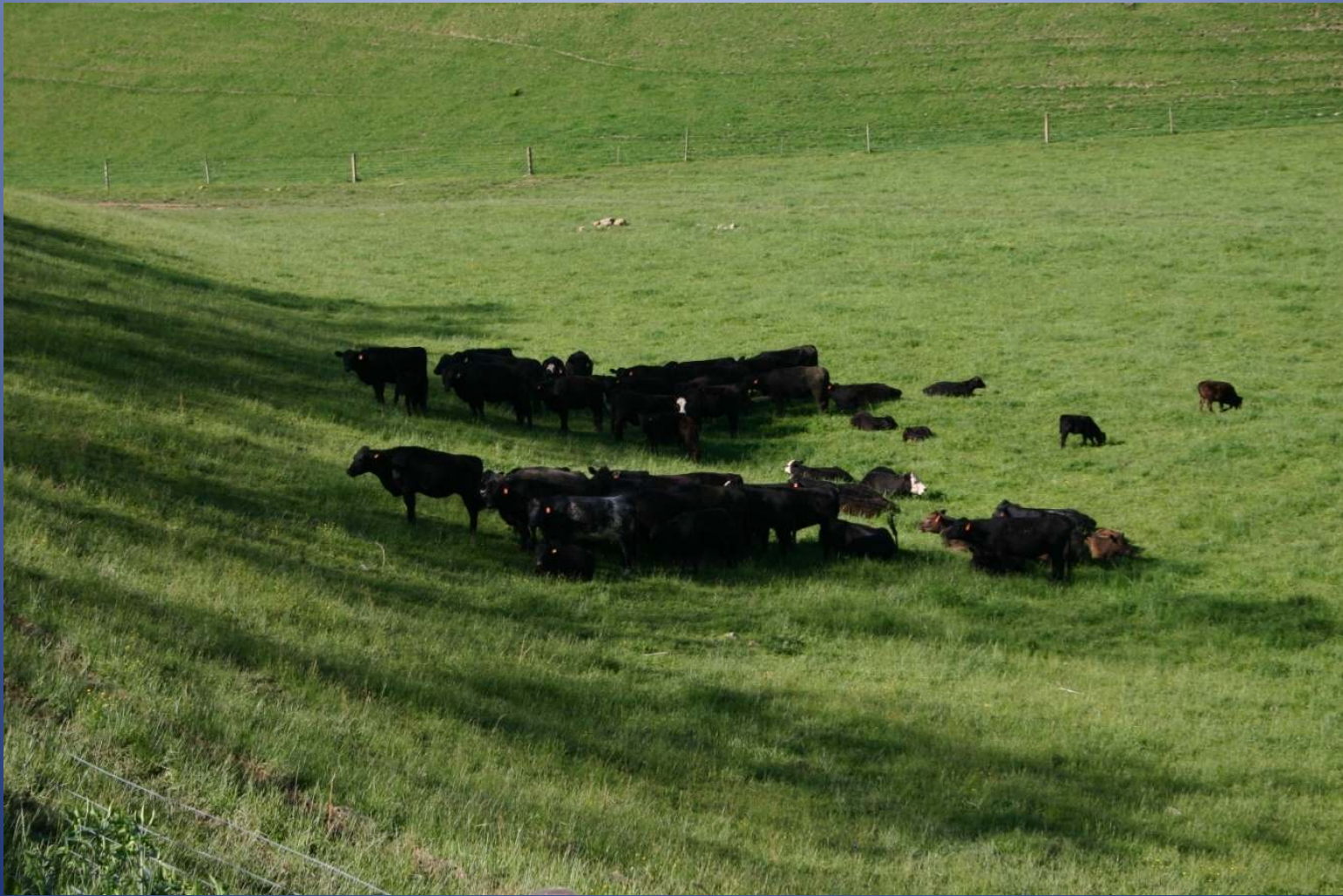




Beer Cattle Operation and Decision Making in the Mid- Atlantic

John F. Currin DVM Dipl ABVP
Associate Clinical Instructor
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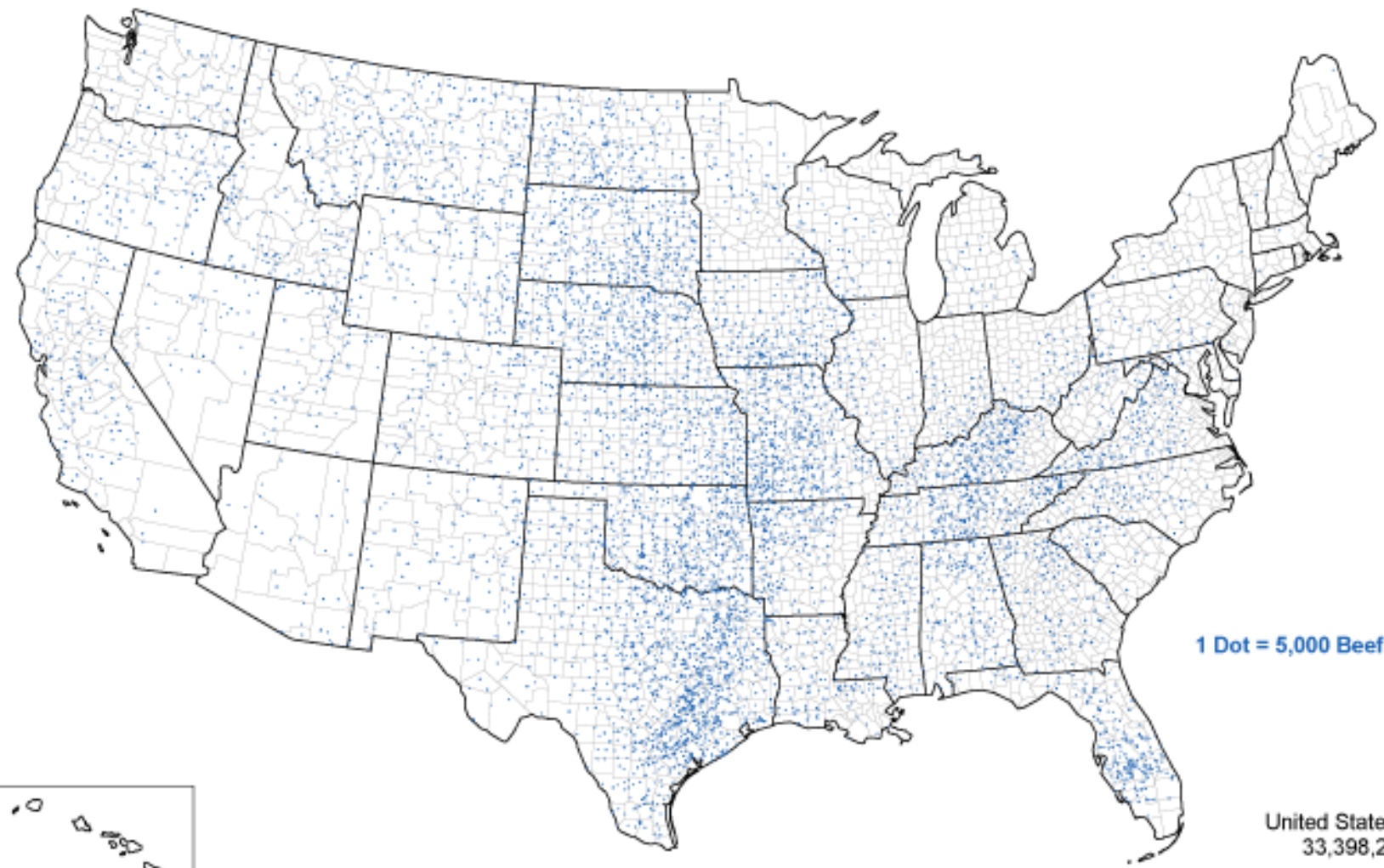




Beef



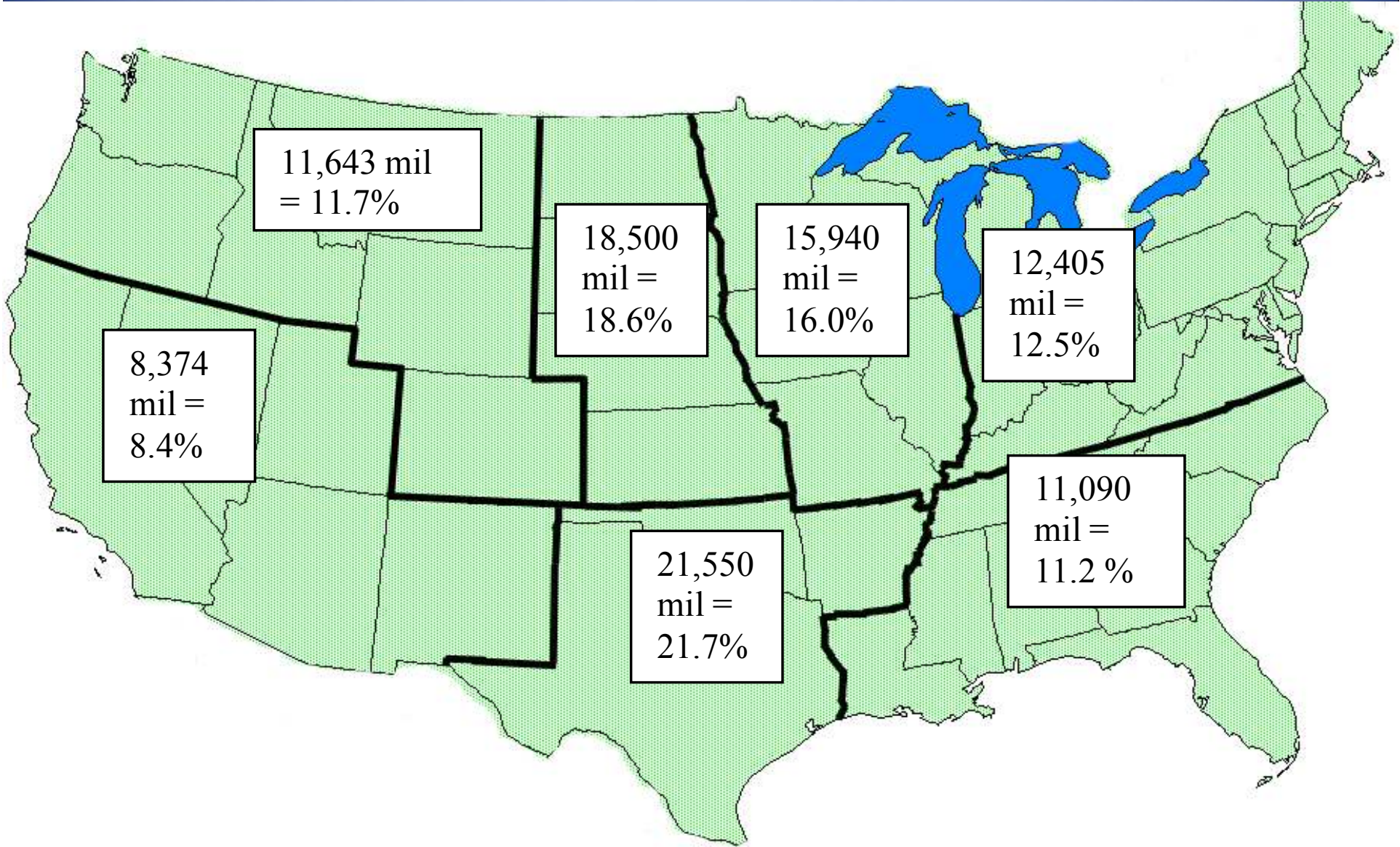
Beef Cows - Inventory: 2002



1 Dot = 5,000 Beef Cows

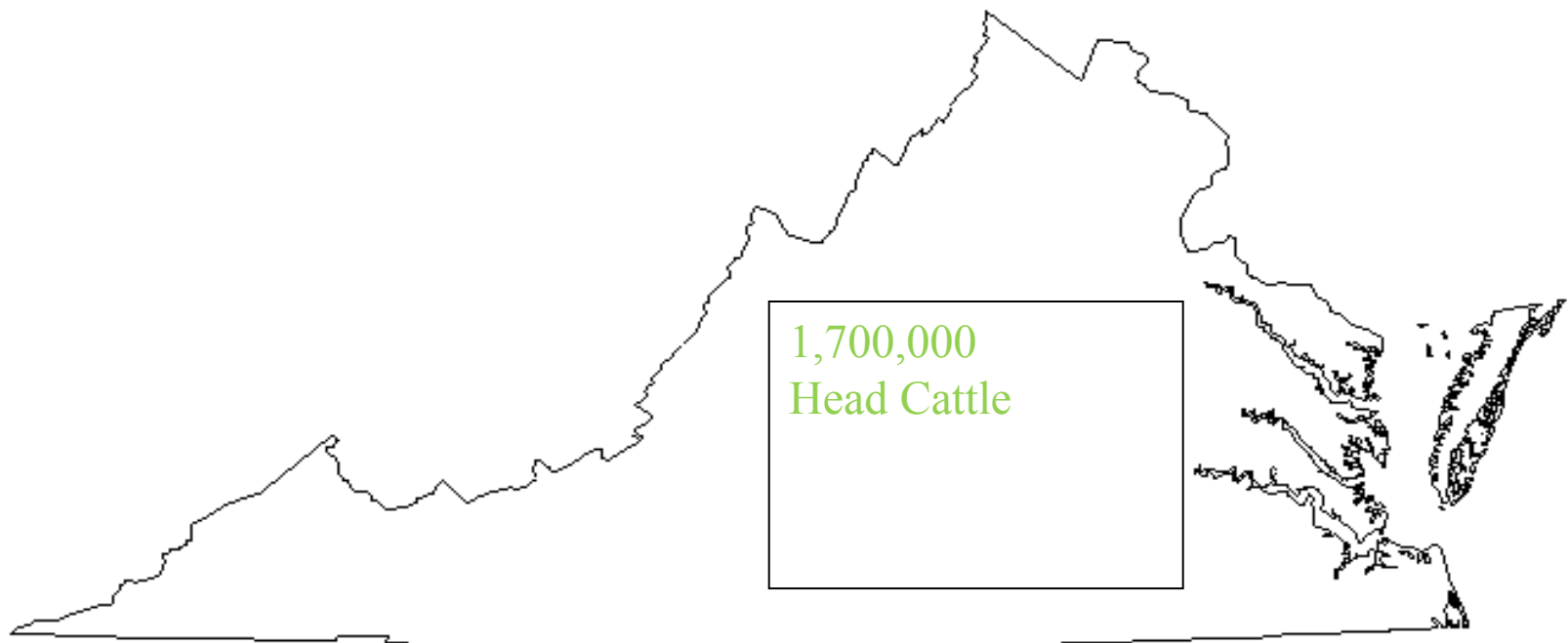
United States Total
33,398,271





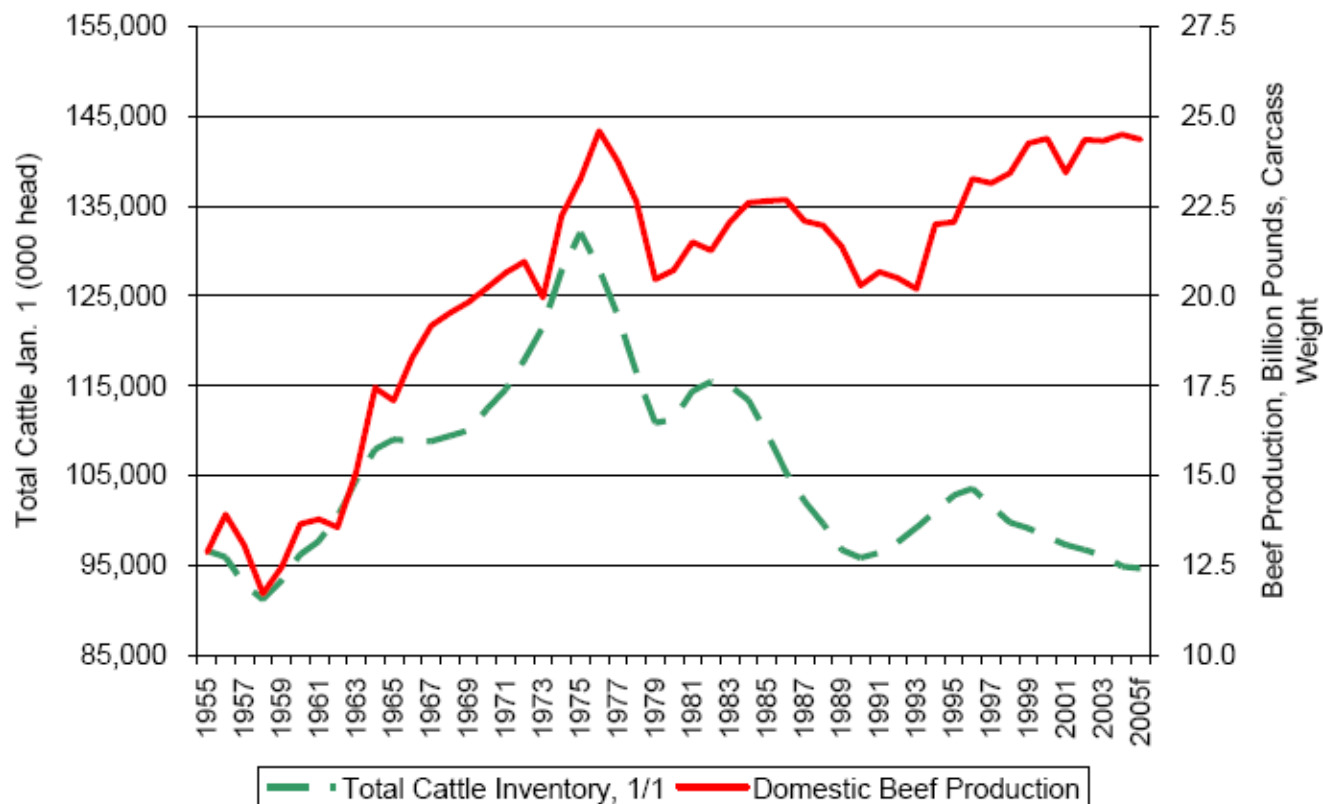
750,000 mama beef cows

Average size farm 30 mama beef cows

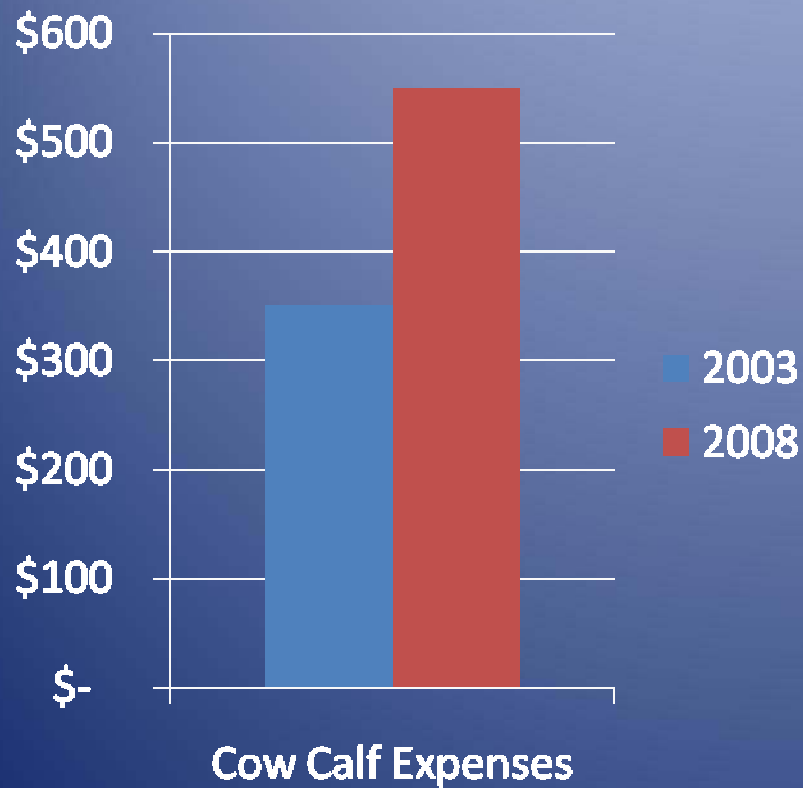


Beef Cattle Efficiency Improvement

Domestic Beef Production and Jan. 1 Total Cattle Inventory



Beef Cattle Expenses



Types of Beef Cattle Operations

- Cow-Calf
- Stocker, Grower, Backgrounder
- Feedlot

Beef Cattle Production

Cow/Calf
- Small to Large Units (1's to 100's)
- Very diverse
- Forage Based

3-700 lb. weaned calf

550-750 lb
calf

Grower
- Medium units (10's to 100's)
- Stockers (graze)
- Backgrounders (harvested feeds)
-

600-1000 lb
Feeder

Feedlot
- Large Units (100's-100,000)
- High concentrate rations
- Intensive management
- PA

Beef Cattle Production - Cow/Calf



Beef Cattle Production - Cow/Calf

Land Requirements

2-5 acres per cow calf pair for grazing

0.5-1 acre for hay production

Little or no grain fed



Beef Cattle Production

Life and production cycle: **Cow/Calf Operations**

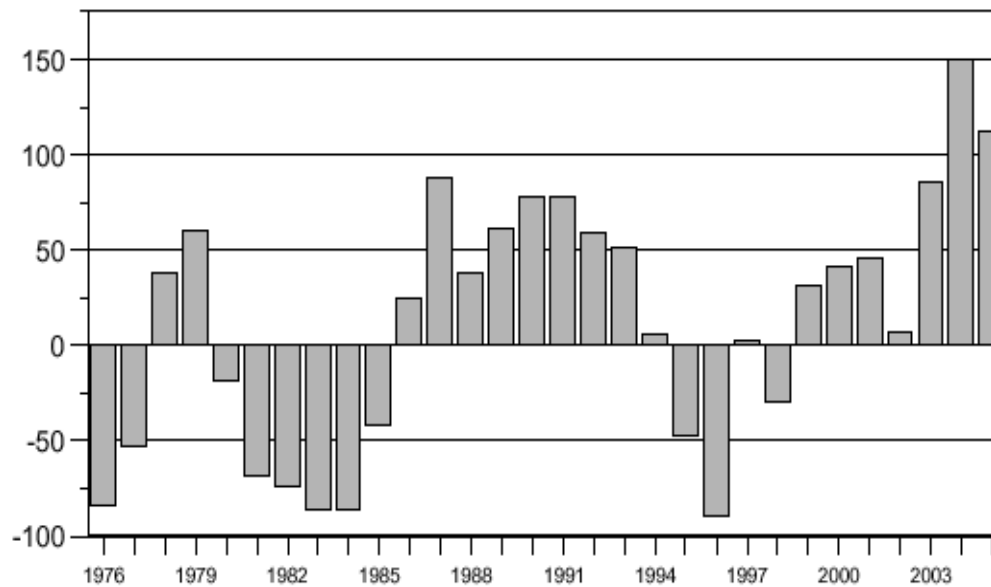
- “Housing” is usually in pastures or wintering outside lots. Rarely housing during very severe winter conditions or temporarily at calving.

Cow-Calf Profitability

ESTIMATED AVERAGE COW-CALF RETURNS

Returns Over Cash Costs (Includes Pasture Rent), Annual

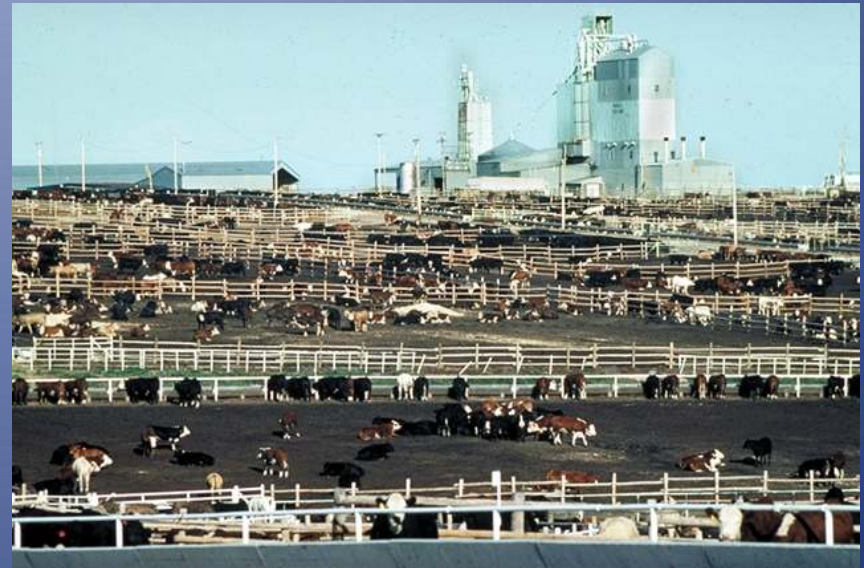
\$ Per Cow



Beef Cattle Production - Stocker



Beef Cattle Production - Feedlot



Types of Farm Owners

- Full Time
 - Small percentage of farmers
 - Requires large number of cattle
 - Cow-calf 300+
 - Stocker 500+

Types of Farm Owners

- Part-time
 1. Habit
 2. Supplemental Income
 3. Lifestyle

Motivation of Farm Owners

- Full-time
 - Profitability (productivity)
- Habit
 - Various
- Supplemental Income
 - Profitability (productivity)
- Lifestyle
 - hobby

Economic Factors Facing Beef Cattle Farmers

- Unprecedented rises in input costs
- Economic slowdown resulting lowered demand
- 10%-20% reduction in in prices

Rented land

- Land is main capital expense
- Beef cattle farming provides a low return on assets
- Renting land provides a cheaper alternative to owning
 - In most of Virginia it is impossible to pay for land by farming beef cattle

Rented land

Land owner

- Maintain land in the family
- Farmers who no longer can or want to farm
- Reduce land taxes
- May be tied to land or removed by 1 or more generations
- Very low ROA

Renter

- Contracts run from 6 months to 10 years
- Capital improvements are almost impossible to justify





Why farmers participate in programs to limit access to waterways

1. Other benefits provided by government programs
 - water in a new location, cross fencing, etc
2. Concern that regulations will eventually require limiting cattle access
3. Environmental concerns









Why farmers do not participate in programs to limit access to waterways

1. Loss of dependable, maintenance free water source
2. Lack of knowledge of government program
3. Desire to not let the government tell them what to do
4. Aggravation of jumping through hoops of government programs



Questions