



Master Cattle Farmer Program

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E X T E N S I O N

Master Cattle Farmer Program



Prepared by
Mark J. Talbert, Fairfield County Agent

Co-Author
Rusty Thomson, Area Livestock Agent

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MASTER CATTLE FARMER PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

DEFINITION & PURPOSE

The purpose of the Master Cattle Farmer program is to promote progressive beef cattle farming, to disseminate applied farming technology, to recognize/reward progressive farmers and farming practices, and to assist young farmers in developing their farming enterprise.

ELIGIBILITY

Any cattle farmer with more than 5 years of experience can apply for entry into the Master Cattle Farmer program. All applicants must complete the written plan and explain the written plan during a farm visit. Applicants must attend five accredited cattle meetings dealing with each of the subjects listed under requirements below. In addition, applicants must attend four county livestock association meetings and the annual state cattlemen's meeting. Membership in the local and state cattle association is required and membership in the National Cattlemen's Association and the Forage and Grassland Council is recommended.

REQUIREMENTS

- A. **Forage Program** - Have a planned forage and grazing program for your farm that best utilizes the resources available and the management capabilities. Feed supplements should also be included in this part of the plan but emphasis should be on supplementing the overall forage program.

- B. **Herd Management Program** - Develop and carry out recommended breeding, calving, herd health plans and quality assurance safeguards for your cattle farm. Proper vaccination schedules, deworming practices, and other sound management practices will be part of the evaluation process.

- C. **Marketing Program** - Cattle farmers should have definite marketing plans for their calves, replacement heifers, and cull cows that maximize the profit potential of these products.

- D. **Records Program** - A system for identifying productive individuals, evaluating different parts of the enterprise, and tracking the overall profitability of the enterprise is an integral part of any business.

- E. **Other Categories:**
 - 1. **Leadership** - Active leadership roles in cattle industry affairs, church, and community.

 - 2. **Stewardship and Farm Aesthetics** - Stewardship of the land, water and wildlife.

 - 3. **Farm Safety** - Safety programs for owner, workers, and animals.

3. **Grazing Plan:** Describe your system for best utilizing the forages you produce. (e.g. rotational or controlled grazing and timing of year to graze)

4. **Fertility Plans:** Describe your fertility program with emphasis on timing for different forage species, effect on stocking rate and winter feed needs, and fertilizer rates based on soil samples.

5. Utilization of hay fields: Describe your management plans for utilizing forages for optimum hay production (e.g. timeliness of harvesting hay, plant stage of growth, etc.) Also include other efficient means of utilizing hay fields such as overseeding Bermuda, utilizing fescue hay fields for off season pasture, etc.

6. Supplemental Feeds and Mineral Program: Explain how you approach using supplemental feeds (hay, grains, protein supplements, etc.) to fill the gaps in your forage program. Base your description of your mineral program on available forages and time of year.

B. Herd Management Program:

1. **Breeding Plan: Purebred producers** - Outline your breeding plans and the criteria you use to formulate these plans. Include use of E.P.D.'s, A.I. and E.T.
Commercial producers - Outline your crossbreeding system to include plans for both selecting purebred bulls and incorporating the resulting crossbred replacements into your system.

2. **Calving Season:** Identify your breeding and calving season and justify this season under your management system and farm resources.

3. **Herd Health Plan:** Describe your complete herd health program to include timing of procedures, products used, and method used to evaluate health needs within the herd.

4. **Working Facilities:** Verify adequate working facilities. (To be inspected during the approval process. Facilities don't need to be elaborate but adequate for herd size.)

C. Marketing Program: Outline your marketing program for your operation to include how you perform the following:

1. Plan your marketing strategy (future market, statistical trends, knowledgeable experts, etc.)

2. Prepare cattle for marketing (preconditioning, health program, advertisements, etc.)

3. Physical marketing method (specific organized sale, private treaty, retained ownership, etc.)

D. Records Program: Identify or describe your record keeping program and point out how you identify management or marketing strengths based on your records system (both cattle and financial records).

1. **Farm Financial Records:** (e.g. use of professional accountant, computerized record keeping, or effective hand records)

2. Describe your utilization of these financial records to analyze the performance of your cattle enterprise and how these records influence the decision making process.

3. **Cattle Records:** Describe your method of identifying individual cattle and method(s) of keeping records on the herd(s).

4. Describe your utilization of these cattle records to analyze the performance of your herd and individual animals within the herd. (Include such things as use of Beef Cattle Improvement Program records, purebred records programs or comparable systems).

5. **Field Records:** With the requirements from EPA for field records for pesticide use, individual field records are becoming more important. Describe your system for keeping both field records for pesticide use and any individual field records for production of forages (records of hay harvested from different fields or lbs of beef produced under intensive grazing systems).

E: Other Categories:

1. **Leadership:** Describe your leadership roles in the cattle and agricultural industry and other community activities (e.g. participation and offices held in associations, community and church organizations, leadership roles in agri-demonstrations/tours and other initiatives taken showing leadership skills).

2. **Stewardship of Farm and Livestock:** Explain practices that conserve soil, water, and wildlife resources. Explain responsible animal husbandry practices (e.g. protecting cattle from disease, safety of animals, sanitation, etc.).

3. **Farm Safety:** Explain how farm safety practices are used to insure safety of workers, the livestock, and the surrounding community.

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