

Floradale Feed Mill Limited has been committed to offering our customers the “finest in feeds and service” for over 50 years. Though there have been recent staff changes, our mission and integrity has remained a constant. As with any business, there is inevitable change in personnel through retirements, alternative opportunities and new opportunities at Floradale. Our strong foundation of quality people have continued to foster the team-approach, supporting the transition for new employees and ensuring unwavering service for our customers. We are still a family-owned, Canadian company; our standard and quality of production, feed and services remains as a point of pride for us. We encourage you to give us a call to discuss opportunities where we can improve our service to you.

From all of us at Floradale, we want to thank you for your continued business and your trust!



Dry Cow Programs

Jake Ringelberg, Ruminant Nutritionist



A proper dry cow program is essential to minimize transition cow problems and maximize peak milk production. There are several approaches to obtain this goal, each with its own pros and cons. Listed here are the 4 main types of dry cow programs:

- ◆ **Traditional far-off and close-up diets** – the far-off diets usually contain forages along with mineral. Close-up diets, consisting of forages and concentrates, are fed starting from 21-14 days before calving. These close-up diets will contain higher levels of metabolic energy and protein.
- ◆ **Goldilocks diet** – a single TMR approach uses a significant amount of straw, along with silage and concentrates.
- ◆ **DCAD diet** – this diet follows a similar approach to the traditional strategy but employs the use of anionic salt(s) in the close-up period. These anionic salts help to manage the extra calcium when feeding high calcium forages, such as legume haylage.
- ◆ **X-Zelit diets** – these diets follow the approach of a traditional strategy but focuses on binding calcium during the close-up phase.

Which one a farm uses depends on several factors, the following chart can help rank how each program compares with some of these factors:

Diet	Cost	Ease of Feeding	Transition Concerns	Flexibility of Ingredients
Traditional	★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★
Goldilocks	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★	★
DCAD	★★★	★	★★★	★★★
X-Zelit	★★★★★	★★★★	★	★★★★★

Least	★
Most	★★★★★

While the above chart is a great, simple tool to determine how each program compares to each other, the best way to determine suitability with your herd and feeds is an on-farm evaluation of forages, obstacles and goals. Contact your Floradale representative today to discuss the different dry cow programs available or to schedule a farm visit from one of our Dairy Specialists.



How are local cash prices calculated?

Futures are crop prices driven by supply and demand on an exchange that is **accessible worldwide**. The exchange's pricing is measured in bushels and U.S. dollars.

Basis is the difference between the future prices and the actual **local** cash price. It is influenced by variables such as freight, handling, storage, and quality, as well as supply and demand factors impacting a specific area.

Our local cash price would be posted in Metric Tonnes (MT) and Canadian dollars. To convert bushels to MTs, there is an equivalent for each grain, such as:

- ◆ Bushel of Wheat x 36.7440 = 1 MT
- ◆ Bushel of Corn x 39.3680 = 1 MT

If the May 2021 corn futures are posted at 6.504 USD per bushel and the local basis is estimated at +0.25 USD, we would have to convert it this way:

- 1) $(6.504 + 0.25) =$ Cash price in bushels & USD
- 2) $(6.504 + 0.25) \times 1.24$ (exchange rate) = Cash price in bushels & CAD
- 3) $(6.504 + 0.25) \times 1.24 \times 39.368$ (Corn bushels to MT) = \$ 329.71 (Cash price per MT in CAD)

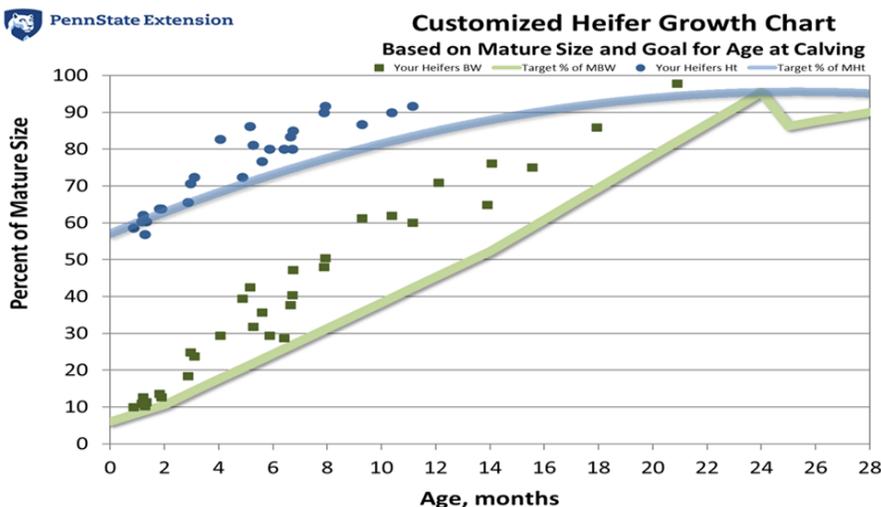
Replacement Heifer Growth

Danielle Skibinsky, Ruminant Nutritionist



It can often be difficult to see the return on investment when it comes to heifer nutrition. Unlike their dams and granddams that are producing milk and saleable calves to “earn their keep”, heifers produce potential through their success in growth and pregnancy. Its important to build a solid foundation in your replacement stock to ensure they hit the ground running in their first lactation.

Ideally, heifers should reach breeding size (50% of mature body size or ~800lbs and 50” at the withers) between 13 and 15 months old in order to calve at approximately 2 years old. To get them ready for breeding at an appropriate age, it is important to balance protein and energy to promote growth and development without creating too much fat. Over-feeding protein and over-conditioning (too much energy) will interrupt estrus cycling, increasing the number of services needed to conceive a calf. This will also increase her risk of difficulty at calving and, thereby, increase her chances of experiencing postpartum health problems; encountering health obstacles during and following calving will have a negative effect on milk production in both yield and lactation curve/persistence.



A key component to streamlining your heifer program is measurement; periodically taking height and weight measurements, as well as frequent body condition scoring, can help pin-point where your heifers sit on the projected growth chart for their respective breed. Coupling this with feed analysis and intakes determines what needs to be adjusted to optimize growth rates. Contact a Floradale representative if you would like assistance with taking, tracking or interpreting measurements for your heifer program.

Pictured to the left: a sample Heifer Growth Chart using the Penn State model.

This will be my last newsletter and I would like to wish a sincere farewell to the wonderful people of Floradale. My husband has been commissioned as a family doctor in Saskatchewan and, therefore, we will be returning to our prairie roots. I have valued my time here and am grateful for the variety of experiences that Floradale has offered for me.—Danielle Skibinsky