



Agriculture & Rural Development

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Event	:	Farmers' Study Group Training Day
Presenter	:	Mr N.P. Bareki
Presentation title	:	Beef cattle Breeding and Calving Seasons
Location	:	Ipopeng, Amalia in Mamusa
Date	:	18 May 2021
Requesting Agric advisor	:	Mr A.C. Mallo
Aim	:	Training of selected study group farmers farmers
Purpose	:	To enhance farmers' understanding of the different mating seasons and their advantages.

Breeding and Calving Seasons

Ipopeng Livestock Farmer Study Groups 18 May



Breeding Seasons

Beef cattle breeding and consequently calving, can take place throughout the year, or it can be restricted to a pre-determined limited part of the year. Where breeding takes place in a restricted breeding season, the most common practice is either a spring calving or an autumn calving season, although some farmers make use of two breeding seasons per year allowing cows that miss a breeding season to rebreed out of season.

Whether breeding takes place throughout the year or is confined to a part of the year, there are advantages and disadvantages associated with each system, which are often decided by the requirements of the farmer and where the farm is situated. The major limiting influence is that cows are pregnant for 283 days and normally do not re-conceive earlier than 50 to 60 days after calving (post-partum).

Breeding throughout the year

Advantage:

Bulls remain in the herd, thus there is less bull management

Disadvantage:

A high plane of nutrition is necessary all the time, management tasks e.g. dehorning, vaccination, castration, must be undertaken continuously throughout the year.

Restricted breeding season

Advantages:

Herd management and fodder flow planning is simplified. Thus, all calves can be dehorned and castrated in a day or two, leaving the rest of the year open for other activities. This could be a significant advantage for a person not always present on a farm or where other enterprises must be taken into consideration.

It is easier to monitor conception rates and to devise a simple system to detect cows that fail to reconceive.

In small herds, the only way performance testing can be carried out is by seasonal breeding as at least 10 to 15 animals in each group must be tested. In order to provide 10 bulls to make a group comparison, for example, at least 30 calves must be born within a time period of 3 months (approximately 50% of calves are male and mortalities must be taken into account).

Animals can be marketed in uniform groups when beef prices are favourable. Where artificial insemination is used, heat spotting is only necessary for a short period