

Rich County Extension

Management During Cold Temperatures

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As you drive through Woodruff Utah, a sign reads “Coldest Temperatures, Warmest Hearts”. Recently, Rich County has been experiencing extreme cold temperatures. This isn’t uncommon for Rich County, however consistent temperatures below zero can affect livestock animal performance. We are coming closer to calving season. Even though most producers will start calving in a few months, the cold temperatures now can affect birth weights then. It is important to point out that when talking about a decrease in birth weight we are talking about a decrease in the average healthy weight for a particular calf.

A research group conducted research near Miles City, Montana to determine the impact of cold stress on birth and weaning weight in beef cattle. Here are the key takeaways that I found important.

- When cattle experience cold stress, their dietary requirements increase.
- When cattle are receiving adequate intake during extreme cold temperatures, birth weight is typically not affected. HOWEVER, birth weight starts to decrease when dietary requirements are not met.

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- Mild and moderate cold stress does not typically decrease birth weight especially if dietary requirements are being met, however severe cold stress has a negative effect on birth weight.
- It is known that calves with a low birth weight have increased death rates.
- When researchers looked at weaning weights, calves from mother cows that experienced any type of cold stress before calving had decreased weaning weights.
- Researchers found that cattle that were born and raised in an environment with extreme environmental conditions, like cold, were able to regulate cold stress better than animals that were born and raised in more temperate climates. Keep this in mind when selecting replacement animals like bulls or heifers.

As always, reach out if you have questions and keep warm.



Extension
UtahStateUniversity



Upcoming and Past Events

Winter Workshops

February - Beef Field Day

March - Managing Nutrition to Reduce Costs



UTAH 4-H JUNIOR LIVESTOCK

COMMERCIAL CATTLE PROJECT

Commercial Cattle Project Workshop

October 3, 2022

This new program will debut at the 2023 Rich County Fair!!

Look for the recording of the meeting in next month's issue.

for more visit: <https://extension.usu.edu/rich/>