

Decision Making needs time for Critical Thinking

Management of any type requires decisions in a timely fashion. Preparation for likely scenarios involves experience and an understanding of the elements of the decision. The goal is to have the decisions how to respond made ahead of the occurrence so implementation is quick. The cattle cycle has been analyzed for many decades and it has changed in some elements but is recognizable and options for any crisis are largely known. Small differences in the implementation of solutions are needed as things like drought roll in and out of the feed equation. Highline® has prepared several Bale Pro® options for managing various feed materials and in particular crop residues. Crop residues can be from cereals, pulse crops and corn for example. For increased protein in diets look to hominy, corn gluten, cull soybeans, cull peas, ddgs, frozen canola and the like. Not all are available North America wide so solutions to hay shortages will vary from Maritime provinces to British Columbia to Florida and Texas. These crop residues have historically been viewed as emergency feed but both nutrition and economics show that they can be used as a planned part of the feed program instead of hay or, in a sparing role where crop residues are blended with hay to extend the supply and reduce daily costs. Small changes can bring large yearly savings. Examination of farms where structured feed management is practiced put these farms consistently in the profit group for beef producers. To get into that group means first reducing waste from feed. Cattle behaviour tells us that with the medium and low quality forages chopping those forages largely defeats the sorting and selecting cows do and improves consumption resulting in less waste. Next blending straw or stover with grain or high quality alfalfa stimulates the cows to consume all they are offered on a daily basis. Finally providing a measured amount and not oversupplying gets the cows to clean up the daily portion which is determined by evaluating the cow weight, stage of production and weather.

Using a Highline Bale Pro® assists producers in this task saving time, feed and leading to more profitable production. It buys time to spend thinking about other efficiency moves that will help the farm. The 650, 651 and 960 series equipped with the grain tank and chopper can deliver daily feed rations on a per cow basis greatly improving feeding accuracy and doing it quickly. The 1251 model is a two bale processor that also has options for a grain tank. This model allows the user to chop and blend two bales to achieve a nutritional balance of forages and then to improve both energy and protein with the accurate addition of grain or protein supplements. Changing the blend can be accomplished by adjusting the aggression settings on one or both bales allowing ration changes between groups of cattle using the same loaded forages and grain source.

Attention to accurate blends of available feeds can make producers more money per cow and help efficient use of available forages lowering the cost of production. Using a Bale Pro® frees up time for critical thinking that is part of your management decision making process. These are all part of today's modern beef production system.

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