



VPP Beef Niche Market Cow earns a premium - BCS #3

DQC
Dairy Quality Center
a Division of Agri-Education, Inc.

BEEF TRIM



Unworthy of selling into the VPP Beef Niche Market - BCS #1

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Southwest Region

Dancing For Dollars

Financial success and the ability to maintain your dairy's productivity is a skill that you've learned and continue to hone. Practice sharpens your proficiency. Successful management is similar to dancing. You have to identify the rhythm and the steps that correspond with the tune. You need a partner that can stay in step with you or at least follow your lead.

What are some of the basic recognizable rhythms of your dairy? High milk production, low somatic cell counts, healthy cows, maintaining sufficient dairy replacements - and enough heifers to market for some extra income! The steps that correspond with the tune...your employees! You guide them to be their very best (attitude and aptitude for their jobs). It takes hours of practice and dedication to maintain the proper foot work on the dance floor. Needless to say once you've mastered a two-step the band comes along with a triple step! This is true for you and everyone at the dairy. Knowing how to lead your employees and that all learn at various speeds is essential. Flexibility and on-going training is a must. Your employees are your partners -- what they know and their ability to follow through will keep your dairy moving forward.

Dancers need to follow the music and the movements required; the same is true of your dairy. Animal care, nutrition and herd health are in your control. Being able to direct the band earns you the ability to invest in technology and make improvements and decisions that financially benefit the dairy. How does a sufficient supply of dairy replacements tie into planned culling? By paying attention to the timing and rhythm of your dairy you can market your dairy beef to produce a valuable crescendo to your income.

Let's focus on your culling practices for a couple of stanzas: Do you know what the beef packer is looking for? Do you work at earning the highest return on your dairy beef?

Some points for consideration:

- Do you have and follow a Do Not Breed List?
- Do you sort your culls or send the entire group? (Early culling means more conditioning & heavier carcasses reducing the need to sort)
- Do BCS align with milk production and breeding data to make informed decisions?
- Do culling considerations include cow health & treatment history?
- Is the cow wild or aggressive? -- cull early if apparent
- Lameness or reoccurring issues with her feet?

Early culling can be a financial incentive -- allowing her to go lame, fall or become a 'downer' cow is hazardous to you and your dairy's image. The value of her milk production is not worthy of the potential risk, market early.

Use FACTS when marketing cows:

- Early culling can prevent condemnation due to Cancer Eye -- market at the first sign
- Heavier carcasses earn more money- more weight and less trim loss
- Market Open cows - cut the expense without a return
- Qualify for premiums - be sure your **annual** Verified Premium Plus certification is current

Do you take the VPP audit seriously? Your VPP premiums add up! Review and manage with your consultative veterinarian, he/she serves as the metronome keeping your dairy in step with the music. Retailers and consumers are your audience and need to know you are prepared to demonstrate excellent food production practices.

You will find a spring in your step as you dance for dollars -- remember to listen to the rhythm of your dairy to keep it VPP-tuned with your veterinarian for success!

