



Beef Briefs
by
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SYNCHRONIZATION COSTS

There are many products on the market now that can help synchronize estrus in beef cows. Purebred cattle breeders have been using these tools for a number of years because of the need to produce calves from AI sires. However, commercial beef breeders have in made increasing use of these tools for the following reasons:

1. The calving period can be reduced because more cows are bred in a smaller window of time. This certainly increases the probability of better calving management.

2. Replacement heifers can be produced from outstanding cows using AI sires that are selected for maternal traits.

3. There can be greater productivity of the calf crop because selection of AI sires with

genetic potential for growth will usually exceed the ability of individually-owned bulls.

4. An effective crossbreeding system can be maintained by using bulls of one breed through AI, and natural matings from a bull of another breed.

There are, of course, costs associated with synchronization programs. The following information will outline some of those costs for four selected synchronization programs. Contact your county extension agent or AI representative for the details of using each of these systems.

Assumed costs: Please recall these costs will be different for any given producer. They are intended as a guide to use for comparison. Be sure to determine all of the actual costs for your program.

1 Semen costs	\$15.00/straw
2 prostaglandin shot	\$3.50 ea
3 GNRH shot	\$4.40 ea
4 breeder/technician	\$5.00 per cow
5 handling costs (per trip through chute)	\$1.00 per cow
6 heat check charge (6 hr/day X \$10.00/hr for 30 cows)	\$20.00 per cow per day
7. MGA-containing feed (\$50/hd/day for 14 days)	\$7.00 per cow
8 Value of additional weight of feeder calves	\$.70 per pound

System 1 Single Prostaglandin (PGF)

	Dollars per head
1 PGF	3.50
1 6 chute trips (60% of treated cows AI'd)	1.60
semen cost	9.00
10 days heat check	2.00
breeder/technician charge	3.00
total	19.10
breakeven weight increase (\$19.10/\$70 per lb.)	27 lbs
Estimated success of AI pregnancies	50%
Cost per cow for each AI-sired calf	38.20

System 2 Double Prostaglandin (PGF)

	Dollars per head
2 PGF	7.00
2 8 chute trips (80% of treated cows AI'd)	2.80
semen cost	12.00
10 days heat check	2.00
breeder/technician charge	4.00
total	25.80
breakeven weight increase (\$25.80/\$70 per lb.)	37 lbs
Estimated success of AI pregnancies	60%
Cost per cow for each AI-sired calf	43.00

System 3 MGA/ Prostaglandin System

	Dollars per head
1 PGF	3.50
MGA feed	7.00

1.7 chute trips (70% of treated cows AI'd)	1.70
semen cost	10.50
5 days heat check	1.00
breeder/technician charge	3.50
total	27.20
breakeven weight increase (\$27.20/\$70 per lb.)	39 lbs
Estimated success of AI pregnancies	50%
Cost per cow for each AI-sired calf	54.40

System 4 Select Sync System

	Dollars per head
1 PGF	3.50
1 GNRH	4.40
2 8 chute trips (80% of treated cows AI'd)	2.80
semen cost	12.00
8 days heat check	1.60
breeder/technician charge	4.00
total	28.30
breakeven weight increase (\$28.30/\$70 per lb.)	40 lbs.
Estimated success of AI pregnancies	60%
Cost per cow for each AI-sired calf	47.16

Again, recall these values will be different (drugs, labor, and/or success rates) based on many factors including such things as cow condition, heat detection experience, breeder/technician expertise, the weather, and other intangibles. However, it is clear a synchronization program will cost about \$30 per cow, and the value of the AI-sired calf must be about \$50 greater to make these programs pay for themselves. In many cases this will be a good investment, particularly when replacement heifers are being produced. It's also clear that experience, good management, the availability of qualified AI technicians, and good handling facilities are necessary for success.

Statewide Search Begins For Biggest Trees In Pa.

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Where are the biggest trees in Pennsylvania?

A championship elm has been found in a park in Pittsburgh, and an enormous yellow-poplar, standing 136 feet tall, was found in Delaware County, outside of Philadelphia.

All across Pennsylvania residents are being asked by The Pennsylvania Forestry Association (PFA) to help locate the biggest and best trees in the state.

The search for the best specimens of Pennsylvania's native trees last took place in 1993, and since then many of the big trees have died, lost limbs or been surpassed by other trees. Now, at the beginning of a new century, PFA is reevaluating and compiling data on prospective grand champion trees and asking all Pennsylvanians to get involved. Photos and information on each championship tree will be published in PFA's millennium edition of the book, "Pennsylvania's Big Trees."

From Abies (fir) to Ulmus (elm), nominating information, instructions, and facts about past champions can be obtained by calling (800) 835-8065. Nominations are sought for each of the 106 native tree species in

Pennsylvania. The champion trees are each determined by a three-measurement point system based on the circumference, height, and average crown spread. Every nominated tree will be evaluated by a professional forester who will determine the amount of points the tree receives.


Seven years ago, the largest tree of any species was recorded in Pennsylvania in Franklin County. The tree, a huge sycamore, stood 102 feet tall with a circumference of 31 feet 1 inch, totaling 506 points. Nine of the "Big Trees of Pennsylvania" are national champions as well as state champions. The tallest of these, a balsam fir located in Adams County in 1993, stood

166 feet tall.

"There's no telling where the grand champion tree in Pennsylvania will be found," said Scott Kurtzman, president of PFA.

"Over the years, the 'Big Trees of Pennsylvania' has encouraged the interest and involvement of Pennsylvania residents from all over the state to appreciate the historic aesthetic and preservation value of the big trees of Pennsylvania," Kurtzman said.

For more information on the Big Tree Contest and how to register your big tree, call (800) 835-8065. For more information about PFA, visit The Pennsylvania Forestry Association on the web at www.paforests.org or call (800) 835-8065.



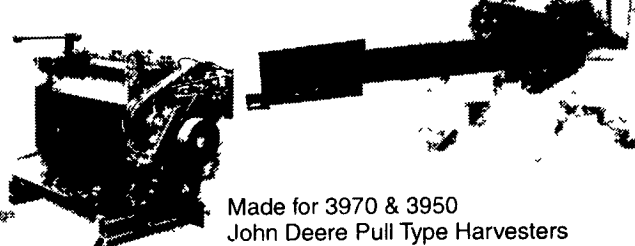
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