

BodyConditionScoring.ca launches with new tools to help cow-calf producers boost production and profit

A new webpage offers a fresh look at the importance of monitoring the nutrition of beef cows and the role body condition plays in overall productivity and profit.

“The importance of maintaining cows’ fat cover at an optimal level is underrated,” said Karin Schmid of the Alberta Beef Producers. “Many producers don’t realize how much thin or over-fat cows hurt their bottom lines, and how easy and effective body condition scoring is when figuring out how to adjust rations and keep cows in the right condition.”

The webpage, www.bodyconditionscoring.ca, features an interactive tool which makes the value of maintaining cows at the right body condition abundantly clear in terms of reproductive performance, calf health, weaning weights and other important aspects of production. It also includes an engaging four minute video that shows examples of cows in various condition, and explains how to quickly and easily measure fat cover. The nutritional information available will help producers decide how to manage their rations once they have an accurate measure of their cows’ condition to get and keep their animals in the right condition.

Recognizing that internet access is still a barrier in some regions, all of the webpage’s content will be available on USB data sticks. Producers needing to access the information offline can pick up a USB stick at some industry events or through a direct request to the Beef Cattle Research Council.

The project is a collaborative effort between the Beef Cattle Research Council, Alberta Beef Producers, Farm and Food Care Saskatchewan, the University of Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture. Funding was provided by Alberta’s *Growing Forward 2* Livestock Welfare Delivery Agent Program. *Growing Forward 2* is a federal-provincial-territorial government initiative to drive an innovative, competitive and profitable Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector.

The groups expect that the new, easily accessible and user-friendly resources will not only lead to improved bottom lines for cow-calf producers, but also prevent animal welfare concerns during cold winter months.

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