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“Are We Ready”

Use February for Planning

Calving Season Preparations

Record CE & BW on All Calves

Marketing Plans

Mating Decisions

Select Sale Animals & Mate Accordingly

Schedule Weaning Date & Weight Time

Register All Calves & Record All Weights

Schedule Pregnancy Check Date

WHR Assessments after Pregnancy Check

Schedule Yearling Weight Date

At Yearling Time Take Ultrasound Carcass Data

Submit DNA for Gnomically Enhanced EPDs

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Shorthorn Impact Breed Initiatives

Develop Better Shorthorn Cattle (see the difference in 5 years)

Shorthorn Breeders Producing Better Animals
Use Extensive Culling Practices

Create Sire Test Program (fully operational program in 2 years)

Identify Cooperator Commercial Test Herds
Shorthorn Breeders Contribute Semen for Sire Testing

Membership Recognition (started December 2016)

Develop New Programs to Recognize Members
Years of Membership, Shows,
Performance and Special Achievements

Are We Ready? Using these three words in your planning can be the difference between success and failure. Preparation is an essential part of anything we do or plan to do. This groundwork helps determine the outcome, regardless of the task or activity.

Make time to determine your goals, do some research and understand the best options; then create a plan to reach your goals. Write down the steps needed and make a time line to keep everyone on schedule. This exercise is essential when planning your crop rotations and planting choices of crop, seed, fertilizer, equipment and marketing; it is all part of the equation.

Cattle operations have the same planning needs. Start with calving this year and recording the calving ease and birthweight on every calf; including those that die or are born dead. This information should be entered into the registry so a true performance picture is used when calculating EPDs. Selecting sires for mating your cows is very important to pre-plan, especially matching up the phenotype and performance records that will produce the desired product for your marketing plan. Plan the time you will wean your calves, based on age and whether you are planning to sell them. Registering each calf born (no extra expense for WHR breeders) results in complete records for every cow in your herd. If you choose not to register every calf, still record every calf and check the “unregister” box; this collects all the information for each cow’s yearly activity and makes the EPD profile of your animals and all animals in the breed more accurate. At some point in your plans create a marketing plan for your calves and/or cows. Even before you breed them, think about which ones may be sold and or culled. By evaluating this early in the year, you have options to breed them for a possible sale or to provide a replacement. Planning when to pregnancy check the cow herd and when vaccinations are required saves the number of times you work the herd. WHR Assessments start November 1 and are more accurate after pregnancy checking the herd. Plan a time to take yearling weights and possibly ultrasound replacements for additional carcass data. To complete the total picture, consider doing a DNA profile that shows the advantage of gnomically enhanced EPDs. This is a lot of planning and scheduling, but your cattle operation has a much better opportunity for success by Being Ready.

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I understand the opinion that this activity is not necessary, because you know when these things need to be done and you have been doing it for years. Yes, I agree to a point. However, the added detail provokes an in-depth thought process that will make your operation much more efficient. Much like preparing a budget, this allows you to prepare for the tasks you face. Simple things like having the vaccinations on hand, hiring labor needed when you want to work the animals or scheduling the vet becomes planned and not stressful.

Please remember it is just as important to have a marketing plan as a production plan. Building a relationship with possible customers is essential to get the most for your product, regardless if you are selling in the purebred market or selling feeder calves. Reverse the roles and think about those who provide products to you; a working business relationship is a two-way street.

The Shorthorn breed has had continuous growth for a number of years. There are numerous new members looking for good top end genetics. It is up to breeders and members to supply a product that is desired in the market place.

ARE YOU READY TO SUPPLY THE NEEDS OF THE INDUSTRY?

