South Florida Beef-Forage Program Reproductive Management School

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Reproductive efficiency has long been recognized as the most important factor influencing the economic viability of commercial cattle operations. Studies have indicated that reproduction efficiency can be increased between 5% and 20% by implementing recommended management practices. **Objectives:** Participants will increase their knowledge and understanding of breeding herd management, cattle handling, heifer development, bull selection, herd nutrition, forage management, reproductive physiology, herd health, calf husbandry, and performance records. Participants will implement two or more management practices in these areas. As a result, participants will improve reproductive efficiency in their herd. **Methods:** In 2008 and 2010, a total of 53 South Florida cattle ranchers representing approximately 3,750 head of cattle attended two Reproductive Management Schools that lasted three-days each. Each day began with an on-ranch lab in pregnancy diagnosis. This was followed by additional labs on reproductive physiology, obstetrics, and bull soundness evaluation; as well as classroom instruction. **Results:** Program evaluation indicated a 57% overall increase in knowledge of participants. Of surveyed participants, 100% indicated that they had adopted two or more management practices. **Conclusions:** As a result of their knowledge gain and subsequent adoption of management practices, reproductive efficiency in their herds can increase between 5% and 20%. This translates to approximately 140,500 more pounds of calves weaned annually. Depending on the cattle market, this could translate to an annual economic increase of from $119,425 to $159,468. Increased use of profitable management practices improves reproductive efficiency thus improving profitability of the beef cattle operation.

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