

BEEF PRODUCTION
IN
RIVERSIDE COUNTY, 1962

During the past few years, 150,000 to 200,000 head of beef cattle have been marketed annually from Riverside County feedlots. Most of the animals marketed were purchased as calves and yearlings from the southwest range states of Arizona, Texas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma. Few range breeding herds are found in the area due to low rainfall and lack of long season native ranges necessary for competitive cow-calf operations. These stocker and feeder animals arrive at weights ranging from 300 to 700 pounds. Cattle are received throughout the entire year; however, the majority of animals arrive during the fall and spring months.

The heavier cattle generally go directly onto a fattening program where they are fed a 60 to 90 per cent concentrate ration until they reach the desired grade and yield and weigh about 1,000 to 1,100 pounds.

Lighter weight cattle are placed on various growing programs until they increase their body weight to about 600 pounds. These growing programs are accomplished by the dry-lot feeding of green feeds (small grains, Sudan, and grassy alfalfa, etc.) hay, and silage with or without varying amounts of concentrates; pasture programs (grassy alfalfa fields, cotton stocks, Sudangrass, or winter small grains) properly supplemented; or various combinations of each.

GROWING CATTLE:

Each cattle feeder must determine the productivity of his land, his most efficient method of operation, and the management and feeding programs necessary for the production of economical gains. Feeders with highly productive soils find pen feeding the best method. By using this method they produce maximum pounds of beef per acre, allot a minimum of productive land to cattle pens and make maximum use of labor and equipment. In addition, they are better able to control planting, irrigation, and crop harvesting dates and have fewer soil management problems. Nutritional programs usually include a minimum of one-half pound grain per hundred pounds body weight, five pounds dry hay and free choice green chop and or silage.

Feeders located on less productive soil, who feed fewer numbers of animals, consider pasture programs as their best method of producing economical gains. Utmost consideration in a dry-lot growing program must be given to equipment costs. The necessary choppers, wagons, tractors, etc. for 1,000 head of animals can represent an investment of \$20,000 to \$30,000. Investment in corrals and chutes will require an additional \$12.50 per head. Feeding and milling equipment represents an investment of \$15 per head. Such expenses must, of course, be borne by relatively large numbers of cattle over a period of several years. It is not at all uncommon to see various combinations of dry-lot and pasture programs for growing cattle.

Regardless of whether pasture or dry-lot program is established the cost per pound of gain and the cost per unit of TDN produced and fed to the cattle must be determined by each feeder from his own records before he can maintain a successful program. Cattle feeders in Riverside County are in direct competition not only with cattlemen in other irrigated areas, but also the range feeder.

GROWING GAIN - DRY LOT

In-weight	350 pounds	
Out-weight	650 pounds	
Number days fed	200	
Average daily gain		1.5 pounds
Pounds of feed required		
Hay (or equivalent)	2,300 pounds	
Grain	500 pounds	
Cost of feed		
Hay @ \$26/Ton	\$ 29.90	
Grain @ \$56/Ton	<u>14.00</u>	
TOTAL FEED COSTS		\$43.90
Non-Feed costs		\$ 6.50
TOTAL COSTS FOR 300 POUND GAIN		\$50.40
TOTAL COST PER POUND OF GAIN		16.8¢

GROWING GAIN - PASTURE (Winter Cereal Grains)

In-weight	400 pounds	
Out-weight	600 pounds	
Number days fed	150	
Average daily gain		1.3 pounds
Area grazed		.5 Acre
Pasture growing costs per acre		\$58.00
Non-feed costs per acre		6.00
Pounds of beef per acre	350 pounds	
TOTAL COST PER POUND OF GAIN		16.0¢

Cattle pasturing on cotton stocks, supplemented with 5 to 10 pounds of ensilage per head per day, will gain at the rate of 30 to 45 pounds per head per month, depending on the amount of grass in the field, the completeness of picking, and the adaptability of the cattle to this feed.