

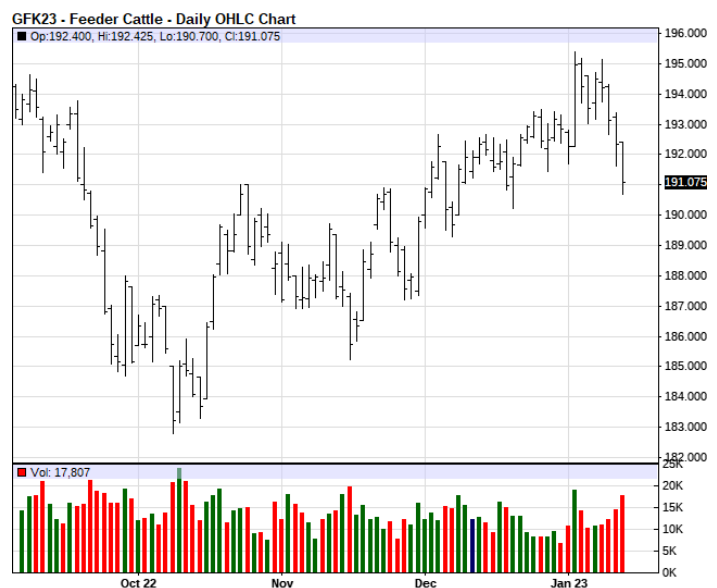


Field Notes for The Week Of 1-16-2023

Positive Beef Cattle Farmers

It might just be my thinking, but I believe January is a long month! In most cases, it seems like time flies by way too fast, but January has always been a slow-moving month for me. Maybe it's the cold dark days, roller coaster temperatures, flooding rains, digging a patch through the mud to feed my cattle, or just the anticipation for spring to arrive. For most farmers winter drags on too long and can be very wearing on the body both mentally and physically. Just a friendly reminder from your local Agricultural and Natural resources educator to take time for yourself, get some rest, take plenty of Vitamin C and D, and think positively about what you do. Speaking of positive thinking this week I was able to host The Ohio State University Virtual Beef Cattle School, giving local beef cattle producers a chance to listen to OSU Beef Cattle Field Specialist, Garth Ruff, Ohio State University Extension Farm Management Specialist Eric Reeker, and Putnam County ANR Educator Clint Schroeder discuss beef cattle operation budgets and the cattle market outlook for 2023. There was a lot of very useful information shared at the meeting and a good discussion as well. The reality is that there are many challenges facing animal agriculture as a whole, but I truly believe that there is still a great future ahead for all animal agriculture industries. Here are some of my key takeaways from the meeting.

1. Total cattle numbers are the lowest since 2014. Due to the severity of the southwestern plains drought that continues to this day many good-conditioned mature cows both young and old have been culled from the ranch. The same goes for heifers.
2. Inflation and energy prices will still take a bite out of the budget in 2023. Inflation is still a key force driving consumer demand and spending. Currently, inflation rates sit at 6.5%, this is down from its peak in June 2022 of 9.1% even with extremely high inflation consumers still demand beef, this includes other countries such as South Korea, E.U., the Philippines, and even China.
3. Farmers of all industries should keep their eyes on interest rates as they continue to climb to level off inflation.
4. Take time to work on your balance sheet and budget. This was a large portion of the meeting and for good reason. Without writing down your number and calculating fixed and variable costs one cannot make proper adjustments to stay sustainable. Just a reminder that your time is worth something too! Many farmers forget to account for their time management costs.
5. Markets are strong for all classes of beef at local and national yards. With that said buyers are still offering premiums for good management. Weaned, vaccinated, and feed bunk-ready calves are fetching a 10-12 cent per lb. premium.



Don't miss the next beef team meeting on February 8th at 6:30 pm in the Adams County Annex Conference room, I hope to see you there!