

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES OF KANSAS CATTLE FEEDYARDS

by

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A MASTER'S REPORT

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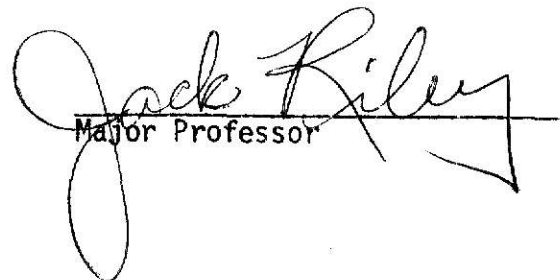
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SUMMARY

Twenty-four Kansas feedyards, participated in a survey on operational procedures pertaining to specific management practices utilized in their operation. The survey included five topic areas: processing, animal health, rations, facilities, and marketing.

Sixty-eight percent of the feedyards surveyed processed all new cattle within two days. The most prevalent vaccines administered were infectious bovine rhinotracheitis, bovine viral diarrhea, and leptospirosis in one combination injection with blackleg and malignant edema in a second combination injection. Cattle were wormed during processing at eighty-three percent of the feedyards surveyed. The first 21 days in the feedyard was designated as the most critical animal health period. A medicated starter ration was used in 74 percent of the feedyards surveyed, providing an average level of 660 mg. antibiotic per head per day. One growing and four finishing rations were used by the feedyards. The concentrate percentages in the four finishing rations (90 percent dry matter basis) were 50, 65, 75 and 87 percent respectively. Average one time capacity of the feedyards surveyed was 18,000 head with a labor requirement of 1.1 persons per 1,000 head on feed. Marketing of slaughter cattle is accomplished by selling direct to packer representatives on a live weight and grade basis. Only 18 percent of cattle fed in the 24 Kansas feedyards were hedged on the live cattle futures market.

INTRODUCTION

Cattle finishing has been one of the most rapidly expanding industries in Kansas during the past two decades. This expansion has resulted in large cattle feeding operations, requiring a high degree of specialization.

A descriptive study was conducted to determine the present management practices of the feedlot industry in Kansas and to provide a basis from which alternatives could be derived. This report emphasizes methods of caring for cattle during the feeding period immediately prior to slaughter. Results of this survey do not claim to represent total view of the cattle feeding industry in Kansas because many factors unrelated to animal husbandry influence management decisions.

SURVEY PROCEDURES

The survey was introduced July 15, 1976 at the Kansas Cattle Feeder's Conference in Wichita, Kansas, where copies were made available to cattle feeders. Questionnaires were also mailed to feedyard managers, to assure adequate coverage of the state. A total of 24 feedyards responded to the lengthy survey and all respondents were included in the final summary. Analysis was based upon the percentage of feedyards that responded in the same manner to a particular question. Eighty-eight questions, distributed among five topic areas were included in the survey. The summary represents the most popular management practices used by the 24 feedyards rather than individual operations. The complete survey is included as Appendix 1.

RESULTS

I. Processing Procedures

Time of processing and drugs administered varied among the 24 feedyards. All cattle are processed within two days at sixty-eight percent of the feedyards surveyed. The most prevalent vaccines administered consisted of infectious bovine rhinotracheitis, bovine viral diarrhea, and leptospirosis in one combination injection with blackleg and malignant edema in a second combination injection. All of the feedyards implanted 100 percent of the cattle and 26 percent of the feedyards implanted twice