

NORTH CENTRAL REGION BEEF PRODUCERS SURVEY



Please circle or enter your responses to each item. Thank you!

1. Do you operate a cow-calf operation in one of the following 12 states?
Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin

1 = Yes 2 = No ➔ **IF NO, PLEASE STOP HERE AND RETURN THE SURVEY IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED. THANK YOU!**

2. Do you have a cow-calf herd with at least 10 cows and/or breeding age heifers?

1 = Yes 2 = No ➔ **IF NO, PLEASE STOP HERE AND RETURN THE SURVEY IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED. THANK YOU!**

As you respond, please consider the average of the last 5 years EXCEPT where asked for a specific year.

FARM & BEEF HERD PROFILE

3. How many acres of farm or ranch land are **managed** by your operation?

	Pasture: Land with planted or domesticated native forage species managed for grazing.	Range: Land with native forage species managed for grazing.	Cultivated Land planted but not used primarily for grazing; e.g. row crops, hay ground that is not grazed.
Acres owned by your operation:			
Acres your operation rents or leases from others:			
Acres your operation rents or leases to others:			

4. How many of the total acres you **own or rent from others** are in each of the following categories?

Acreage production type	Number of acres
Pasture, range, and hay: Cool-season forages <i>(e.g. tall fescue, bluegrass, orchardgrass, alfalfa, clover, birdsfoot trefoil)</i>	
Pasture, range, and hay: Warm-season forages <i>(e.g. big bluestem, Bermuda grass, Indian grass, switchgrass, lespedeza)</i>	
Cultivated: Silage or greenchop <i>(e.g. for corn silage, small grains silage/haylage, etc.)</i>	
Cultivated: Row crops <i>(e.g. corn, soybeans, grain wheat)</i>	
Cultivated: Cover crops for grazing	
Timber/forest/orchard (ungrazed)	
Farmstead, buildings, and other non-cultivated or ungrazed	

5. What other types of livestock does your operation have, in addition to your cow/calf herd?
 (Select all that apply.)

- 1 = Feedlot Cattle 3 = Dairy Cattle 5 = Sheep/Goats
 2 = Stocker Cattle 4 = Grass finished cattle 6 = Other: _____

6. Economically, how important is your cow-calf operation to your farm operation overall?

Not Important	Slightly Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
1	2	3	4	5

7. How many total hours of labor per week (on average over the year) go into your cow-calf operation?

_____ hours per week

8. Would you consider your cow-calf operation to be confinement? 1 = Yes 2 = No

9. How many of the following animal types did you have in your cow-calf operation in **2019**?

- _____ Cows and heifers that calved (regardless of calf survival)
 _____ Calves weaned
 _____ Bulls maintained for breeding purposes
 _____ Replacement heifers maintained (between weaning and breeding)

10. What is the makeup of your herd? (Select one answer)

- 1 = Purebred 2 = Commercial 3 = Both purebred and commercial

11. What are the predominant breeds in your herd? _____

Thinking about the past 5 years...

12. How satisfied are you with the **herd health** of your cow-calf operation?

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

13. How satisfied are you with the **reproductive success** of your cow-calf operation?

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

14. Do you have a defined breeding season? 1 = Yes 2 = No

15. Approximately how many calves were born during each month in **2019** in your operation?

JAN 2019	FEB 2019	MAR 2019	APR 2019	MAY 2019	JUN 2019	JUL 2019	AUG 2019	SEP 2019	OCT 2019	NOV 2010	DEC 2019

Please think about the **past 5 years** as you answer the following questions.

16. What are the **main** reasons your operation calves when it does? (Select no more than 2.)

- 1 = Labor availability 3 = Market timing 5 = Forage or feed availability
 2 = Weather 4 = Tradition 6 = Other: _____

17. How satisfied are you with the **nutritional management** component of your cow-calf operation?

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

18. What months is your cowherd typically allowed to graze? (Circle all that apply.)

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

19. Do you use the following types of grazing systems on your farm?

Yes	No	
1	2	Continuous grazing (<i>no rest for forage regrowth between grazing</i>)
1	2	Rotational grazing (<i>animals rotated through pastures to allow for forage regrowth</i>)
1	2	Controlled grazing (<i>strip grazing with new pasture area allocated often</i>)
1	2	Mob grazing (<i>concentrated stocking density and then extended period of rest</i>)
1	2	Other: _____

20. What portion of your cow-calf operation's feed and forage **over the entire year** is produced by **your own** farm?

- 1 = Less than 25% 2 = 25-49% 3 = 50-74% 4 = 75% or More

21. During what months do you generally feed harvested forage (e.g. hay, haylage or balelage, silage) to the majority of your cowherd? (Select all that apply)

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

22. Do you generally group animals on your cow-calf operation by their nutrient requirements? (e.g. lactating vs. dry, heifers vs. cows, first-calf heifers vs. mature cows)

- 1 = Yes 2 = No

Again, please answer the following questions thinking about the past 5 years.

23. Do you generally provide the following types of supplements to the groups of cattle listed below? (Select a response for each supplement type in each row.)

	Energy & Protein Supplement	Salt Supplement (Salt only- no trace minerals)	Mineral & Vitamin Supplement
Bred Heifers	1 = Yes 2 = No	1 = Yes 2 = No	1 = Yes 2 = No
Pregnant Cows	1 = Yes 2 = No	1 = Yes 2 = No	1 = Yes 2 = No
Lactating 2-year olds	1 = Yes 2 = No	1 = Yes 2 = No	1 = Yes 2 = No
Lactating cows	1 = Yes 2 = No	1 = Yes 2 = No	1 = Yes 2 = No
Bulls	1 = Yes 2 = No	1 = Yes 2 = No	1 = Yes 2 = No
Open Females	1 = Yes 2 = No	1 = Yes 2 = No	1 = Yes 2 = No

24. What is your estimated feed and forage cost for **one cow-calf pair each year**? \$ _____

25. How likely is it that changes in the following areas would improve the financial returns of your cow-calf operation?

	Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Neutral	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely
Number of head	1	2	3	4	5
Forage management	1	2	3	4	5
Land management	1	2	3	4	5
Health management	1	2	3	4	5
Reproductive management	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

26a. In general, how satisfied have you been with the financial returns of your cow-calf operation over the last five years?

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

26b. How likely is it that the financial returns from your cow- calf operation in 2020 will be negatively impacted by the global coronavirus pandemic?

Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Neutral	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely
1	2	3	4	5

WINTER FORAGE AND NUTRITIONAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

For the purposes of this study we define “Winter” as the time between the first major frost and last major frost, or the time of dormancy (little to no growth) for most grazed forages due to cold temperatures.

Please think about the past 5 years as you answer the following questions.

27. Based on this definition of winter (above), what months do you consider to be part of winter feeding?
(Circle all that apply)

SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5

28. What portion of your operation’s feed and forage is produced by your own farm for **winter feeding**?

1 = Less than 25% 2 = 25-49% 3 = 50-74% 4 = 75% or More

29. How much of the forage that you feed to your cowherd over the winter is made up of the following forage types?

	None	1-25%	26-49%	50-74%	75-100%
Hay (<i>dried/cured</i>)	1	2	3	4	5
Haylage/Baleage (<i>forage</i>)	1	2	3	4	5
Silage (<i>e.g. corn or small grain</i>)	1	2	3	4	5
Grazing Forage	1	2	3	4	5
Grazing Cover Crops	1	2	3	4	5
Grazing Crop Residue (<i>e.g. corn stalks</i>)	1	2	3	4	5
Other (Please specify: _____)	1	2	3	4	5
Other (Please specify: _____)	1	2	3	4	5

30. How do you store **MOST of** your dried or cured hay? (*Select one response.*)

1 = Uncovered on ground (soil) 3 = Uncovered off ground on gravel, pallets, concrete, etc
2 = Covered on ground (soil) 4 = Covered off ground on gravel, pallets, concrete, etc

31. Do you feed forage as part of a total mixed ration? 1 = Yes 2 = No

32. **Where** do you feed **MOST** of your harvested forage (*dry hay, haylage/baleage, or silage*)?
(*Select one response.*)

1 = Barn 3 = Paddock (non-pasture soil)
2 = Pasture (grazable) 4 = Other

33. How do you feed **MOST** of your harvested forage (dry hay, haylage/baleage, or silage)?
(Select one response)

- 1 = Hay ring
- 2 = Wagon-style bunk
- 3 = Fence-line bunk
- 4 = On ground
- 5 = Other

34. How has your use of the following forage types for **winter feeding** changed over the **last 10 years**?

	Large decrease	Some decrease	No change	Some increase	Large increase
Hay (dried/cured)	1	2	3	4	5
Haylage/Baleage (forage)	1	2	3	4	5
Silage (e.g. corn or small grain)	1	2	3	4	5
Grazing Forage	1	2	3	4	5
Grazing Cover Crops	1	2	3	4	5
Grazing Crop Residue (e.g. corn stalks)	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

35. How satisfied are you with your access to the following **winter forage** types for your cow-calf operation?

Forage type	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Hay (dried/cured)	1	2	3	4	5
Haylage/Baleage (forage)	1	2	3	4	5
Silage (e.g. corn or small grain)	1	2	3	4	5
Grazing Forage	1	2	3	4	5
Grazing Cover Crops	1	2	3	4	5
Grazing Crop Residue (e.g. corn stalks)	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

36. What is the one forage type you would **most** like to **increase use** of during winter feeding of your cowherd in 2020-21? (Select one type.)

- 1 = Hay (dried/cured)
- 2 = Haylage/Baleage (forage)
- 3 = Silage (e.g. corn or small grain)
- 4 = Grazing forage
- 5 = Grazing cover crops
- 6 = Grazing crop residue
- 7 = Other: _____
- 8 = None [IF NONE, GO TO QUESTION 38]

43. How much do the following factors **influence the types and quantities of winter forage** that you use for your cow-calf operation? This includes *positive* or *negative* influence.

	No Influence	Minor Influence	Some Influence	Major Influence
Climate (e.g. growing days, temperatures, precipitation)	1	2	3	4
Weather predictability (year-to-year)	1	2	3	4
Fencing	1	2	3	4
Land availability	1	2	3	4
Water infrastructure (e.g. waterers, pipe, etc.)	1	2	3	4
Cost of producing harvested forage	1	2	3	4
Cost of purchasing harvested forage	1	2	3	4
Quality of forage needed	1	2	3	4
Quantity of forage needed	1	2	3	4
Cost of renting land	1	2	3	4
Labor prices and availability	1	2	3	4
Competition for resources within your operation	1	2	3	4
Wildlife concerns	1	2	3	4
Water quality concerns	1	2	3	4
Other: _____	1	2	3	4

44. How do you determine forage quality? (Select all that apply.)

- 1 = Forage type
- 2 = Forage analysis (quality test)
- 3 = Animal performance (condition, growth)
- 4 = Book values (e.g. NRC or Extension publication)
- 5 = Past feeding value
- 6 = Previous forage analysis
- 7 = Other:

45. How do you separate and feed the harvested forage inventory for your cow-calf operation? (Select all that apply.)

- 1 = By forage type
- 2 = By harvest date
- 3 = By harvest location
- 4 = By forage species
- 5 = None, no forage separation
- 6 = Other: _____

46. What is your estimated **winter feed and forage** cost for one cow-calf pair annually? \$ _____

47. How often do you have the **soil** in your **pastures &/or hay grounds** tested?

- 1 = Annually
- 2 = Every two years
- 3 = Every five years
- 4 = Rarely or never

48. How important are winter feeding practices compared to non-winter feeding or grazing practices for the following components of your cow-calf operation?

	<u>Winter is Much More Important</u>			Equally Important		<u>Non-Winter is Much More Important</u>	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overall feed costs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overall labor needs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overall land management and costs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overall facility management and costs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cow numbers (herd size)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overall cow body condition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overall cow health	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overall calf health and survival	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overall calf growth and productivity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overall reproductive success	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Financial returns	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Other:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

49. How often do you have a nutrient analysis (quality test or hay test) performed for harvested or dormant forage?

- 1 = Annually for **all** forages
- 2 = Annually for **some** forages
- 3 = Every 2 years
- 4 = Every 5 years
- 5 = Rarely or irregularly done
- 6 = Never →

50. **IF NEVER:** Why have you not used forage nutrient analyses? (*Select all that apply.*)

- 1 = No perceived problems with forage quality
- 2 = Cost of forage nutrient analysis
- 3 = Lack of analytical service availability
- 4 = Lack of equipment
- 5 = Lack of time/labor necessary
- 6 = Don't know how or where to do nutrient analysis
- 7 = Other: _____

PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 54 (NEXT PAGE)

IF YOU HAVE HAD A FORAGE NUTRIENT ANALYSIS DONE, PLEASE ANSWER QUESTIONS 51, 52 and 53.

51. Who has conducted your forage nutrient analyses? *(Select all that apply.)*

- 1 = Commercial laboratory 3 = Other: _____
 2 = University laboratory

52. Which of the following types of forage have you had analyzed? *(Select all that apply.)*

- 1 = Hay (dried/cured) 5 = Grazing cover crops
 2 = Haylage/Baleage (forage) 6 = Grazing crop residue
 3 = Silage (e.g. corn or small grain) 7 = Other: _____
 4 = Grazing forage

53. Do you use your forage nutrient analysis results in any of the following ways?

Yes	No	
1	2	To determine if cowherd nutrient requirements are met by forage
1	2	To determine amount of energy/protein supplement necessary
1	2	To feed forage to animal groups based on quality
1	2	To feed forage during specific months based on quality
1	2	To market forage
1	2	To purchase additional forage
1	2	Other: _____

Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with each statement below.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
54. The quality of winter forage available is adequate for my cow-calf operation.	1	2	3	4	5
55. My ability to provide winter forage determines the number of breeding females on my operation.	1	2	3	4	5
56. My cowherd productivity is limited by nutritional management during winter .	1	2	3	4	5
57. Environmental or ecological concerns affect winter forage management practices of our operation.	1	2	3	4	5
58. My operation is able to adapt well during times of weather unpredictability that affect our available winter forage .	1	2	3	4	5
59. My operation is able to adapt well during times of feed price volatility or change.	1	2	3	4	5

To what extent do you disagree or agree with each statement below?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
60. Winter forage is allocated to groups of animals based on perceived forage quality.	1	2	3	4	5
61. I am satisfied with the winter forage management of my cow-calf operation.	1	2	3	4	5
62. Winter forage and feed costs do not limit financial returns of my cow-calf operation.	1	2	3	4	5
63. Winter feeding/forage management is more difficult than nutritional management during the rest of the year.	1	2	3	4	5
64. Winter feeding/forage management is more important than nutritional management during the rest of the year.	1	2	3	4	5

MANAGER/OPERATOR PROFILE (Overall manager or operator making management decisions)

65. Your age: _____ years

66. Your gender: 1 = Male 2 = Female

67. Your operation’s Zip Code: _____

68. What is your main motivation for having a cow-calf operation? *(Select one answer.)*

- 1 = Land management
- 2 = Income
- 3 = Tradition

- 4 = Lifestyle
- 5 = Other: _____

69. How many years of experience do you have with beef cow-calf operations? _____ years

70. How **many more** years do you expect to have a cow-calf operation? _____ years

71. How many days a week (on average) do you work **off** the farm? _____ days/week

72. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

- 1 = High school (or equivalent)
- 2 = Technical training (certification or associates degree)
- 3 = Some college, no Bachelor’s degree
- 4 = Bachelor’s degree
- 5 = Graduate or professional degree
- 6 = Other: _____

73. What are your **TOP 3** trusted information sources concerning cow-calf management practices?
(Select up to three.)

- 1 = State, Regional, or County Extension service or University-related publications
- 2 = Non-profit organizations (*State cattlemen's, Grassland/forage councils, etc.*)
- 3 = Trade publications - paper or electronic (*Drover's Journal, Beef Magazine, Feedstuffs, Progressive Farmer, Farm World, etc.*)
- 4 = Other producers
- 5 = Local agricultural retailer (e.g., feed store/mill, fertilizer, agricultural chemical dealer, co-op)
- 6 = Consultants (*e.g. nutritionist, etc.*)
- 7 = Veterinarians
- 8 = Other: _____

74. Which category best represents your **total annual household income** for all members of the household, including on- and off-farm income, retirement, social security, etc?

- 1 = Less than \$25,000
- 2 = \$25,001 - \$50,000
- 3 = \$50,001 - \$75,000
- 4 = \$75,001 - \$100,000
- 5 = Over \$100,000

75. Which category best represents your annual income generated by **on-farm** production?

- 1 = Loss
- 2 = Less than \$25,000
- 3 = \$25,001 - \$50,000
- 4 = \$50,001 - \$100,000
- 5 = \$100,001 - \$150,000
- 6 = \$150,001 - \$200,000
- 7 = Over \$200,000

76. Which category best represents your annual income generated specifically **from your beef cow-calf** enterprise?

- 1 = Loss
- 2 = Less than \$10,000
- 3 = \$10,001 - \$25,000
- 4 = \$25,001 - \$50,000
- 5 = \$50,001 - \$100,000
- 7 = Over \$100,000

77. What additional information would you like us to know about your winter forage and nutritional management that was not covered in this survey?

Thank you for your cooperation!
Please return your completed survey in the envelope provided.