

**NEW YORK FEEDLOT AND CARCASS VALUE DISCOVERY
PROGRAM-2004/2005 Harvest Report**

All cattle consigned to the 2004/2005 Feedlot and Carcass Value Discovery Program have been harvested. Consignors had the option of having their cattle fed for the conventional (C) or natural (N) market. Cattle in the natural feeding program were not implanted or fed an ionophore. If the cattle required treatment with antibiotics they were no longer eligible for the N market. Following antibiotic treatment many of these cattle were implanted, but they remained on the natural diet, which did not contain an ionophore. The feedlot performance is shown in Table 1. Initial and final weights of C and N steer and heifers were not drastically different. The N diet contained more forage to control acidosis. As such they were on feed about 16 days longer resulting in lower average daily gain. Additionally the amount of feed required to support that gain was higher as shown by the higher F/G.

Table 1. Feedlot Performance of cattle fed in the NY Feedlot and Carcass Value Discovery Program using conventional and natural protocols 2004/2005.

Data	Management protocol			
	Conventional	Natural ^a	Conventional	Natural ^a
	Steer		Heifer	
Initial wt, lb	636	644	586	578
Final wt, lb	1186	1193	1057	1064
Days on feed	149	166	145	162
ADG, lb	3.7	3.3	3.2	3.0
F/G	5.8	6.6	5.9	6.5

^aNatural animals are fed a diet that does not contain an ionophore, contains a higher proportion of hay and have not been implanted.

The Economic performance of the cattle is shown in Table 2. The increased F/G of the N cattle resulted in higher total feed costs and when expressed over the lower ADG produced a higher Feed cost of gain. Likewise the Yardage charge, which is a daily fee to cover cost of labor and facilities, was also higher for the N cattle. While all cattle were treated with antibiotics if required, the N cattle had a lower Vet and Medicine charge. The reason for this is unclear but could be related to a more successful pre-conditioning and weaning program. The Data collection and market fee covers a \$25/hd data collection fee, \$1 Beef Check-off, warm up ration and yardage fee (\$15) and freight charges. The Total cost reflects all the charges explained plus a cost that reflects the value of the feeder calf on arrival at the feedlot. The steers were valued at \$1.05/lb based on 726 lb. and the heifers were valued at \$0.99/lb for 658 lb. There was a \$0.05/lb slide. The Return to cow/calf is the total dollars received from the sale of the finished animal minus all of the feedlot charges. This is the amount available to cover the cost of raising the calf from conception to harvest. Feeder value is the price/lb that the calf would have had to bring at delivery to the feedlot to break-even. This gives an indication what the feeder calf was worth. Prices were good last fall, but not \$1.18-\$1.19/lb for steers weighing 636 lb -644 lb. The bottom line is that it was once again profitable to retain

ownership on these cattle.

Table 2. Economic Performance of cattle fed in the NY Feedlot and Carcass Value Discovery Program using conventional and natural protocols, 2004/2005.

Data	Management protocol			
	Conventional	Natural ^a	Conventional	Natural ^a
	Steer		Heifer	
Feed cost ^b , \$/hd	\$210.59	\$238.90	\$186.84	\$209.72
Feed cost of gain ^b , \$/lb	\$0.39	\$0.44	\$0.40	\$0.43
Yardage, \$/hd	\$59.31	\$66.30	\$58.00	\$64.70
Vet & medicine, \$/hd	\$11.02	\$4.20	\$9.74	\$4.40
Data collection and market, \$/hd	\$52.33	\$49.99	\$52.50	\$46.50
Total cost ^b , \$/hd	\$1,026.45	\$1,058.58	\$904.73	\$939.87
Total cost of gain ^b , \$/lb	\$0.61	\$0.66	\$0.65	\$0.68
Sale price, \$/lb HCW	\$1.50	\$1.60	\$1.49	\$1.61
Return to cow/calf, \$/head	\$733.95	\$800.75	\$646.12	\$708.55
Feeder value, \$/lb	\$1.18	\$1.19	\$1.11	\$1.16
Net return, \$/head	\$43.41	\$104.57	\$48.47	\$118.24

^aNatural animals are fed a diet that does not contain an ionophore, contains a higher proportion of hay and have not been implanted.

^bDoes not include the cost accrued by cattle that died before marketing.

Finally, the carcass performance is shown in Table 3. This information is extremely valuable in determining if the breeding program is producing the product that meets market demand. The current industry standard is a HCW between 650 and 900 lb, a Quality grade of low Choice and a Yield grade 2 carcass. With very few exceptions the

Table 3. Carcass Performance of cattle fed in the NY Feedlot and Carcass Value Discovery Program using conventional and natural protocols, 2004/2005

Data	Management protocol			
	Conventional	Natural ^a	Conventional	Natural ^a
	Steer		Steer	
Hot carcass wt, lb	732	737	640	639
Dressing percent	61	59	61	60
Back fat, in	0.54	0.56	0.50	0.55
Ribeye area, in ²	12.3	11.8	12.1	11.3
REA/cwt HCW	1.7	1.6	1.9	1.8
REA/cwt LW	1.03	1.00	1.15	1.09
% Choice or higher	0.94	0.95	0.90	100.00
% Select or lower	0.06	0.05	0.10	0.00
Yield grade	2.7	3.0	2.4	2.9
YG 1,2, %	64	46	67	40
YG 4,5, %	1	1	0	5

^aNatural animals are fed a diet that does not contain an ionophore, contains a higher proportion of hay and have not been implanted.

average of the cattle consigned to this program were well within the specifications of industry demand. Producers participating in this program can compare their cattle to the average of the group and make breeding and management decisions to improve the value of their cattle. Perhaps they need to use a bull with more size, less backfat or more REA. Perhaps their cows are too small, too big, or don't produce high marbling calves. Without data, it is difficult to evaluate. The Value Discovery Program provides data to do this analysis.

Producers that participate in this program have been able to adjust and improve the value of their cattle, as well as make additional profit. For more information, contact Mike Baker, mjb28@cornell.edu, or 607-255-5923.1