

Beef producers learn new management techniques

AT A GLANCE

As a beef production state, Idaho cattle producers strive to maintain their success in the industry. Educational events offer additional resources and information to assist producers in this goal.

The Situation

The beef industry in southeast Idaho is a diverse group of individuals with varying knowledge and experience levels. The total economic value of the cow-calf sector is \$200 million annually in the region. Individual producers are always on the lookout for information that can help reduce costs and increase return on investment.

Our Response

Several Extension educators worked together to organize a multi-series beef school that was offered in three different sites throughout eastern Idaho. Topics were selected to reflect the beef industry season and that would meet the needs of cattle producers. Presenters were chosen to cover these topics, providing producers face to face time with Extension and industry experts and allowing for delivering of information to be paired with discussion.

Program Outcomes

Producers learned about recurring and emerging issues in the beef industry. Herd health was the focus of this year's beef school. Topics covered included the effects of stress on cattle immunity, antibiotic protocols,



Burke Neely discusses nutrition's influence on cattle immunity. Photo credit: Meranda Small.

nutritional influence on herd health, scours, vaccination protocols and parasite control. These topics provided producers with management practices to consider when making production decisions.

A total of 60 people participated in the two-week class. Eighteen participants responded to the survey. A qualitative-quantitative survey design was used. The quantitative portion used pre-and-post questions ranked on a five-point Likert-type scale (Very Low = one and Very High = five). Participants reported increased knowledge both weeks, and the difference in average was statically different at $p=0.05$. A T-test was used assuming unequal variance. The qualitative portion consisted of three open-ended questions for participants to provide their thoughts. The qualitative results

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indicated that producers want to simplify management and reduce cost of raising beef. The producers also thought that involving private industry in the school was beneficial. The information gathered in this section will be used in planning future schools.

Survey results for fall 2019

Mean Average	Knowledge Before	Knowledge After
Week One	3.2	4.0
Week Two	2.7	3.9

The Future

Looking forward, as consumers develop greater interest in knowing the origins of food, research-based industry initiatives will increase in importance. It will also continue to be important to provide educational opportunities for producers.

Cooperators and Co-Sponsors

Thank you to our sponsors and guest speakers that supported the 2019 Fall Beef Schools.

- CAL Ranch with Pro Earth Animal Health
- Idaho AgCredit
- Neely Livestock Nutrition, Inc.
- Performix Nutrition Systems
- Saltgrass Veterinary & Production Services
- Ward Feed and Seed
- Zoetis
- Jacob Rickman , former University of Idaho Extension educator, Oneida County
- Les Nunn, former University of Idaho Extension educator, Bear Lake County.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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