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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Time to be Weaning Calves?

As September is now here, it is time for many to be thinking about weaning calves. Some of the earlier calving producers may already be there. It is very hot this week and that will add stress to both the calves and whoever is working the calves. The temps in the 90s and humid is not good for anyone or anything involved with working calves.

The following is just a few hints from someone else. This came from the Beef Blog and was written by students and staff at New Mexico State University.

Weaning is one of the most stressful events in a calf's life. Two primary stressors affect calves at weaning: social separation from their mothers and moving to a new environment where they must develop new feeding and watering skills and habituate to new surroundings. Management practices that minimize stress by making this transition less abrupt can improve calf health and weight gain. Facilities, labor, and feed resources should be considered when deciding which weaning protocol is most likely to minimize stress on calves while still preparing them for the next stage of production.

Prevent unnecessary stress by castrating, dehorning, or branding calves prior to weaning. These practices should be completed at least three weeks before weaning and preferably prior to three months of age since the tissues are less developed and less vascularized. It also beneficial to vaccinate calves in advance of weaning to optimize antibody responses to the high-stress time of weaning. Increased levels of antibodies will provide protection against illness during the time of stress.

## Thoughts on Worming the Calves

Well, I just discussed weaning and working your calves prior to weaning to reduce stress. How about the timing for de-worming these calves? Should I do that now or later? What should I use? How do I reduce the chances of resistance?

There are a couple of things that I can say here to answer those questions, but for the best answers you should talk to your veterinarian. The one thing that I will stress that you need to think about for whatever wormer you use it to pay close attention to the dosage. The dosage is tricky.

So, let me guess. Maybe 25 percent of the herds are actually using a set of scales to calculate the dosage. Hopefully I am low on that, but that is my guess for this area. So if you do not use scales, how good are you at guessing on the weight?

Next question, do you guess each individual weight or do a group average? A group average might be easier from the standpoint of measuring, but not for preventing resistance. If you use the group average weight, about half of the calves would be administered less than the recommended dosage.



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If the dosage is below the amount needed you are setting up the perfect storm for resistance regardless of which product you use. Using different products is another key to reduce resistance, but you need to take that a step further. Different products is only effective if the active ingredient is different and a different class, too. Keep this in mind as you discuss this with your veterinarian.

### **Dates to Remember**

Sept. 13      Beef Quality Assurance Training at the United Producers Stockyards in Hillsboro at 6:30 p.m. Call 393-3424 to register prior to the event. Meal starts an hour prior.

Sept. 18-20    Farm Science Review. Tickets are now available in the OSU Extension Office.

Sept. 27 – Oct. 1      Brown County Fair

October 25      Beef Quality Assurance Training at the United Producers Stockyards in Hillsboro at 6:30 p.m. Call 393-3424 to register prior to the event. Meal starts an hour prior.