

Are your cows ready for winter?



Pregnancy testing is a valuable tool to use when deciding which females to keep or sell, as well as an aid when deciding at which price point to sell. Veterinarians offer pregnancy testing by palpation and many offer Ultrasound which can detect pregnancy as early as 30 days. Additionally, veterinarians can give an estimated gestation of the calf which can help with planning for the calving season. Confirmation of pregnancies and estimated gestation times can also help producers gauge how well their bull(s) have performed over the summer.

Vaccines for cows during Fall processing may be warranted as well, protecting them and their unborn calves from illness. There are many types of vaccines, some of which can cause a bred animal to abort, so it is best to check with a veterinarian for advice on the right vaccination protocols for any particular herd.

Deworming cattle in the Fall helps cattle to better hold condition over winter, as their bodies do not need to compete with parasites for nutrition. Having mineral and salt blocks available and ensuring feed has adequate nutrition will also assist in maintaining body condition through the cold weather.

Unfortunately, some older cows are unfit for sale come Fall. If this is the case, consider having BSE testing done at the time of euthanasia. Participating in BSE testing will help to keep international markets for Canadian beef open.

Developing protocols for animal health and biosecurity for your herd with your veterinarian can help you save time and money. Having a current and ongoing Veterinary Client Patient Relationship (VCPR) will play a huge role in timely treatment of illnesses on farm.

