

**NORTH WEST DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL  
DEVELOPMENT.  
AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT SERVICES.**

**BEEF CATTLE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**  
**LENANE TSAMAISO LA THUO YA DIKGOMO TSA NAMA**



**Dan Kgaswane**

**Farmers Day (10<sup>th</sup> December 2021)**

**018 299-6500**



**Agriculture &  
Rural Development**  
Department:  
Agriculture and Rural Development  
North West Provincial Government  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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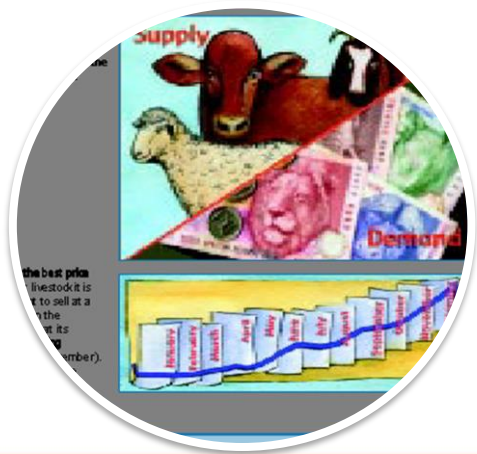


# INTRODUCTION

- ❖ Beef cattle are the most important livestock species in SA.
- ❖ Farming with **beef cattle** can be a profitable enterprise.
- ❖ Successful beef farming depends on “proper management”.



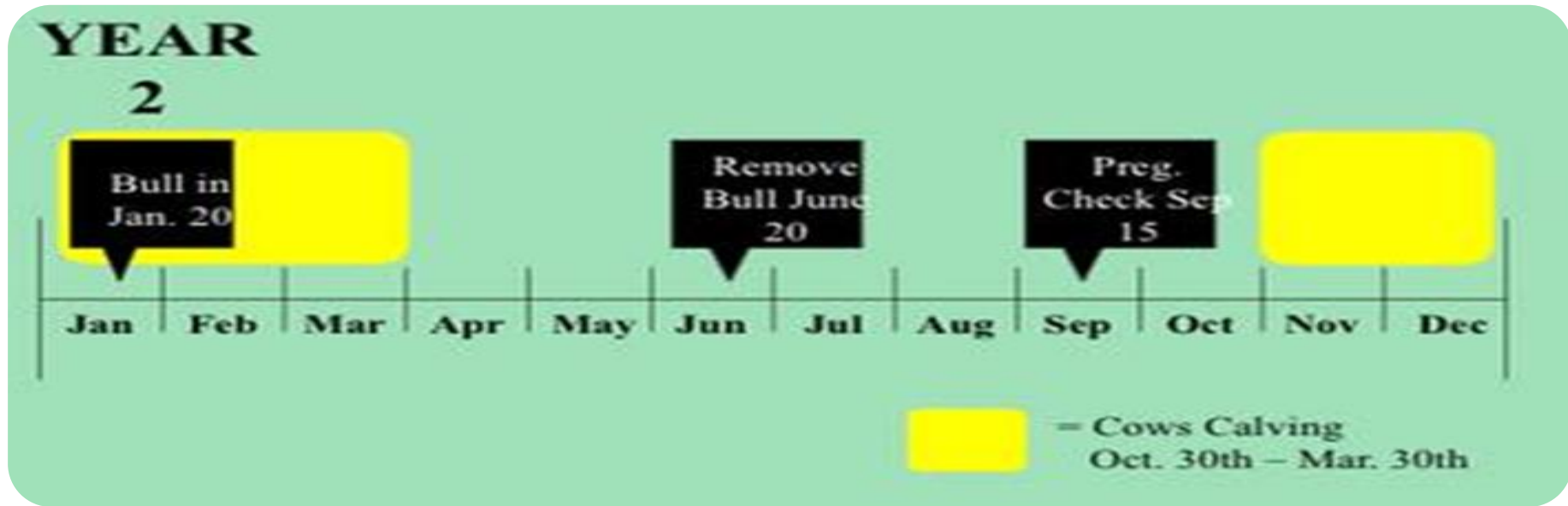
# WHY ARE YOU IN CATTLE FARMING?

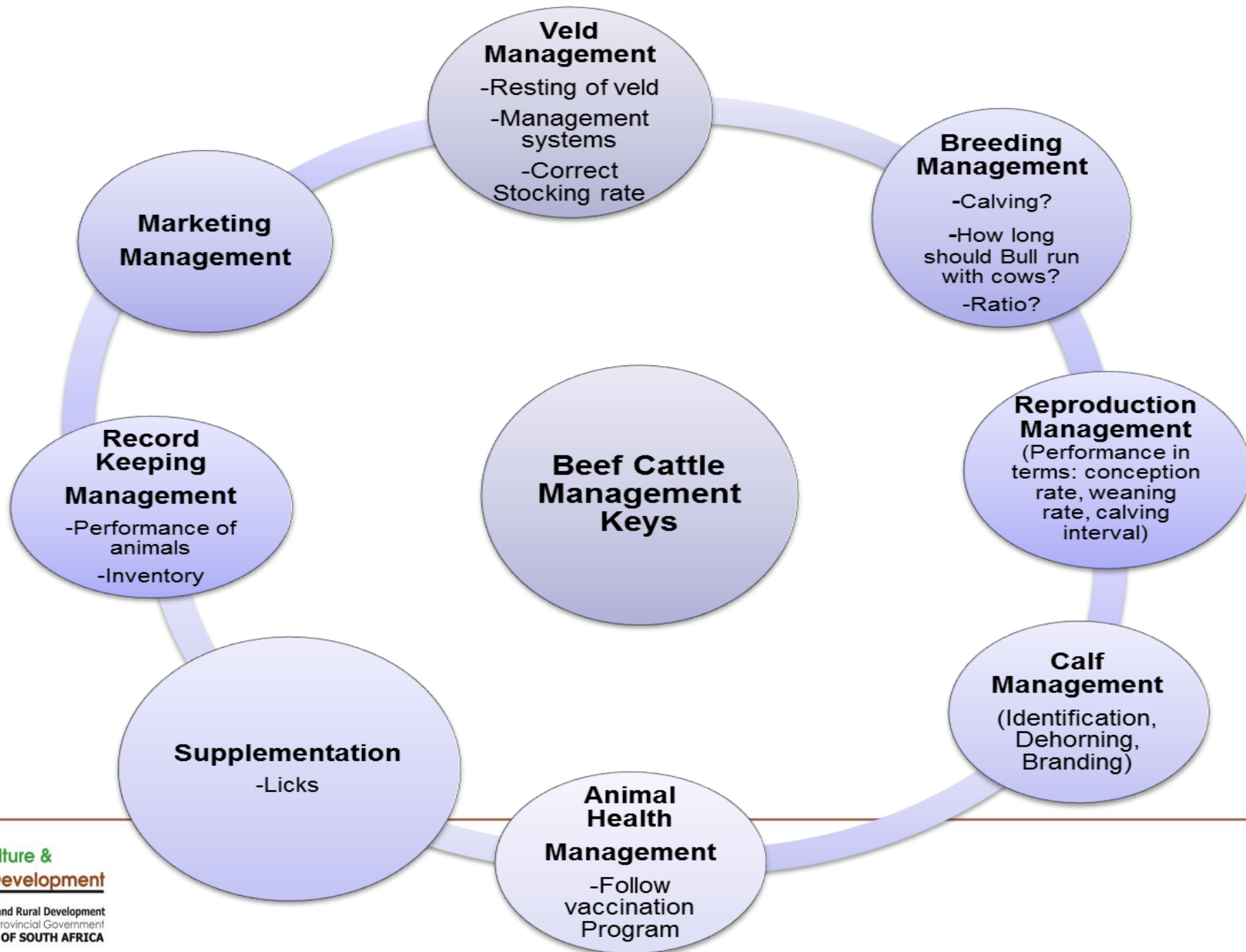


# What is Beef Cattle Management Program?



- ❖ Tool for farmers to help in scheduling practices for cow herd over a 12 months period.

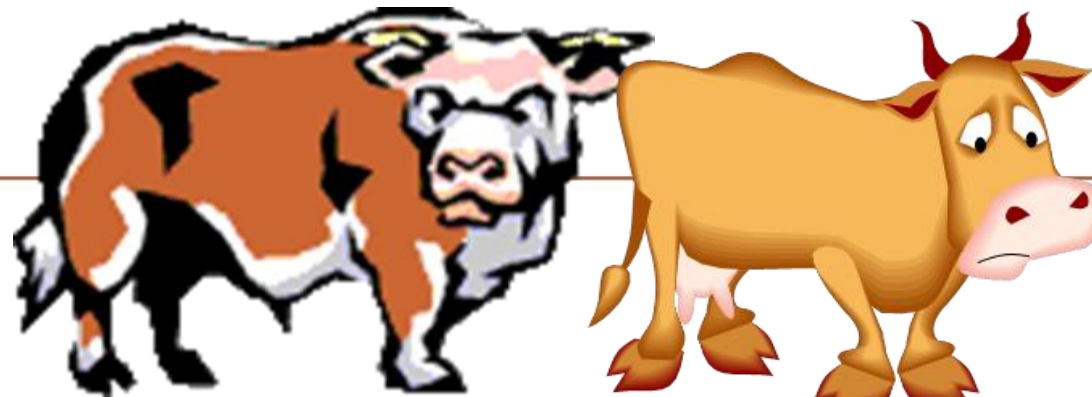






# Breeding season

<b>SEASON</b>	<b>BREEDING</b>	<b>CALVING</b>
Summer	Nov-Feb	Sep- Nov
Winter	June-Aug	May-July



# Advantages of summer breeding

- ❖ Nutritional requirements of cows coincides with the peak production period of natural pastures (summer).
- ❖ Cows are in a good condition during midsummer resulting in higher conception rates.
- ❖ Less supplementation needed.



# Disadvantages of summer breeding

- ❖ The internal and external parasite load is high (dosing and dip costs).





# Advantages of winter breeding

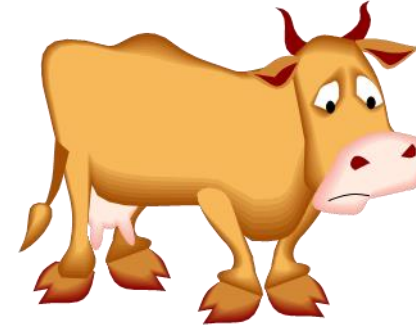
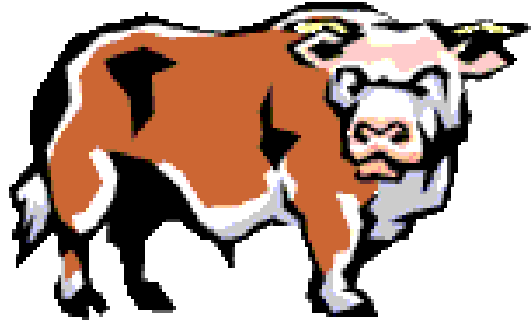
- ❖ Excess crop residues and hay can be utilized optimally.
- ❖ The parasite load is lower, which can lead to savings on dosing and dip costs.



# Disadvantages of winter breeding

- ❖ The cows are normally in a poor condition at breeding, resulting in lower conception rates.
- ❖ More supplementation is needed to keep the cows in good condition.



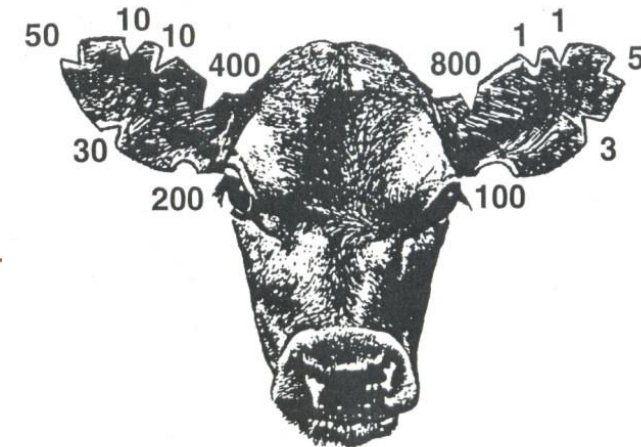


# BEEF CATTLE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



# September

- ❖ Heifers starts to calve.
- ❖ Observe calving difficulties
- ❖ Each calf should receive 4 L of colostrum within 6 hours of birth.
- ❖ Weigh **calf** at birth (done within 3 days of birth)
- ❖ Identification of calves (Ear notch).



# Watch out "Retained Placenta".

❖ Must come off within 24 hours

## Causes of Retained Placenta:

1. Over fat cows.
2. Stress during calving.
3. Deficiency of calcium & Vitamin E/Selenium.
4. Infections in reproduction tract during pregnancy.





# September



## What about the bulls?

- ❖ Restore body condition, if necessary.
- ❖ Invite **State Veterinary** to do breeding soundness evaluation on all breeding bulls.

## What is a breeding soundness evaluation?

- ❖ Veterinary examination of the bull resulting in a prediction of his fertility potential.
- ❖ Best done **30-60** days before use.



# Breeding soundness evaluation.

- ❑ Exam of the reproductive system-if the parts are normal, he has a problem.
- ❑ Semen analysis - enough sperm alive and normal for an optimum pregnancy rate.



# October



❖ Heifers continue to calve.

❖ Cows starts calving.

- *Make sure the correct measurement .*
- *Scale is calibrated at all times.*
- *Correct recording of the sex of a calf is of utmost importance.*
- *Cows sometimes swop calves.*



❖ Provision of extra feed if necessary (Production Lick)



# November



- ❖ Cow continue to calve

## Preparation of cows for the mating season.

- ❖ Correct preparation have a positive effect on their conception.
- ❖ Monitor the body condition by using BCS system.
- ❖ Cows must be in good condition (body score of 3 out of 5).

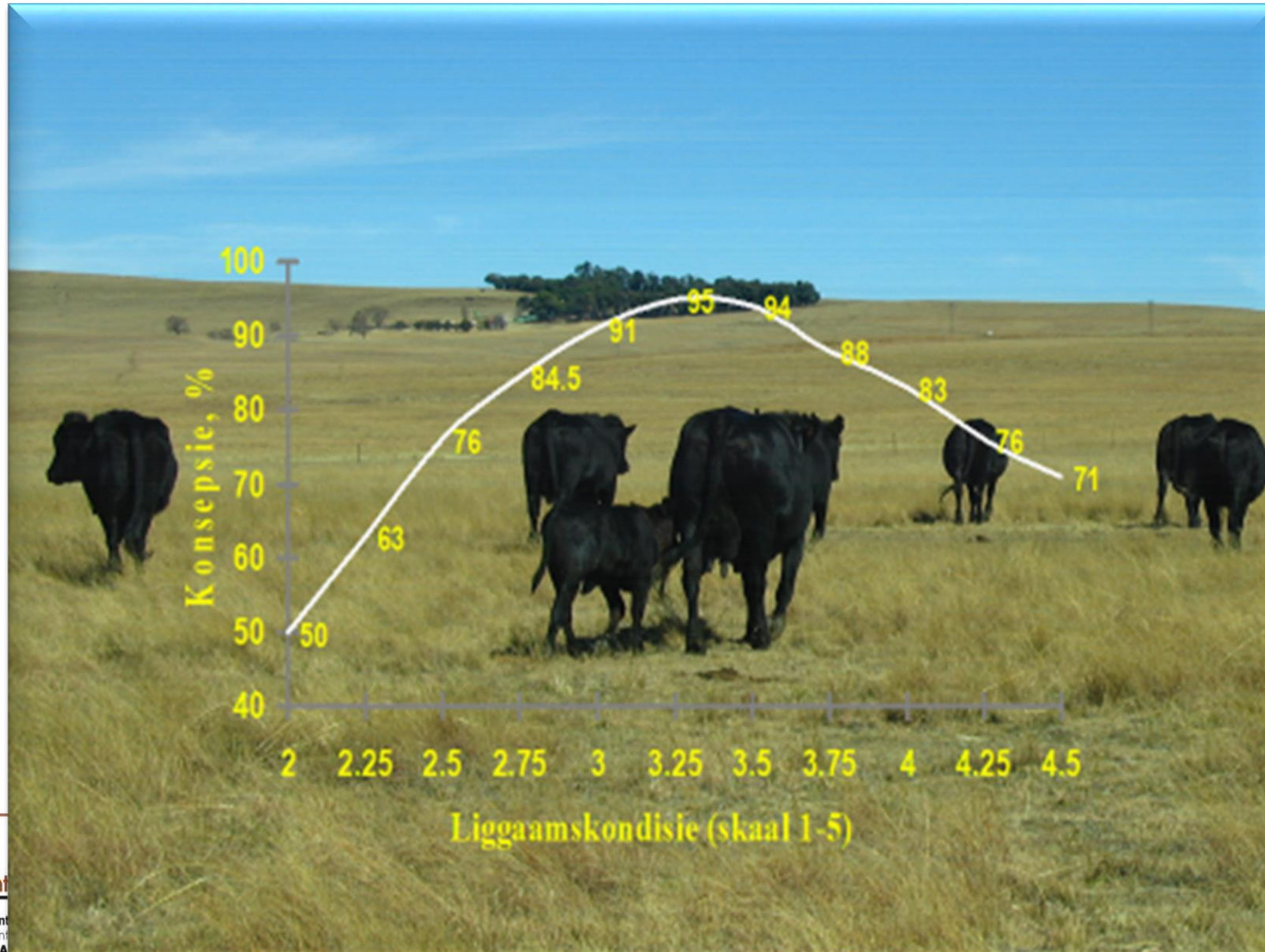


# Body Condition Scoring (BCS)





# Relationship between body condition at breeding and conception rate( J. Meaker,1991)



# November

❖ **Breed heifers to calve earlier than the cow herd.**

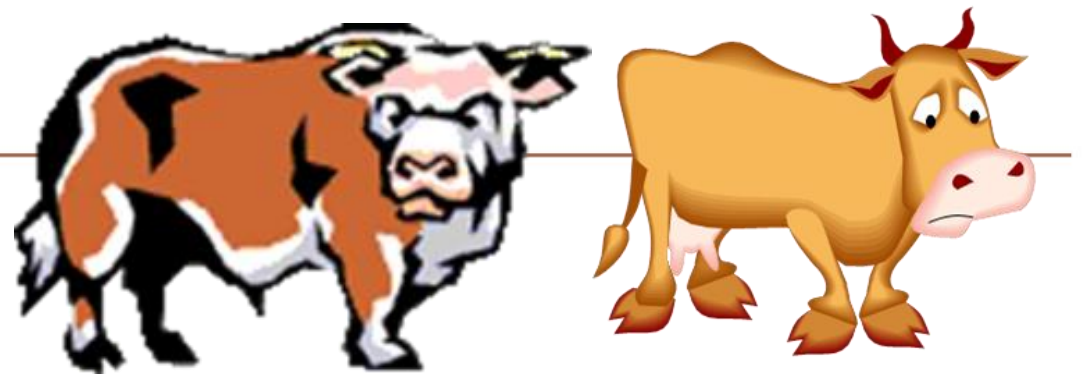
-Allows better calving supervision.

-Allows more time for them to start cycling and get bred back.

❖ Middle of the month, mating of heifers (18-24 Months of age).

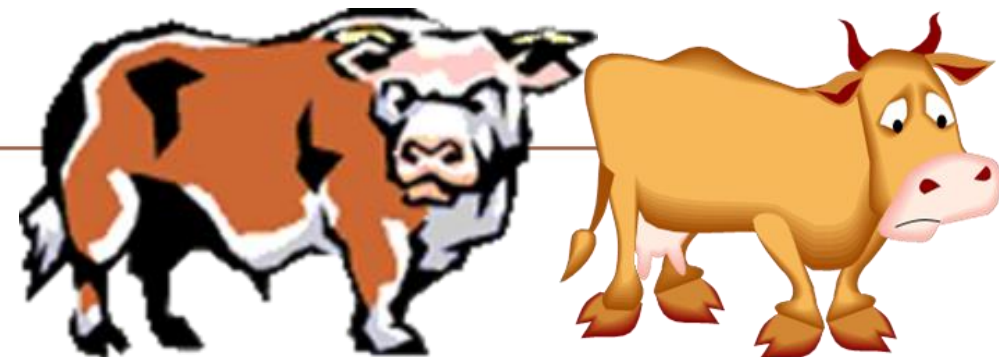
❖  $\pm 42$  Days (2 X Oestrous cycle).

❖ Ratio 1 Bull: 25 Heifers.



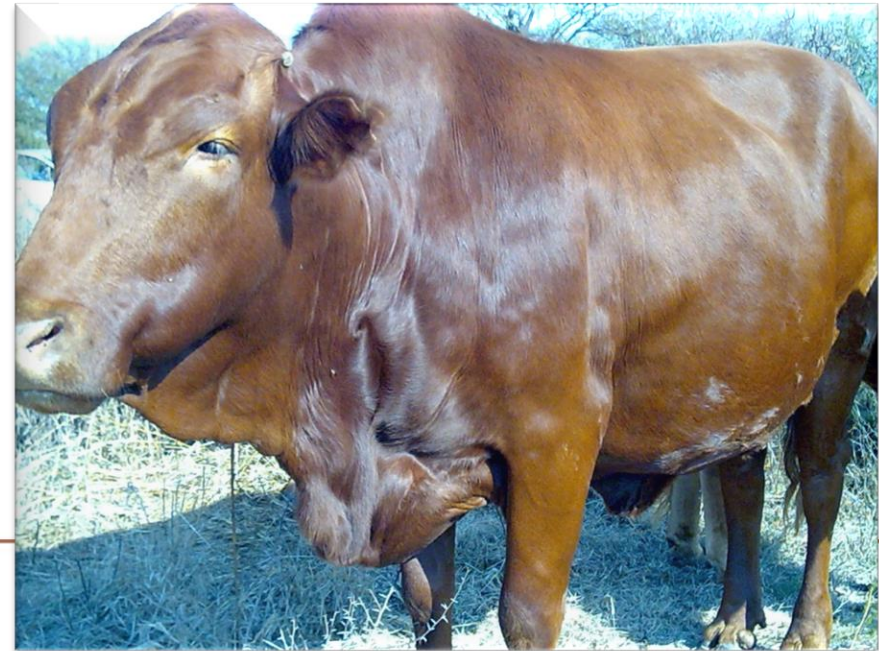
# December

- ❖ Middle of the month, Cow breeding season starts  $\pm 63$  Days = (3 X Oestrous cycle).
- ❖ Ratio 1 Bull: 30-40 Cows.
- ❖ Cull non reproductive cows while price are seasonally high.





# Non Productive Cows?



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# January -March

- ❖ End of breeding season.
- ❖ Feed requirements
- ❖ Order feeds for the coming winter.





# April -May

- ❖ Invite State Veterinary to do pregnancy diagnosis.
- ❖ Pregnancy diagnosis is essential within **30-60** days after breeding for confirm the pregnancy.
- ❖ This should be done by qualified veterinary doctor.



## Why PD?

- This facilitates optimal feeding and care of pregnant animals in positive animals.
- This provides clear way to breed the animal in negative cases.

# May

- ❖ Weaning-Separation of calf and making independent of its mother for food.
- ❖ Wean calves (6-9 Months of age)
- ❖ **Weigh calf after weaning.**
- ❖ Cow should wean a heavy calf (at least 45-50% of dam's weight)
- ❖ Why weaning?
- ❖ Select replacement heifers.



# June

## Branding

- It is one of the permanent method
- Brand Marking of young calves between the age of 6-8 months.



## Hot Iron branding

- A good hot iron branding should be visible.



## Required

- Branding irons.

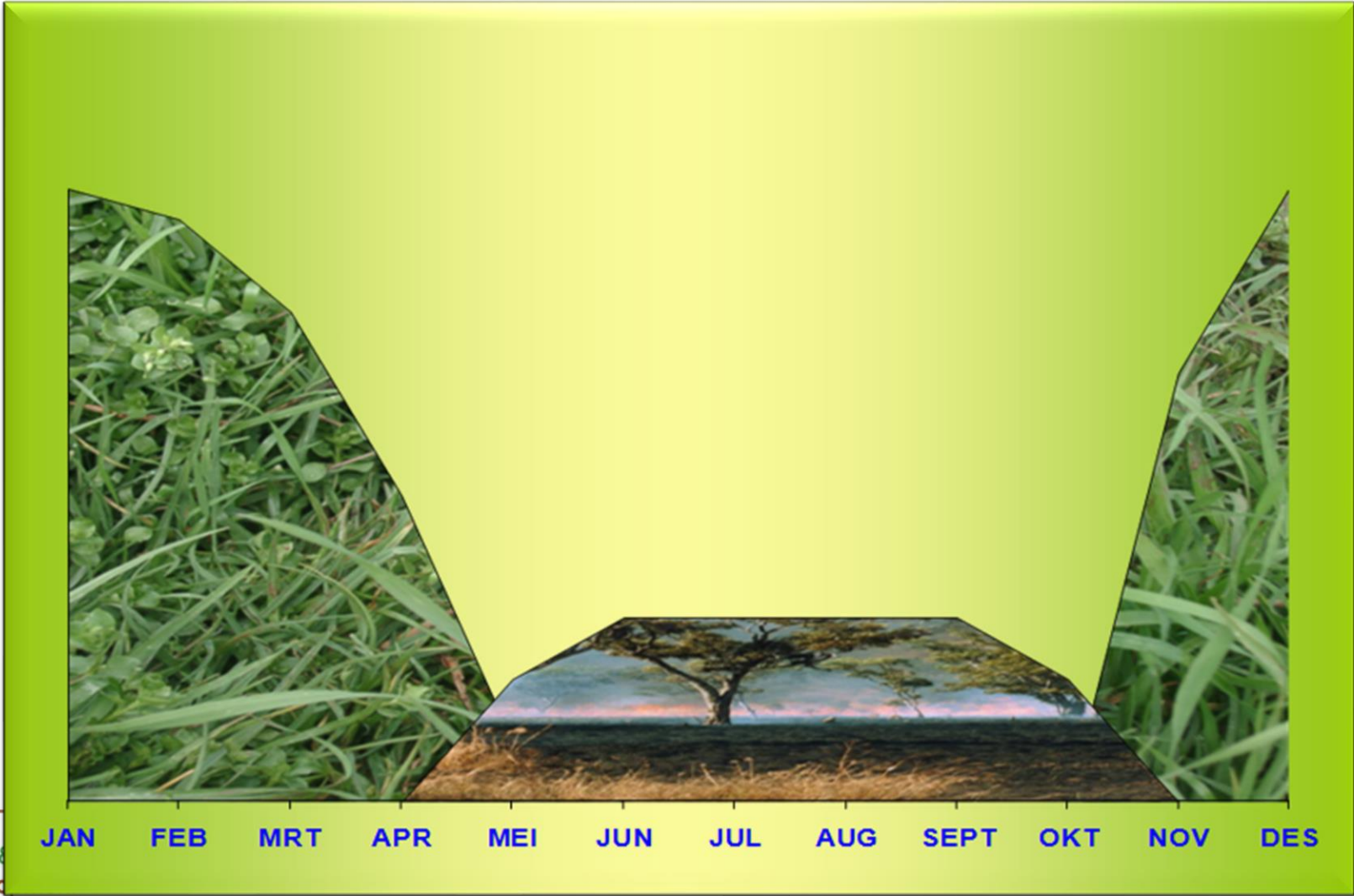


# August

- ❖ Culling and selling of animals.
- ❖ Keep bulls in good condition for breeding.
- ❖ Prepare books for calving season.
- ❖ Buy breeding bulls.



# Summing up!





# Lick supplementation

- Summer lick – (November –April)
- Winter Lick- (May –October)





# Dipping!



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# Record keeping!



- Daily stock register
- Birth/calving register
- Breeding register
- Weights
- Sales/ disposal register
- Mortality register
- Feed stock register
- Fodder stock register
- Receipt/ Income register
- Herd health register



# Beef cattle facts

- ❖ Recommended age first mating – 18-24 months.
- ❖ Recommended body weight at mating 320 –360kg.
- ❖ Gestation Period - 285 days.
- ❖ Oestrous Cycle - 21 days
- ❖ Calving to weaning-6-8 Months
- ❖ Breeding period-(42-62 Days heifers: 63-91 Days Cows).
- ❖ Spring calving system.
- ❖ At least 1 calf per year.



# Conclusion



- ❖ Summer breeding season usually is better than a winter breeding season.
- ❖ Timing for breeding is very important.
- ❖ Strive for a cow that calves easily, annually & growthy calf.
- ❖ Cows in good condition (body score of 3-3,5) at the start of mating season .







**KE A LEBOGA! PULA!!!!**

