

# Minerals Essential For Top Beef Production

**SPRINGFIELD, MO.**

**R**esearch at the University of Missouri has shown that mineral supplementation is essential for good health and adequate performance of beef cows according to Gary Naylor, a livestock specialist with the University of Missouri Extension.

“Beef cows that received supplemental minerals had a higher percentage calf crop than groups that were not supplemented,” said Naylor.

He notes that the minerals do not have to be expensive to do the job.

“Some companies promote minerals that can cost four times as much and result in no increase in performance,” said Naylor.

Naylor recommends supplementing with a basic mineral mix of salt, calcium, phosphorus and essential trace minerals.

“The phosphorus content should be five to seven percent. A good low cost formula would

contain 30 percent dicalcium phosphate and 70 percent trace mineral salt,” said Naylor.

He explains that a beef cow should consume two ounces per head per day of this mix.

Naylor recommends adding dried molasses or soybean meal to help increase consumption if needed. He also says that a vitamin pack can be added to the mix at times when poor quality hay or pasture is the only source of feed available.

“In herds where pinkeye exists or has been a problem in the past, you can add chlortetracycline to the mineral mix. Research has shown a reduction in the incidence of pinkeye by nearly fifteen percent in herds that have supplemented with this antibiotic,” said Naylor.

Naylor reminds beef producers that white and trace mineral blocks do not contain the essential minerals calcium and phosphorus. Remember, adequate phosphorus intakes are important for cows to breed back on a timely basis. Δ



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