

# Morgan County Market Beef Project



## Selecting your Market Beef

Whether you are brand new to the Beef project, or a veteran with many years under you belt, here are some tips on the animal you are looking for.

- Before starting a Beef project you should consider that it may have a sizeable investment, often exceeding \$2000. You should develop a cash flow budget and be sure that you have adequate funding for this project.
- Make sure you pick a reputable breeder if you are purchasing your animal.
- Know the genetic makeup of the animal you are going to purchase.
- Consider the following factors: frame size, muscle, structural correctness, balance, eye appeal, and disposition.
- Keep in mind the average daily gain for a beef is 2.0-3.0 pounds.
- Beef typically need to eat 7.0 - 7.5 lbs. of feed for every 1 lb. of gain. Your beef will need to eat between 17.5 and 18.5 lbs. of feed to ensure a gain of 2.5 lbs. per day.
- The feeding period for a market beef is 180-270 days.
- Feed should contain 12-14% protein.
- Keeping with current industry standards, your beef should weigh 1250-1350 pounds at county fair.
- Your market beef should be 15-18 months in age at county fair.
- Use the chart to the left to determine how big your beef should be at purchase to ensure he is properly finished by county fair.

## How Much Should My Beef Weight?

**\*Assuming a 2.5 ADG**

Days to Beef	Desired Beginning Weight	Desired Market Weight at Show
270 days	575-675 pounds	1250-1350 pounds
230 days	675-775 pounds	1250-1350 pounds
200 days	750-850 pounds	1250-1350 pounds
180 days	800-900 pounds	1250-1350 pounds

## Additional Information

- Fresh and clean water should be available at all times.
- A calf weighing 500 lbs. will drink 5-12 gallons of water per day.
- Your Beef animal requires about 150 to 175 total square feet of space. Ensure that the steer will have room to move at its final size.
- Fence should be minimum of 50 inches tall and Barn/Shelter should be a minimum of 20-25 square feet of space.
- Use only fresh, high quality feed and remove stale feeds from the bunk.
- Feed regularly, preferably two or three times a day.
- House our animals in an area where you can readily observe them to best monitor feed, water, and their health.

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## Upcoming Events:

- Market Beef Primary Care begins, 3/3/25;
- Market Beef ID's due to the Extension Office by 4:00 pm, 3/3/25
- Breeding Beef ID's due to the Extension Office by 4:00 pm, 5/1/25
- Meat Quality Assurance 5/12/25 or 5/13/25 , 4:30-6:30 pm, MCFG
- Fair entries and record books due, 7/9/25 by 4:00 pm, Extension Office



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## Additional Information Continued

- It takes about 2500 pounds of grain and 500 pounds of hay to properly feed a market calf over the last 170 days.
- Steers should be fed 2 to 2.5% of its body weight per day in order to gain 2.25 to 2.5 lbs. of weight per day (approx. 425 lbs. of grain). Be sure any changes to the steer's feed and nutrition are done gradually.
- Feeding from November to August (280 days) will require approx. 5000 lbs. of feed.
- Start slow: Begin by just watching and talking to your steer.
- Tie your steer to a fence post or secure object for an hour or two at a time. This will get it used to being restrained and standing still. This is also a good time to brush him down so that he gets used to being touched. For safety reasons, never leave your steer alone when he is tied up.
- Expose your steer to as many sights and sounds as possible; i.e. play a radio in the barn.
- Be sure to practice with the show halter and show stick that will be used during fair.
- Wash and clip your steer several times before the fair so he gets used to it.
- Trim hooves about 4-6 weeks before the fair.
- Beef should be dewormed once every 2 months, leaving proper withdrawal period before harvesting.
- Warts and ringworm are common health issues for beef.
- When treatment or injections are necessary for animal health read the label, administer properly, adhere to withdrawal times, and keep accurate records.
- Ask for Help: 4-H Agent, Leaders or other members in the 4-H Beef Project.

