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NCA-IRM STANDARDIZED PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS- REPRODUCTION AND PRODUCTION

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Background. Beef industry leaders continue to challenge cattlemen to be lower cost producers, to be more competitive and to increase market share and profits. In order to meet this challenge, ranchers must determine current costs of production and make comparisons with alternative production systems which might be more efficient.

Effective management depends on summaries of records tracking production and financial relationships over a specified period of time. Standardization of these summaries facilitates comparisons between operating years, ranches and production areas.

Consequently, the National Cattlemen's Association Integrated Resource Management (NCA-IRM) committee and Extension specialists from several states developed standardized guidelines for analyzing production and financial performance of cow-calf enterprises. These standardized performance analysis (SPA) guidelines specify efficiency measures for reproduction, production, grazing and raised feed land use and finances. Computation, interpretation and limitations are provided for each measure.

Current Information. Extension specialists have worked directly with ranchers to implement IRM-SPA programs for evaluating production performance of individual herds. This work has been facilitated by computer software developed at Texas A&M and made available at cost to ranchers. Results are being summarized for comparative analysis.

IRM-SPA measures of reproduction and production performance demonstrate considerable variability in efficiency between herds of cattle and ranching operations, table 1. Average values are weighted by herd size to provide a more realistic industry perspective. Results suggest that there are very efficient as well as very inefficient cow-calf operations, each with their unique ability to survive during the next cattle cycle. To a certain extent, inefficiencies can be attributed both to managers and cows.

Recommendation. To be competitive with other meat industries and to remain profitable, cow-calf producers need information on which to base management decisions aimed at improving performance. IRM-SPA provides a standardized procedure for evaluating production performance and identifying opportunities for improving management efficiency. Similar programs also are being developed for stocker, fed cattle, seedstock or purebred, and replacement heifer enterprises.

Table 1. Summary of Select SPA Production Performance Measures, 1990-1991 Data¹

Performance Measure	Weighted Average	Minimum	Maximum
Pregnancy percent	86.98	69.63	98.34
Calving percent	81.85	59.13	98.28
Calf death loss	4.27	0.00	9.86
Weaning percent	79.58	57.39	96.77
Actual weaning weight			
steers/bulls	523	410	793
heifers	495	325	713
Lbs weaned/exposed female	406	245	669
Total acres/exposed female	18	2	140
Pay weight price (\$/cwt)			
steers/bulls	94.10	83.49	113.94
heifers	88.08	63.53	110.00
average	90.53	73.43	111.34

¹Values are summarized for 55 herds with over 59,000 exposed females in 12 states. Herd size ranges from 15 to 6,000 cows with small, medium, and large herds represented nearly equally. Cow-calf income as a percent of gross income ranged from six to 100 percent for the herds.