

Premier Beef Cattle and Rangeland Education Programs

ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF EXTENSION EDUCATION

STRUCTURE OF THE COW-CALF INDUSTRY

- Beef cattle production in Texas is a \$9 billion industry, with beef topping every other agricultural commodity produced in the state.
- Changing dynamics and challenges in the beef cattle industry have many beef cattle operations across the state and the nation seeking ways to optimize production efficiency and maintain competitiveness.

AGRILIFE EXTENSION'S RESPONSE

- Premier beef and rangeland programs in the north region of the state were developed to identify key program areas that address producers' needs and impact decisions and economic returns for beef cattle production.
- Program focus areas include beef cattle health, nutrition, management and reproduction, brush and weed control, forage health, and economic risk management and marketing.
- Beef cattle health programs focus on the health and profitability of beef cattle, including the proper and safe use of antibiotics for treating illnesses. Programs also focus on heifer and bull development, management, selection, vaccination programs, and conditions of livestock while aiming to improve sustainability, reducing disease and illness risk, and improving economic returns.
- Beef cattle nutrition educational programs focus on nutrition supplementation, body condition scores, nutritional requirements, minerals, alternative sources of feed, decision aides, and forage value with the goal of improving beef quality and increasing economic returns.
- Brush and weed control programs focus on herbicide education, alternative control options, use and safety of pesticides, improved forages, and weed identification and management with the goal of improving the quality and quantity of

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forages available and reducing or eliminating the need for chemical control in pastures

- Rangeland and forage health educational programs focus on monitoring forages, forage availability and quality, rangeland health, determining stocking rates, management, and nutrient value of forages aimed at protecting the environment and natural resources, enhancing economic returns, benefiting wildlife habitat and reducing the need for pesticides.
- Risk management and marketing focuses on pricing methods and strategies, risk assessment, budgeting and cost of production, and legal considerations.
- In 2024, 610 producers participated in 19 beef cattle and rangeland programs.

ECONOMIC IMPACTS

- The economic benefits of the programs were measured in terms of the potential increase in net returns resulting from the adoption and implementation of selected beef cattle and rangeland management practices taught in the programs.
- Participants of the programs manage an estimated 428,228 beef cows, calves, and stockers, and 6.6 million acres. Participant survey responses indicated an average anticipated economic benefit of \$6.74 per acre resulting from adoption of practices related to beef cattle health, nutrition, management and reproduction, brush and weed control strategies, forage health, and risk management and marketing.
- The total anticipated annual increase in net returns in 2024 was \$44.5 million for producers who adopt selected management practices.