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Factors Influencing Price of South Dakota Feeder Calves Fall 2021 and Winter 2022

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Objective

Determine the value of various management practices on price received for calves marketed through five auction barns across South Dakota during the fall 2021 and winter 2022 calf runs. Utilize data to calculate a uniformity score and determine the value of a uniform calf crop.

Study Description

Data was collected at Faith, Philip, Hub City (Aberdeen), Mitchell, and Ft. Pierre Livestock Auctions during the weeks of October 4, 11, 18, and November 1, 2021. Data was collected and analyzed on the approximately 116,000 head of calves that were marketed during that time frame. Data collected included: auction barn, date, seller id, sex, number of head per lot, average weight, hide color, uniformity information, vaccination data, creep feed, implants, branded programs, weaned, horns, mud score, price per hundredweight, price per head, and additional comments. Uniformity score and weighted average price per hundredweight was calculated for each seller. Sellers were grouped into "herd sizes" to compare uniformity and determine value. Additional data will be collected in February and March 2022 to assess the value of backgrounded calves.

Data from the fall calf run are currently being analyzed. Preliminary analysis indicates no differences in price per hundredweight for black versus black-white face calves ($P > 0.05$), so data was combined and classified as black. The same was true for red versus red-white face ($P > 0.05$), so were classified as red. Significant differences ($P < 0.05$) were identified for auction barn, hide color, vaccination program, lot size, drug free and horns. There were no differences for implanted cattle versus non-implanted cattle ($P = 0.99$) or creep fed calves versus non-creep fed calves ($P = 0.97$).

Take Home Points

Various management practices can increase the end value of calves marketed through auction barns in South Dakota. Producers may want to evaluate management practices and impact on price received for calves. Not all practices pay as expected and producers could be leaving money on the table by not taking advantage of these opportunities.

Acknowledgments