

Beef Management Calendar

Ronnie Silcox and Mark McCann, Extension Animal Scientists

This calendar contains a monthly listing of the common management practices needed for commercial beef herd production in Georgia. Some are recommended at a certain time of the year and others are recommended when calves are a certain age or at a certain point in their reproductive cycle.

Each monthly list is divided into three sections: general, fall calving and spring calving. Management practices in the general category are seasonal and apply to most cattle producers in Georgia. The fall calving list is based on October 1 through December 20 calving dates, and the spring calving list is based on January 10 through March 31 calving dates. These dates are not necessarily the best dates for all producers but were chosen because they are reasonably close to what many producers use. Establish calving dates based on your feed resources and availability of labor. A cow's energy and protein requirements increase greatly at calving and remain high through breeding season. It is best to plan breeding season for the time of year when forage quality is at its best. With good winter grazing, fall calving is a good option. If cows are wintered on hay, spring pasture offers the best feed for breeding season and spring calving is a better choice. If your calving season is different, adjust management practices accordingly.

	GENERAL	SPRING CALVING January, February, March	FALL CALVING October, November, December
JANUARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide high magnesium mineral supplement for cows on winter grazing. ✓ Vitamin A supplementation might be needed if frosted grass, weathered hay or by-products are the primary feedstuffs (35,000 IU/day for 1000 lb cows). ✓ Do not graze winter annuals closer than 4". Overgrazing can reduce winter production. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Check cows frequently during calving season. ✓ Tag calves at birth. Record birth dates, tag numbers, ID. ✓ Castrate, dehorn and implant calves at birth. ✓ Keep yearling heifers gaining weight. They need to weigh about 2/3 of mature weight at breeding in March. ✓ Bulls will be turned in with heifers in March and with cows in April. Evaluate bulls, trim feet, line up breeding soundness exams and decide on buying new bulls. ✓ A cow's nutrient needs increase by at least 50% after calving. If possible, separate dry cows from cow-calf pairs to feed more efficiently. ✓ Order calf and cow vaccines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Breed cows. Cows bred January 1 should calve October 13. ✓ Be prepared to remove bulls from heifers after a 45-60d breeding season. ✓ Use your best feeds now. With average quality hay, a lactating cow needs 4 to 5 lbs of whole cottonseed, 1 1/2 lbs of cottonseed meal plus 2 lbs of corn or free choice liquid supplement or block plus 2 lbs of corn. A forage analysis permits you to supplement your cows more precisely. ✓ Limit grazing on winter annuals. Two hours of grazing per day and free choice hay stretches grazing.
FEBRUARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Pull soil samples on bermuda and bahia pastures and hay fields to plan spring fertilization and liming. ✓ Check with your county agent about pasture weed control. This is the best time to spray for musk thistle control. ✓ Check mineral feeders and continue to feed high magnesium mineral supplement to cows on winter grazing or tall fescue. ✓ Fertilize tall fescue pasture and overseeded grazing. Apply 60 lbs N per acre in addition to soil test recommendations. ✓ Do not graze winter annuals closer than 4". Overgrazing can reduce total winter production. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Check cows frequently during calving season. ✓ Tag calves at birth. Record birth dates, tag numbers and cow ID. ✓ Castrate, dehorn and implant calves at birth. ✓ Make sure bulls are in good condition for breeding heifers next month. Trim feet, conduct breeding soundness exams and provide additional feed if needed. ✓ A cow's nutrient needs increase by at least 50% after calving. If possible, separate dry cows, first calf heifers and cow-calf pairs to feed more efficiently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Vaccinate calves over 3 months old with clostridial vaccines (black-leg). Check with your local veterinarian about other problems in your area. ✓ Castrate and dehorn any calves missed at birth. ✓ Implant calves. Steers that were implanted at birth can be re-implanted. (Synovex-C and Ralgro are approved for use in replacement heifers. Follow label instructions.) ✓ Check on the condition of bulls during breeding season. Provide supplemental feed as needed. ✓ Remove bulls from heifers after a 45-60 day breeding season.

MARCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Continue feeding high magnesium mineral supplement to cows on winter grazing. ✓ Do not overgraze winter annuals. Pull cows when the annuals are shorter than 4". ✓ Fertilize permanent pastures according to soil test. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ For a January 10-March 30 calving season, bulls need to go in April 1-June 20. Make sure bulls are in good condition and conduct breeding soundness exams. ✓ Cows need to be in moderate to good condition to rebreed early. You may need to start feeding your best hay and put them on your best grazing now. Supplement as needed according to forage test. ✓ Start breeding heifers about a month before the cow herd. ✓ Castrate, dehorn and implant calves at birth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Remove bulls March 23 to end calving season about December 31. ✓ Keep bulls in a small pasture with strong fences. Feed bulls enough to keep them in good condition for next year's breeding. ✓ Spot check cows to see if most are bred. By now, there should be little activity. ✓ Vaccinate for clostridial disease, castrate and dehorn late calves or those missed in early working.
APRIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Keep a close watch on pasture conditions. Continue supplemental feeding until grass is plentiful. ✓ Fertilize permanent pastures according to soil tests if not done previously. ✓ Start watching for flies. Order fly control products to be ready when treatment warrants. Consider the type tags or sprays used last year. Change from organophosphate to pyrethroid or vice versa. ✓ Use all outside stores of hay; clean out hay storage areas for new hay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ For calves to begin hitting the ground around January 10, bulls need to go into pastures on April 1. ✓ Check condition of bulls during the breeding season. Provide supplemental feed if needed. ✓ Be prepared to remove bulls from heifers after a 45-60 day breeding season. Spot check heifers for activity now to see if they are breeding. ✓ Cows need to be in moderate to good condition to rebreed. Provide supplemental feed if spring pastures are slow to grow. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ To precondition for shipment, calves should be vaccinated for respiratory diseases 45 days prior to shipment. Check with the local veterinarian now for product recommendations so these vaccines can be ordered. ✓ Heifer calves should be calfhood vaccinated for brucellosis at 4 to 8 months of age. ✓ Pregnancy check heifers 45-60 days after the end of breeding season. ✓ Brand or otherwise establish permanent IDs for bred heifers.
MAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Control pasture weeds by clipping or with chemical weed control. ✓ Fertilize bermudagrass and bahia pastures according to soil test recommendations, if not done previously. ✓ Check out the hay equipment and make sure it is ready for operation. ✓ Control flies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Vaccinate calves more than 3 months old with clostridial vaccines (black-leg). ✓ Castrate and dehorn any calves missed at birth. ✓ Implant calves. Calves that were implanted at birth may be re-implanted. ✓ Check on condition of bulls during breeding season. Provide supplemental feed if needed. ✓ Spot check to make sure cows are settling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Pregnancy check cows 45-60 days after the end of the breeding season. Sell open cows. ✓ Check cows' eyes, udders, feet, legs and production records for others that should be culled. ✓ To precondition calves for shipment, vaccinate for respiratory diseases (IBR, PI₃, BVD, BRSV, <i>H. Somnus</i>) 45 days before weaning. Check with your local veterinarian for product recommendations. ✓ Heifers should be calfhood vaccinated for brucellosis at 4-8 months of age.
JUNE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cut hay! Plan on about 1½ tons of hay per cow for this winter. ✓ With adequate rainfall, hay should be cut every 4-5 weeks. ✓ Apply 60-80 units of nitrogen per acre after cutting hybrid bermudagrass hay fields. (1 ton of hay removes 50 lbs of N, 14 lbs of P and 43 lbs of K from the land.) ✓ Put hay in barn or move round bales to dry, well-drained areas and cover them. ✓ Clip overgrown pastures. ✓ Continue fly control ✓ Check mineral and water supply often. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Spot check cows to see if most are bred. By now, there should be little activity. ✓ Remove bulls on June 20 for January-February-March calving. ✓ Put bulls in a small pasture with strong fences. Young bulls in thin condition may need a little supplemental feed. ✓ Vaccinate for clostridial diseases, castrate and dehorn late calves or those missed in earlier working. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Check and repair fences in pens where weaned calves will be placed. ✓ Consult with your marketing agent about prices and special sales. ✓ Wean calves depending on pasture conditions and marketing plans. ✓ Select replacement heifers based on weaning weights. ✓ Deworm calves at weaning. ✓ Cull open and poor producing cows after weaning.

JULY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Continue fly control. Watch fly numbers; as tags get old, you may need to begin spraying or using back rubs. ✓ Clip overgrown pastures. ✓ Check for pinkeye, cancer eye and foot rot. ✓ Send in forage samples on hay now so you will have results to use in planning winter feeding. ✓ Check water and minerals often. Plenty of clear water is critical in summer. At 90 degrees F, a mature cow nursing a calf drinks about 17 gallons of water a day. ✓ Treat for grubs between now and the first of October. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consider creep feeding, depending on pasture conditions and marketing plans. ✓ Pregnancy check cows 45-60 days after the end of the breeding season. ✓ Pregnancy check heifers 45-60 days after the end of the breeding season. ✓ Sell open heifers now. ✓ Brand or otherwise establish permanent IDs for bred heifers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Wean calves depending on pasture conditions and marketing plans. ✓ Wean replacement heifers and separate from the rest of the herd. Weigh heifers to project needed gain between now and breeding (in December). ✓ Deworm calves at weaning. ✓ Deworm cows if needed. ✓ Cull open and poor producing cows after weaning.
AUGUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Continue fly control. As fly tags get old, you may need to begin spraying or using back rubs. ✓ Plant winter grazing needs. Check on supply and prices for winter annual seed. ✓ Treat for grubs between July and October. ✓ Check water and minerals often. ✓ Stockpile fescue for late fall grazing. ✓ Get large, round bales into the barn or move to dry, well-drained areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Pregnancy check cows. ✓ It is a good time to deworm while cows are up. ✓ Check cows for bad eyes, udders, legs and production records to find other cows that need to be added to the cull list. ✓ Heifers should be calthood vaccinated for brucellosis at 4-8 months of age. ✓ To precondition calves, vaccinate for respiratory diseases (IBR, PI₃, BVD, BRSV, <i>H. Somnus</i>) 45 days prior to shipment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Replacement heifers are 8-10 months old. Forage quality declines rapidly from now to frost. Keep an eye on heifer gains and supply supplemental feed as needed. ✓ Check cow condition. Cows should be in moderately good condition prior to calving.
SEPTEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Quality of bermudagrass and bahia declines rapidly from now to frost. Keep an eye on heifers and supplement as needed. ✓ Stockpile fescue for late fall. ✓ Begin planting winter grazing. ✓ Take stock of your hay supply so additional cuttings or purchases can be made. (Send samples in for analysis.) ✓ Keep a close check on supplemental feed prices. Corn and byproduct feeds such as cottonseed can usually be bought cheaper in the fall. ✓ Plan where winter grazing will be over-seeded into pastures. Graze these areas close or clip prior to planting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Wean calves depending on pasture conditions and marketing plans. ✓ Wean heifers and select replacements based on weaning weights. Use weights to project needed gain between now and breeding (March). ✓ Consider options for selling weaned calves, back-grounding or maintaining ownership through the feedlot. ✓ Deworm calves at weaning. ✓ Calthood vaccinate heifers for brucellosis at 4-8 months of age. ✓ Separate cull cows at weaning. ✓ For late calves (weaning in late Oct or Nov), consider creep feeding and vaccination for respiratory diseases 45 days prior to weaning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Move heavy-springing heifers to clean pastures where they can be checked 2-3 times daily. ✓ Establish an ID system and tag calves at birth. ✓ Gather and clean your calving supplies. Be ready to assist with calving difficulties and to castrate, implant and deworm calves at birth. ✓ Feed requirements increase 10-15% during the last 30-45 days prior to calving (i.e., about 1 lb of extra TDN per day). On fall pastures, cows may need a small amount of supplemental feed.
OCTOBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Quality of bermudagrass and bahia declines rapidly from now to frost. Watch condition of cows. Supplemental feed may be needed. ✓ Fertilize fescue pastures (60 lb N; P, K and lime according to soil test results). ✓ Finish planting winter grazing in prepared seed beds and begin overseeding winter annuals into pastures. ✓ Watch feed conditions closely when grazing stalks and stubble. Cows will eat the best of the crop residues rather quickly. ✓ Remove cattle from sorghum crops after a light frost due to the danger of prussic acid poisoning. ✓ Continue to monitor supplemental feed prices. Corn and by-product feeds like cottonseed are usually cheaper in the fall. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Finish weaning late calves (follow September management list). ✓ Heifers need to weigh about 2/3 of their mature weight at breeding time in March. They usually need to gain 1 to 1½ lbs per day after weaning. ✓ Watch the body condition of bred heifers. Separate them from the cows and provide supplemental feed as quality of fall grazing declines. ✓ Identify thin cows and supplement them at a rate where they will reach moderate body condition at calving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cows due to calve should be put into clean pastures and checked frequently. ✓ Tag calves at birth. Record birth date, tag number and cow ID. ✓ Castrate, dehorn and implant bull calves at birth. ✓ Bulls will be turned in with heifers in December and cows in January. It is time to evaluate bulls, trim feet, line up a breeding soundness exam or decide on buying a new bull. ✓ Check with your veterinarian about suggested pre-calving and pre-breeding vaccinations for cows. ✓ Start feeding high magnesium mineral supplement 30 days before cattle are turned in on winter grazing or lush fescue pasture.

NOVEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Check parasite load of cows, collect fecal sample on 10-20% of herd as an indication of whether deworming is needed. Check with your veterinarian for instructions. ✓ Deworm and implant stockers before turn out. ✓ Start feeding high magnesium mineral supplement 30 days before cattle are turned in on winter grazing or lush fescue. ✓ As weather gets colder, treat cattle for lice. ✓ Remove old insecticide ear tags as you work cows. Old tags release low levels of insecticide that tend to promote development of resistant strains of flies. ✓ Keep a close eye on pasture conditions as residual summer grass and crop residues are consumed. Start offering some hay before pastures are totally grazed off. Bull sale season is starting. Evaluate your herd bulls and start looking if you need a new bull. ✓ It's not too late to get forage analyzed and order winter supplements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Check on calving supplies and order, so they will be on hand in January. ✓ Feed poorer quality hay to dry cows now. Save your best hay for calving season. ✓ Check heifers frequently. They should begin calving in December. ✓ Make sure cows maintain their body condition. Supplement if necessary. Thin cows and first-calf heifers would be the most likely candidates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Tag calves at birth. Record birth date, tag number and cow ID. ✓ Castrate, dehorn and implant bulls at birth. ✓ A cow's nutrient needs increase by at least 50% after calving. If possible, separate dry cows, first calf heifers and cow-calf pairs to feed more efficiently. ✓ Get the bull ready! Trim feet if needed, make sure bulls are in good condition and check with your veterinarian about breeding soundness exam. ✓ Check cows frequently. Be ready to provide assistance with calving if necessary. ✓ Replacement heifers should be nearing $\frac{2}{3}$ of their mature weight.
DECEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Do not graze winter annuals closer than 4". Over grazing can reduce winter forage production. ✓ Provide high magnesium mineral supplement for cows on winter grazing. ✓ Treat for lice if not already done. ✓ Keep a close eye on cattle when grazing on crop residues and residual summer grass. Quality will decline rapidly now. ✓ Evaluate your winter feed supply. Consider the amount of grazing planted, condition of grazing fields, hay quantity and quality. There is still time to buy supplemental feeds at fall prices. ✓ Vitamin A supplementation might be needed if frosted grass or weathered hay is the primary forage source (1000 lb cow requires 35,000 IU/day). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Move heifers into dry, clean pastures and check frequently. They should begin calving in December. ✓ Tag calves at birth. Record birth dates, tag numbers and cow ID. ✓ Castrate, dehorn and implant at birth. ✓ Check breeding dates on cows. Watch closely as due dates approach. ✓ Feed requirements increase about 10-15% during the last 30-45 days prior to calving. Do not underfeed in an effort to reduce birth weight. ✓ Check with your veterinarian about suggested pre-breeding vaccinations for cows. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Check cows frequently. Be ready to assist with calving if necessary. ✓ Castrate, dehorn and implant calves at birth. ✓ Tag calves at birth. Record birth date, tag number and cow ID. ✓ Start breeding heifers about a month before the cow herd. (They should weigh $\frac{2}{3}$ of expected mature weight.) ✓ For a high percentage of cows to re-breed early, they must be in moderate to good condition. You probably need to start grazing or feeding your best hay now. Supplement as needed according to forage test. ✓ Check bulls' semen before turning in with cows.

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Gale A. Buchanan, Dean and Director