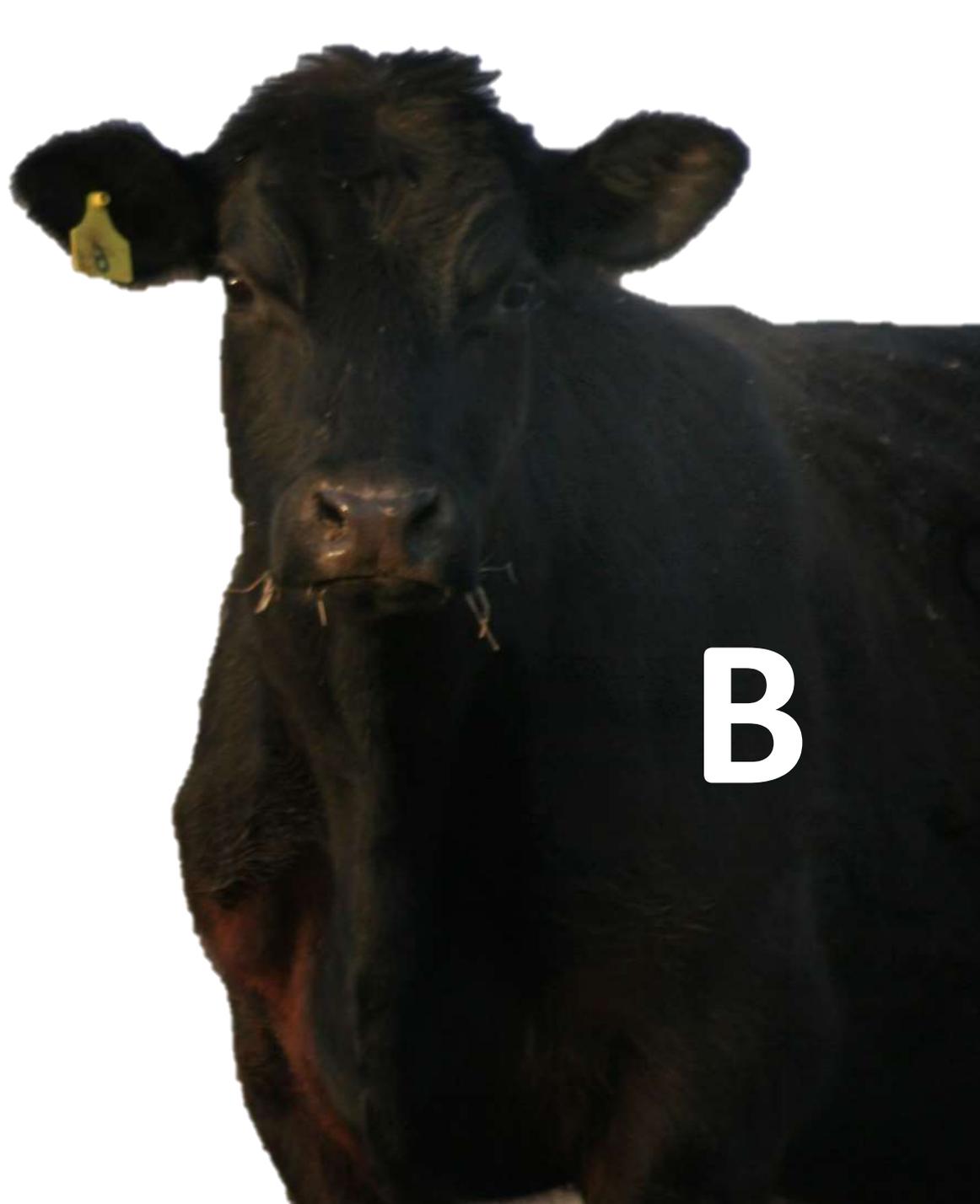
Genetics



- **Value of a Cross Bred**
- **Selection/Culling Program**
- **Develop Genetic Direction**



A



B

Management

- **Development of a culling strategy**
 - **STICK TO IT!**
 - **Skip Method: What's the cost?**
 - **Salvage value of cows = 10%- 20% income**
 - **\$900 salvage value – (\$350 Annual Cow Cost x 2)**
 - **Determine rate of replacement**
- **Pregnancy status**
 - **Poor performance**
 - **Age**
 - **Mouth**
 - **Udder**
 - **Structural soundness**
 - **Health problems**
 - **Disposition**

Replacement Heifer Development

- **Manage to meet your goals**
 - **Target ADG (Mature Cow WT*60%)/(Days till breeding – 21)**
- **Understand your cost**
 - **Depreciation**

Purchase Price or Replacement Cost – Salvage Value
Productive Years in the Herd

*** Replacement Cost includes development + Wean Value**

2016 Cost of Replacement

$$\frac{(\$550 \text{ Development} + \$800 \text{ Wean Value}) - \$900}{7 \text{ Years of Production}} = \$64/\text{Hd}$$



2016 Cost of Replacement

$$\frac{(\$550 \text{ Development} + \$1050 \text{ Wean Value}) - \$900}{7 \text{ Years of Production}} = \$92/\text{Hd}$$



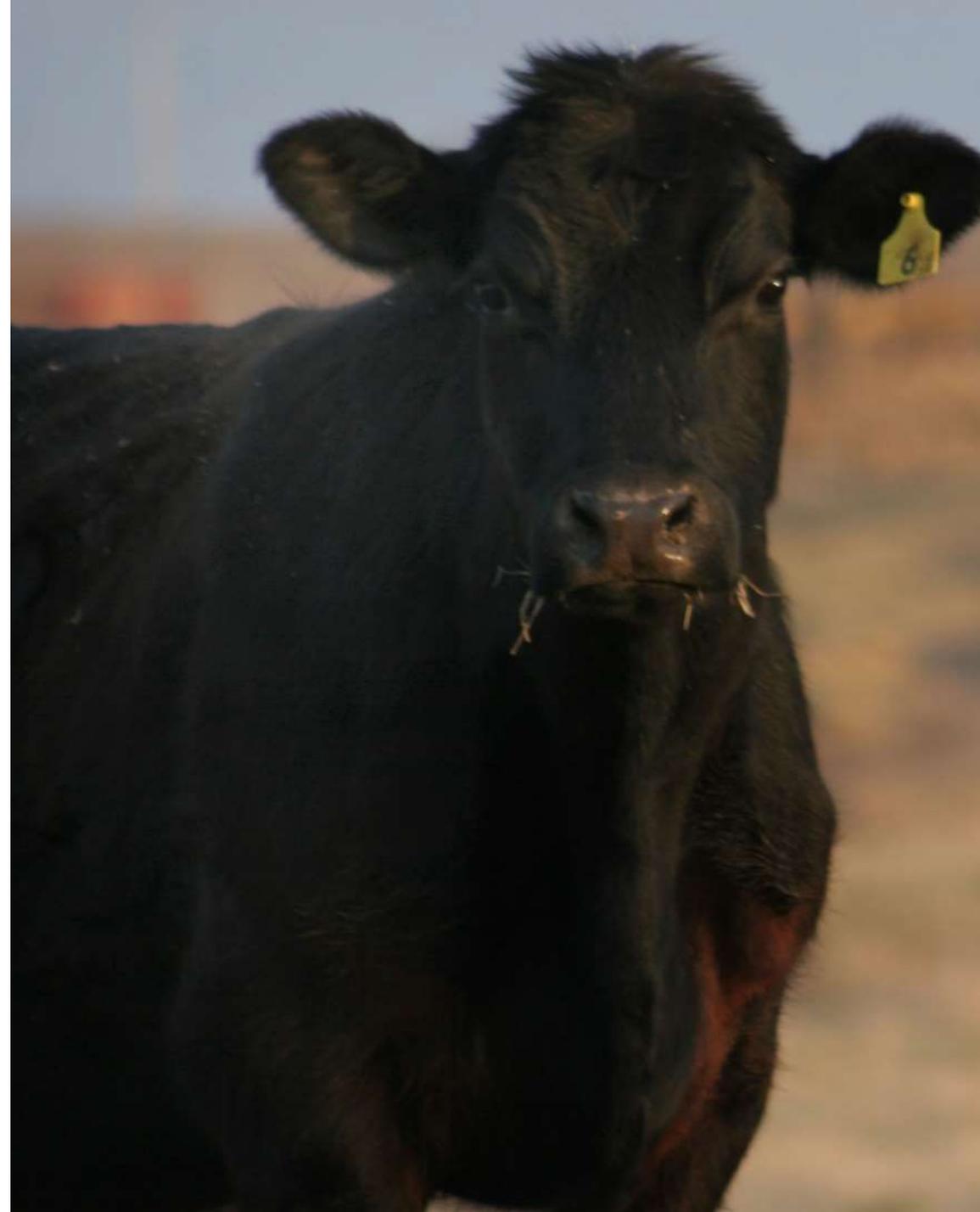
Panhandle Replacement Heifer Development

- **Economic of Scale**
- **Expert Reproductive and Nutritional Oversight**
- **NFREC in Marianna, FL**



Performance Through Management

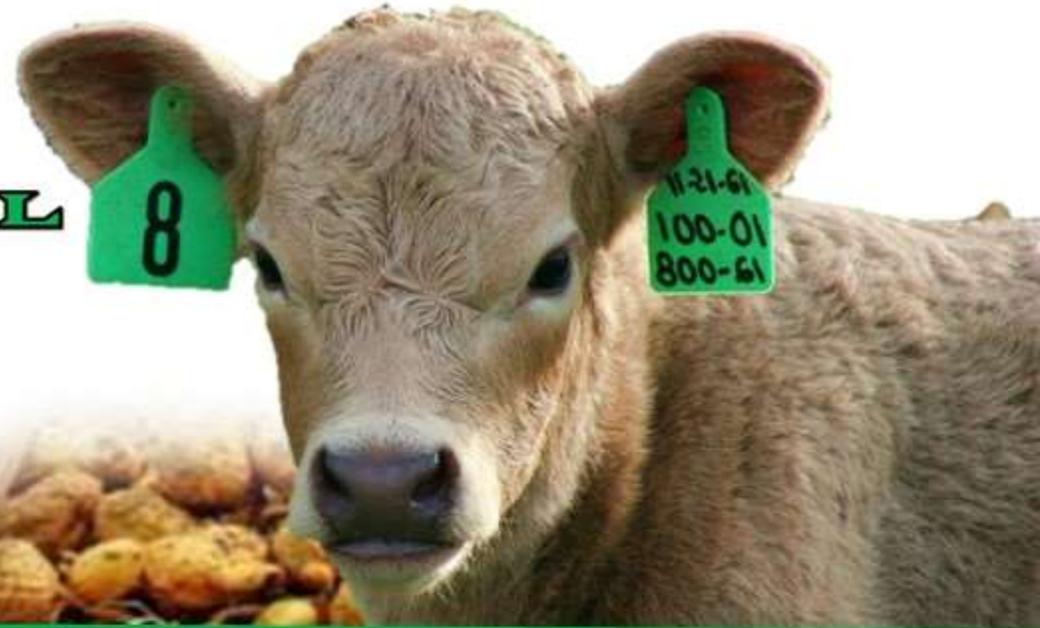
- Develop a plan
- Keep records that aid in decision
- Execute at the herd level



Panhandle Agricultural Connection



Panhandle
AGRICULTURAL
CONNECTION



FSA
FARM SERVICE AGENCY

UF

IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



Thank You
Kalyn Waters
Holmes Co. Extension
850-547-9862
kalyn.waters@ufl.edu



Annual Production Cycle

