

Management Practices Affect Production and Profitability

- Historically, the level of net returns in the cow-calf business have been relatively low due to several factors, including the cost structure of the industry and production practices used.
- More than 40% of cow-calf operations in Texas do not use sound management practices for improved productivity, cost-effectiveness, and greater net returns.

AgriLife Extension’s Response

- Created in 1996, the *Beef Partnership in Extension Program* (Beef PEP) is a collaboration comprising the Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, veterinary practitioners, cow-calf producers, and a pharmaceutical company.
- The program was developed to improve the profitability and sustainability of beef cow-calf operations in Texas by increasing the knowledge base of two main groups of advisers: county extension agents and veterinary practitioners.

- Extension specialists analyzed performance, production, and financial data from four demonstration herds for five consecutive years.
- The specialists conducted routine herd visits to evaluate health and production information, animal body-condition scores, pasture grass/hay samples, and blood and fecal samples.
- The implementation of 25 specific ranch management practices were evaluated in seven categories: (1) nutrition, (2) pasture/hay management, (3) reproduction, (4) herd health, (5) calf husbandry, (6) calf marketing, and (7) accounting or performance records.

Economic Impacts

- Statistical analysis shows a potential increase in net returns of \$11.79 per exposed cow.
- For the estimated 250,000 breeding beef cows and heifers in Texas using Beef PEP management practices (5% of the state’s inventory), the increase in net returns was estimated at \$2.9 million in 2015.
- Total economic output (gross business sales) associated with this level of increased income was an estimated \$3.8 million.
- This level of economic impact helped to support an additional 27 jobs.

