



## Becoming a better manager through better records



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*“If all you ever do is all you’ve ever done,  
then all you’ll ever get is all you ever got.”*

- An old Texas saying

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## Why Keep Cattle Records?

How keeping good records can help increase your bottom line.

- **“You can’t manage what you don’t measure”**
  - You must have data on your cattle in order to make effective management decisions
- **Learn which cattle are truly productive**
  - With good records, it is easy to determine which cows are your top producers and which should be culled
- **Track sales and purchases for financial records**
  - View your sales and purchases to learn where you are more profitable, and which breeders may be better for your herd

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## “Investing” in a management system

Your time is the biggest investment you will make in cattle record keeping

### Investment

- Setup Time – tagging cattle, entering records, learning components
- Update Time – updating records with births, sales, treatments, etc
- Money - Software, hardware, tags, reader

### Returns

- Save Time
- Quality and Accuracy
- Improved decision making
- Understood by others
- Marketing



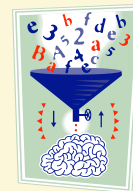
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## Data, Information, and Knowledge

### Data

- Cow 45 was Bred
- Calf 23 WW 500lbs
- Steer 55 was YG 3
- Calf 29 had scours



### Information

- 73% of my cows were palpated bred
- My lbs/exposed female was 400lbs
- I had 15% YG 3's and 4's
- I had 50 incidents of calf scours

### Knowledge

- Conception rate is low
- Calves were underweight
- Calves fed too long in feed yard
- Evaluate herd health program

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## Cattle record keeping options

Several tools to get the job done

Benefit	Paper	Spreadsheets	Software
Easy to backup		Yes	Yes
Easily read by others		Yes	Yes
Time saving features		Limited	Yes
Data export capabilities		Limited	Yes
Data import capabilities			Yes
Equipment compatibility			Yes
Data validation and error checking			Yes
Flexible reporting			Yes

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*“A record keeping system without reporting and analysis is simply an electronic file cabinet.”*

- Louis Martin

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## What records should I maintain?

It's important to organize your records when beginning to use a cattle software program.

### Recommended Records

- Current herd inventory
- Herd Bulls individually and uniquely identified
- Breeding Cows individually and uniquely identified

### Nice to Have Records

- Pasture locations for cattle
- Current cow palpation results
- Calves individually identified
- Individual weaning weights for calves

### Different Records for Different Operations

- Too little information = useless
- Too much information = cumbersome
- Software can grow as your operation grows



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## Getting Started

Planning and organization are key

### A good start puts you on the path to successful record keeping

- Existing data
  - Breed associations
  - Other cattle software programs
  - Other electronic sources (Excel, Access, etc)
  - Electronic or Visual Tag lists
- Adding new cattle records
  - Begin with current year's breeding or calving records
  - Then enter contacts and finances
  - Enter historical information and pedigrees last

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## Keeping records up-to-date

It's important to keep your records current to maximize benefits

### Events in the production cycle

- Breeding
- Palpating
- Medicating
- Calving
- Weaning
- Selling

### Additional features to keep you organized

- Calendar
- Rainfall
- Contacts
- Finances

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## Capturing value from your records

Make your records work for you with improved decision making

### Ways to Make Records Cost Effective

- Breeding cattle inventory
- Female culling
- Carcass data for female selection
- Seedstock
- Terminal sire selection
- Branded beef products

Source: 2004, McGrann, Falconer, and Rupp, "Individual Cattle Identity Records for Cow-Calf Producers: Ways to Make Records Cost Effective"



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## Questions?

Feel free to contact us with questions or comments.

- Phone: Toll free 877-454-COWS (2697)
- Web site: <http://www.CattleMax.com>
- Current record keeping and technology topics  
<http://www.CattleManagement.com>