

JUNIOR COMMERCIAL CATTLE FEEDING PROGRAM

By

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JUNIOR COMMERCIAL CATTLE FEEDING PROGRAM

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It was thought some few years ago that the 4-H club members and vocational agriculture students of Blaine County needed to be taught a more practical method of feeding cattle for the market rather than just feeding the individual steer for the show ring.

In the spring of 1957, a Junior Commercial Cattle Feeding Program was outlined. The program was explained to the 4-H club members and vocational agriculture students of Blaine County with the following purposes in mind:

(1) To encourage the feeding of beef cattle in Blaine County.

(2) Finances for the projects: Arrangements were made with local finance firms to loan the Junior Feeders sufficient money to purchase all or a portion of their feed and to buy the feeder cattle needed for this Commercial Beef Cattle Feeding Program. Most of these loans were made to the Junior Feeders at a reduced rate of interest.

In most cases where the loan was obtained through a leading agency, the parents signed the note with the 4-H club or vocational agriculture members. For those who were borrowing money for the first time, it was explained to them that the principal and interest would be due upon completion of the feeding program.

- (3) **Feed Arrangements:** It was explained to the Junior Feeders that the program was so designed for them to feed home grown grains as the major portion of the concentrates in their ration. For those who needed to purchase such feed grains as barley, oats and grain sorghums, it was suggested to them to arrange for storage facilities and make their purchases direct from the combine at harvest time, as generally these grains can be bought for the best price at this time. The Junior Feeders who intended to use cotton seed hulls or wheat bran in their ration, it was suggested that they contact their local feed dealer to get their advice as to the best time for them to purchase this portion of their ration.
- (4) **Selection of Feeder Cattle:** The grade of feeder to be used in a program of this type was quite important. It was explained to the Junior Feeders that the feeder cattle used in this program should be of sufficient quality so that the cattle would do well in the feed-lot. The feeder grades were discussed so that in the selection of their feeder steers or heifers they would select cattle that would grade in the good to low choice feeder grades.
- (5) **Feeding Procedure:** The most of those participating in this Commercial Feeding Program had very little to no experience in feeding cattle and were assisted with the preparation of their ration for this program. It was explained to those participating that chances are that

they would be confronted with less feeding difficulties if they would follow a hand feeding program, however, self feeding was permitted if they so desired to feed in this manner. All cattle are confined throughout the feeding period. The length of the feeding period has been established annually by those participating in the program before the program began.

- (6) **Marketing of Cattle:** Proper marketing of the cattle is considered a very important segment of this program. Slaughter grades have been discussed with the Junior Feeders and length of feeding period established annually so that upon completion of the program, the Junior Feeders would have their cattle grading from a good to a low choice slaughter grade. To assist with the education phase of marketing, the committee discusses with the Junior Feeders the slaughter grades and the reason for the grades. Upon completion of the feeding program, the cattle are marketed as the owners so desire.

CHAPTER II

METHODS OF OPERATION

In the five years that this report is based upon, all feeding programs were started during the months of October or November. The length of the feeding period has varied from one hundred and eight days to one hundred and thirty-five days. The reason for this variation in the length of feeding periods has been due primarily to the amount of flesh the feeder cattle were carrying at the beginning of the program.

As the program is designed, each Junior Feeder is permitted to exhibit at the completion of the feeding program a maximum of two pens of three animals. Each pen must be either three steers or three heifers.

If the 4-H club or vocational agriculture member desires to feed a greater number of cattle than what it takes to constitute a pen of three, then the pen must be designated at the start of the program. An alternate can also be designated to the pen if the Junior Feeder so desires, but this alternate steer or heifer cannot be used in the pen when they are exhibited unless one of the designated animals in the pen dies.

At the start of the program, all cattle are weighed during a three day period at designated weighing points. The cattle are confined without feed and water approximately twelve hours prior

to weighing. No additional shrink is added as the cattle have been hauled approximately an equal number of miles to the weighing points.

To standardize the weighing program, a pound and a half per head per day is either added or subtracted depending on whether the Junior Feeder weighed a day or two before or after the designated starting date. A maximum of seven days is permitted after the starting date.

After the pens of three have been on feed approximately seven to ten days, they are inspected by a committee of three members. Two members of the inspection committee are representatives of Livestock Commission Companies from the Oklahoma City Livestock Yards and the third member is a local beef cattle producer and feeder.

The committee's responsibility is to establish a feeder grade and value on all of the cattle used in the feeding program. A point system of grading the cattle has been used.

Feeder Grades:

Fancy	200 - 250
Choice	150 - 199
Good	100 - 149
Medium	25 - 99

A value per cwt is established on the cattle by the committee. This is necessary as some of the cattle used in the program are produced on the Junior Feeder's farms. Others are purchased from their neighbors and some buy their cattle at local auctions or at the Oklahoma City Livestock Yards. After the committee has placed

a value on the cattle, this information is used in scoring the pens upon completion of the program.

Upon completion of the feeding period the same committee grades and establishes a value per cwt on all of the cattle.

Following is the Slaughter Grade point system used by the committee:

Prime	400 - 450
Choice	350 - 399
Good	300 - 349
Standard	250 - 299

From this the per head value is calculated.

All animals completing the program are graded a slaughter grade even though some of them might still be classified as feeder cattle if sold at any of the major livestock markets.

During the first three years of the program, the feed record average daily gain and cost of gain was used as the basis for scoring the pens. This was found to be a difficult system to use due to the accuracy of the feed record.

The past two years the following system has been used:

One point for each pound of gain during the feeding period.

Three points for each gross dollar increase in value.

In case of identical scores on two or more pens, the committee would then add an appearance score ranging from 0 to 50 points. This score would be based primarily on the uniformity of the pen.

Steers and heifers do not compete in this program.

This system has worked quite successfully, however, it has its advantages and disadvantages.

To stimulate interest in the program, the Blaine County Fair Board provided the following premium provisions annually to be paid per pen on the steer and heifer divisions:

1st - \$20.00	6th - \$13.50
2nd - \$19.50	7th - \$12.00
3rd - \$18.00	8th - \$10.00
4th - \$16.50	9th - \$10.00
5th - \$15.00	10th - \$10.00

The Blaine County Livestock Club supports the program and pays the following bonus on the steer and heifer divisions:

1st - \$20.00	3rd - \$15.00
2nd - \$17.50	4th - \$12.00

The fifth and all remaining pens in the two divisions receive \$10.00 per pen.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Over the period of the past five years, sixty-three pens of steers and forty-three pens of heifers have been fed which constitutes a total of three hundred and twenty-seven head.

Eighty-seven 4-H club and vocational agriculture members have participated in the program.

(1) Feasibility of feeding cattle in Blaine County: It has been profitable for the majority of the eighty-seven 4-H club and vocational agriculture members.

No other cost of production is shown in Table II other than the initial cost of the animals, feed-mixing and grinding costs.

(2) Weight of feeder cattle was found to be of great importance. The Junior Feeders have found that heifers weighing from 500 to 650 pounds have produced greater profits for them in comparison to lighter weight heifers. This weight cattle can produce a high good to low choice in approximately one hundred and twenty days. Those feeding steers have found to produce a desirable slaughter weight steer, they should weigh approximately 700 to 800 pounds at the beginning of the program and be expected to gain 250 to 350 pounds during a one

hundred and twenty day feeding period. This length of feeding period will generally let the steers grade from a good to a low choice slaughter grade.

- (3) Feeder Grades: The confirmation and quality of feeder has been found to be of great importance. The most desirable feeder grade has been the low to high good grade. The greatest response has come from cattle that were in fair to medium flesh at the start of the feeding period.

The normal feeding period of one hundred and twenty days has been too short for choice feeder calves to be profitable.

- (4) Payment of Notes: The prompt payment of the money borrowed by 4-H club and vocational agriculture members for this program has been made upon completion of each years program.

- (5) How has this program helped the 4-H club and vocational agriculture student? (a) He has learned how to feed. With the information he has obtained from participating in the program, he now has a better understanding of cattle feeding. (b) He has learned the kind of cattle to feed that will give the best response in the feed-lot. (c) He now has a better understanding of the feeder and slaughter grading system used in the cattle industry.

TABLE I

NUMBER OF PENS OF THREE COMPLETING THE PAINTING PROGRAM

<u>STERS</u>	<u>YEAR</u>	<u>REPAIRS</u>
4	1958	8
5	1959	6
13	1960	15
21	1961	4
20	1962	9

TOTAL PENS OF STERS - 63

TOTAL PENS OF REPAIRS - 43

TOTAL PENS - 106

TABLE II
1962 STEERS

FEDDER GRADE	Fancy Choice Good Medium	200-249 150-199 100-149 25-99	FEDDER GRADE	Prime Choice Good Standard	400-450 350-399 300-349 250-299	SLAUGHTER GRADE	SLAUGHTER GRADE	AVERAGE DAILY GAIN	AVERAGE INITIAL WEIGHT	LENGTH OF FEEDING PERIOD (DAYS)	NAME	INITIAL PRICE	FINAL PRICE	PLACING	RETURN FOR LABOR
												INITIAL PRICE	FINAL PRICE	PLACING	RETURN FOR LABOR
			1-110 Good +			305 Good -	3.13	780	135		Karen Schenk	\$22.00	\$22.75	1	\$199.85
			2-115 Good -			350 Choice -	3.04	771	135		Larry Seib	\$22.25	\$24.00	2	\$192.92
						315 Good -	3.10	560	135		Freddie Meier	\$23.50	\$23.50	3	\$131.21
						305 Good -	3.13	640	135		Freddie Meier	\$22.00	\$23.00	4	\$131.80
						370 Choice -	2.86	760	135		Nickie Scott	\$23.75	\$24.75	5	\$123.37

TABLE II (Continued)

NAME	LENGTH OF FEEDING PERIOD (DAYS)	AVERAGE INITIAL WEIGHT	AVERAGE DAILY GAIN	FEDDER GRADE	SLAUGHTER GRADE	INITIAL PRICE	FINAL PRICE	PLACING	RETURNS FOR LABOR
Leon Wright	135	745	2.95	1-85 Medium + 2-65 Medium	250 Standard -	\$18.30	\$20.00	6	\$74.89
Sterling Meier	135	505	2.96	2-165 Choice - 1-135 Good	340 Good +	\$25.30	\$24.00	7	\$88.63
David Lambeth	135	413	2.92	1-125 Good 2-90 Medium +	285 Standard	\$18.30	\$22.50	8	\$102.44
David Neely	135	697	2.75	160 Choice -	355 Choice -	\$24.00	\$24.25	9	\$99.42
Wesley Mailb	135	782	2.62	160 Choice -	370 Choice	\$24.00	\$24.65	10	\$55.80
Joe Meier	135	465	2.95	155 Choice -	295 Standard +	\$26.00	\$22.90	11	\$98.35

TABLE II (Continued)

NAME	LENGTH OF FEEDING PERIOD (DAYS)	AVERAGE INITIAL WEIGHT	AVERAGE DAILY GAIN	PERIOD GRADE	SLAUGHTER GRADE	INITIAL PRICE	FINAL PRICE	PLACING	REURNS FOR LABOR
Gary Schafer	135	687	2.57	165 Choice -	340 Good +	\$24.50	\$23.75	12	\$79.44
Ed - Ray - Troy Cowan	135	555	2.47	175 Choice	350 Choice -	\$26.00	\$24.25	13	\$60.41
Larry Hoffman	135	447	2.70	150 Choice -	330 Good	\$26.00	\$23.50	14	\$71.51
David Woodward	135	603	2.11	2-155 Choice - 1-135 Good	365 Choice -	\$23.50	\$24.75	15	\$63.84
Karen Schenk	135	820	2.22	150 Choice -	330 Good	\$23.00	\$23.50	16	\$97.14
Tim Meler	135	528	2.32	165 Choice -	330 Good	\$26.00	\$23.35	17	\$21.50
Mike Rose	135	638	2.22	2-175 Choice 1-120 Good	345 Good +	\$24.30	\$24.00	18	\$89.60

TABLE II (Continued)

NAME	LENGTH OF FEEDING PERIOD (DAYS)	AVERAGE INITIAL WEIGHT	AVERAGE DAILY GAIN	FEEDING GRADE	SLAUGHTER GRADE	INITIAL PRICE	FINAL PRICE	PLACING	RETURN FOR LABOR
Neal Williams	135	547	2.21	140 Good +	320 Good	\$24.00	\$23.25	19	\$63.34
Mike Base	135	577	1.58	1-175 Choice 2-90 Medium +	270 Standard	\$23.00	\$21.75	20	\$ 2.62

TABLE III

1962 HOPPERS

FARMER GRADE	Pency Choice Good Medium	200-249 150-199 100-149 25-99	PRIME	400-450 350-399 300-349 250-299	SLAUGHTER GRADE	LENGTH OF FEEDING PERIOD (DAYS)	AVERAGE INITIAL WEIGHT	AVERAGE DAILY GAIN	FEDDER GRADE	SLAUGHTER GRADE	INITIAL PRICE	FINAL PRICE	PLACING	RETURNS FOR LOSS
Dean Nelson						135	677	3.13	110 Good	355 Choice -	\$20.00	\$23.25	1	\$130.66
Tim Heier						135	470	2.60	160 Choice -	345 Good +	\$24.00	\$24.00	2	\$ 71.63
Dean Nelson						135	577	2.63	140 Good +	300 Good	\$22.00	\$22.25	3	\$ 10.60
Marilyn Schofer						135	554	2.45	165 Choice -	355 Choice -	\$24.00	\$24.00	4	\$ 84.51
Tom McLarty						135	675	2.33	2-160 Choice - 1-140 Good +	300 Good	\$20.00	\$21.25	5	\$ 26.89

TABLE III (Continued)

NAME	LENGTH OF PUSING PERIOD (INCH)	AVERAGE INITIAL WEIGHT	AVERAGE DAILY GAIN	FEDDER GRADE	CLAUGHTER GRADE	INITIAL PRICE	FINAL PRICE	PLACING	RETURNS FOR LABOR
Sterling Meier	135	530	2.60	160 Choice -	335 Good	\$23.50	\$23.50	6	\$ 45.24
Bob Blosser	135	536	2.30	160 Choice -	330 Good	\$23.00	\$22.00	7	-9 31.18
Bob Blosser	135	501	1.93	160 Choice -	315 Good -	\$24.00	\$22.60	8	-9 68.21
Larry Helm	135	445	1.55	155 Choice -	315 Good -	\$24.00	\$23.50	9	\$ 56.78

TABLE IV

1961 STEERS

PRIME GRAB	Grade	Weight	Prime	Weight
Fancy	Choice	200-249	Prime	400-450
Choice	Good	150-199	Choice	350-399
Good	Medium	100-149	Good	300-349
Medium		25-99	Standard	250-299

NAME	LENGTH OF FEEDING PERIOD (DAYS)	AVERAGE INITIAL WEIGHT	AVERAGE DAILY GAIN	FINISH GRADE	SLAUGHTER ORDER	INITIAL PRICE	FINAL PRICE	PLACING	RETURNS FOR LAUR
Wesley Math	127	783	3.19	135 Good	330 Good	\$22.00	\$23.50	1	\$156.12
Karen Schenk	127	708	2.89	145 Good +	330 Good	\$22.00	\$23.00	2	\$112.97
Larry Math	127	685	2.88	135 Good	330 Good	\$23.00	\$23.75	3	\$107.77
Karen Schenk	127	642	2.94	145 Good +	330 Good	\$23.00	\$23.00	4	\$102.68
Freddie Meier	127	668	2.70	155 Choice -	310 Good -	\$22.00	\$22.75	5	\$154.60
Jerry Evans	127	670	2.65	155 Choice -	325 Good	\$21.00	\$22.50	6	\$110.55

TABLE IV (Continued)

NAME	LENGTH OF FEEDING PERIOD (DAYS)	AVERAGE INITIAL WEIGHT	AVERAGE DAILY GAIN	FEEDER GRADE	SLAUGHTER GRADE	INITIAL PRICE	FINAL PRICE	PLACING	RETURN FOR LABOR
Suel Whisley	127	503	2.72	35 Medium +	300 Good	\$20.00	\$22.00	7	\$ 70.90
Sterling Meier	127	653	2.69	155 Choice -	347 Good +	\$23.50	\$23.25	8	\$ 95.32
Gery Schafer	127	696	2.54	140 Good +	345 Good +	\$22.00	\$23.50	9	\$109.47
Terry Strader	127	590	2.68	145 Good +	325 Good	\$23.00	\$23.00	10	\$ 66.90
Mike Haigler	127	715	2.51	155 Choice -	355 Choice -	\$23.00	\$21.00	11	\$ 80.55
Joe Meier	127	608	2.63	155 Choice -	315 Good -	\$23.50	\$22.75	12	\$ 75.92
Jeanette Gols	127	646	2.39	155 Choice -	355 Choice -	\$23.50	\$24.00	13	\$ 84.50

TABLE IV (Continued)

NAME	LENGTH OF FEEDING PERIOD (DAYS)	AVERAGE INITIAL WEIGHT	AVERAGE DAILY GAIN	FEEDER GRADE	SLAUGHTER GRADE	INITIAL PRICE	FINAL PRICE	PLACING	EXPENSES FOR LABOR
Sterling Heier	127	600	2.36	155 Choice -	320 Good	\$23.50	\$22.75	14	\$ 52.17
Tim Heier	127	580	2.30	155 Choice -	355 Choice -	\$23.50	\$23.00	15	\$ 53.47
Chuck Woolsey	127	570	2.23	160 Choice -	320 Good +	\$24.50	\$23.25	16	\$ 15.46
Sandra Heigler	127	675	2.06	155 Choice -	345 Good +	\$23.00	\$23.75	17	\$ 31.52
Tim Heier	127	620	2.22	155 Choice -	325 Good	\$23.50	\$22.75	18	\$ 39.21
Mike Heigler	127	710	1.98	155 Choice -	348 Good +	\$23.00	\$23.75	19	\$ 25.19
Sandra Heigler	127	642	1.77	155 Choice -	320 Good	\$23.00	\$23.25	20	\$ 8.10

TABLE V

1961 HEIFERS

Pancy	200-249	Prime	400-450
Choice	150-199	Choice	350-399
Good	100-149	Good	300-349
Medium	25-99	Standard	250-299

FREDER GRADE SLAUGHTER GRADE

NAME	LENGTH OF FEEDING PERIOD (DAYS)	AVERAGE INITIAL WEIGHT	AVERAGE DAILY GAIN	FAIRER GRADE	SLAUGHTER GRADE	INITIAL PRICE	FINAL PRICE	SLAUGHTER GRADE	RETURN FOR LAZER
Sandra Geln	127	570	2.79	135 Good	325 Good	\$20.00	\$22.00	1	\$124.90
Troy Strader	127	495	2.62	140 Good +	325 Good	\$21.50	\$22.50	2	\$ 74.52
Dean Nelson	127	462	2.55	155 Choice -	340 Good +	\$21.50	\$23.00	3	\$147.26
Dean Nelson	127	538	2.36	155 Choice -	355 Choice -	\$21.50	\$23.50	4	\$139.14
Freddie Meier	127	477	1.79	135 Good	305 Good -	\$21.50	\$21.75	5	\$ 49.89

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The interest in the Junior Commercial Beef Cattle Feeding Program, since it was started in 1957 has been very good. The program has been well accepted by the 4-H club and vocational agriculture members and also the adults.

The price of cattle and the prospects for small grain winter grazing at the time that some of the programs were started has had some bearing on the participation in the programs.

The Junior Feeders that have participated in the program one or more years have a much better understanding of the grades and kind of feeder cattle that will ordinarily do the best in the feedlot. They also have gained greater knowledge in the field of feeding, managing and marketing of beef cattle.

This program has also stimulated the feeding of a greater number of cattle in the county the past few years by adults. Local farmers who had never fed cattle have observed the program and checked the rations that were fed by the Junior Feeders and could see that it is a practical program and one that can be used on their farms in their farm programs.

The Junior Feeders have learned how to start and keep their cattle on feed and up to this time the death loss has been zero per cent for this five year period.

Interest in this type of program for 4-H club and vocational agriculture members in Blaine County will be maintained or even possibly increase due to the availability and supply of feeder cattle and feed grains here in Oklahoma.

Under this type of program it has been difficult to compare the steers and heifers as they have been fed a variety of different rations and under different conditions and management.

VITA

Eldon L. Nelson

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Master of Science

Report: JUNIOR COMMERCIAL CATTLE FEEDING PROGRAM

Major Field: Rural Adult Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born at Buffalo, Oklahoma, September 5, 1922, the son of Walter and Ethel Nelson.

Education: Received elementary and secondary education at the Buffalo Grade and High School, Harper County, graduating May, 1941. Received the Bachelor of Science Degree from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma with a major in Animal Husbandry in January, 1949. Engaged in post-graduate study toward the Degree of Master of Science at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma from June, 1953 to May, 1963. Attended the three week Western Regional Extension Summer School conducted at Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado, 1957, 1959 and 1961.

Professional experience: Served in the U. S. Navy from November, 1942 to February, 1946. Served as Assistant County Agent in Blaine County, Oklahoma from February, 1949 to July, 1949. Employed as County Agricultural Agent of Beaver County, Oklahoma from July, 1949 to May, 1955. Employed as County Agricultural Agent of Blaine County, Oklahoma since May, 1955.