Get MORE Beef

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POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION, as shown in the picture of horn branding on the cover, is essential in keeping accurate records. Upon such records stockmen base sound decisions in selecting herd animals.

Simple Records Can Help You Pick Out Your Top Producers

Extra production is *yours,* Mr. Cattle Breeder, if you will combine a small amount of record keeping with prompt culling of those individuals that do not measure up to your standards. Written records on *individual* bulls, cows and calves will point the way to more effective selection.

Records will help you make genetic progress, because neither type nor size of beef cattle is directly related to efficiency of beef production. This means that you, as a commercial breeder, must select directly for characteristics that *do* influence efficiency of production.

University of Arizona records kept in cooperation with a beef cattle breeder show increases in average weaning weights of range-raised calves to be as follows:

Yr.	Average Weaning Weight at 260 Days of Age	Annual Precipitation
1948	418 lbs.	11.09 inches
1949	483 lbs.	13.86 inches
1950	489 lbs.	8.96 inches
1951	452 lbs.	16.90 inches
1952	508 lbs.	17.22 inches
1953	524 lbs.	5.38 inches

All weaning weights were adjusted to a uniform weaning age, and corrected for differences caused by ages of dams and sex of calf. Annual precipitation is included to show that the increase in weights was not the result of better feed conditions.

Keep Records

The keeping of a few simple records can be of help to any breeder trying for heavier weaning weights. Most cattlemen are prone to remember the good things about a bull, cow or calf and to overlook or forget some of the not-so-good things. Mistakes in selection brought about by this situation are costly.

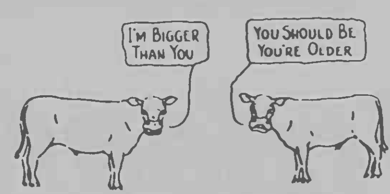
Mistaking the effects of environment for the effects of genes, which are the units of inheritance, is usually the biggest obstacle to the breeder's rapid progress toward his chosen goal. This source of error often prevents increases in growth rate and fleshing ability—two factors that are economically important to every cattleman.

As an example of how environment can affect selections, consider weaning weight of beef cattle. University of Arizona records show that male calves average consistently heavier at weaning time than females. Also, middle-aged cows tend to produce heavier calves than do either younger or older cows.

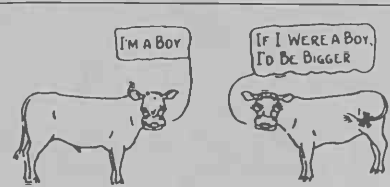
The three most obvious environmental factors that influence weaning weights of beef cattle are shown below.

Environmental Factors

1. AGE OF CALF



2. SEX OF CALF



3. AGE OF DAM

If the calves being compared are not similar in each of these respects, then the breeder is sure to mistake some of the effects of environment for the effects of genes.

The way to keep the effects of environment from covering up those of heredity is to observe and record carefully the environmental factors that apply to each animal and then allow for these when making comparisons.

You don't need elaborate records—just simple, accurate ones. A set of scales would help, but are not necessary. The basic records needed are approximate birth dates and positive identification of individual animals.

A rather crude but effective way to compare calves at weaning time is to divide them into groups of similar age, the same sex, and out of cows of similar age. In this way, all calves in each group had an equal chance.

If the age groups are too small, say less than three head, the calves out of 3, 4, 9 and 10 year old cows could be grouped together. With the calves thus grouped according to similar environmental conditions, you can walk or ride into each group and compare one calf to the others in *that* group.

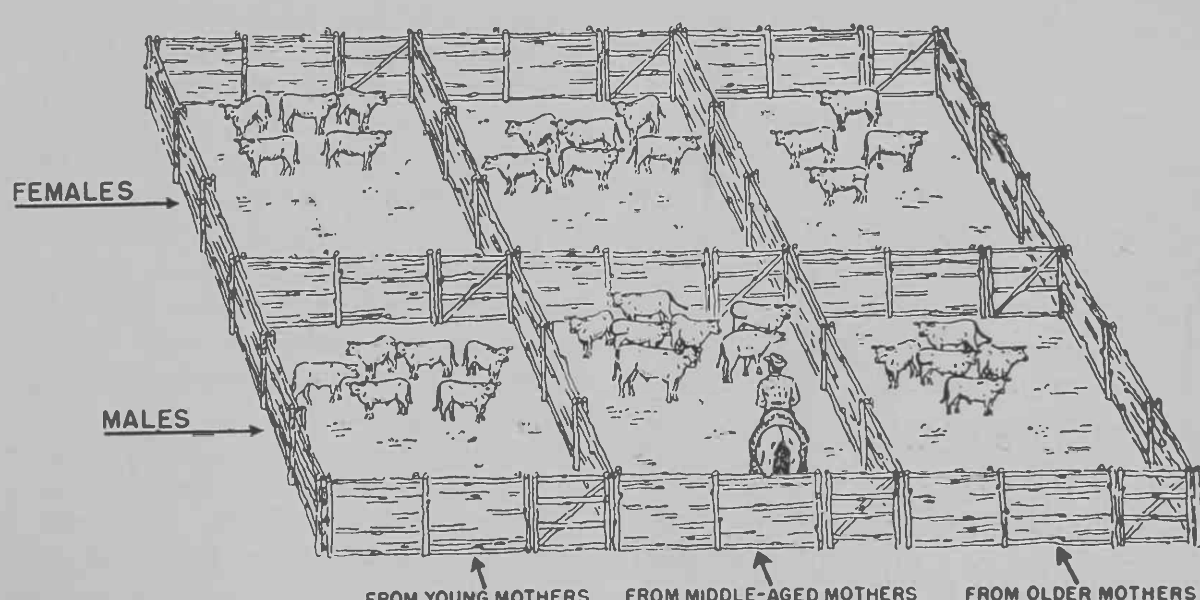
Keep the Best!

Keep the larger, typier, bloomier calves as possible replacements. The others could be rejected and the dams of the poorest of the rejects culled from the herd.

This formula makes sense:

Records + Selection = More Beef

Here's How to Sort Your Calves



ALL CALVES OF SIMILAR AGE