

Tips on Caring for a Performance Bull

Manage your performance-tested bull

To obtain the optimum breeding performance from tested bulls, it is important to remember that they are relatively young and developing. Thus, they will require better care than 2 year old or mature bulls.

Conditioning young bulls

Yearling bulls should be kept in moderate flesh, avoiding excessive or inadequate condition. Additionally, they should be kept in a pasture large enough to promote adequate exercise. This performance tested bull has been running with other cattle all his life. In order for him to make the adjustment to your farm, he should be run with a few steers or a few cattle.

Feeding the yearling bull

If the yearling bull is to develop normally, he should receive supplemental protein and energy at a level of 0.5-1 pound (lb.) of grain per 100 lb. of body weight. After the breeding season has started, the yearling bull should receive 0.5 lbs. of grain per 100 lb. of body weight, especially when pastures become short. After the breeding season, 5-6 lbs. of grain, plus good-quality roughage, should be adequate.

Management at the start of the breeding season

It is wise to observe the yearling bull at the start of the breeding season to ensure that he can breed satisfactorily and has adequate libido. In many cases, allowing him to breed a few heifers or cows in an easily observed area prior to turnout is also a good practice. It is often good management to rotate yearling bulls during a long breeding season. In other words, putting the bull in the breeding pasture for three weeks, then removing him for one or two weeks, will aid in maintaining adequate growth and development during the breeding season.

Health program

The following practices will ensure the health of the bull and will increase his breeding season.

- Control internal and external parasites throughout the year.
- Have a breeding soundness examination (BSE) and semen evaluation performed at least one month prior to the breeding season.
- Trim the feet if necessary

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