

# Stairway to Marketing Value-Added Feeder Cattle

Increased Value \$\$\$

Age and Source Verified with Tags

Weaned 45 Days

Bunk Broke, Weaned

VIP Plus

Dehorned, Castrated, VIP Shots

Right Off the Cow

The terms value-added and premium are used often and sometimes out of context in the cattle industry. To add to the confusion, some feeder cattle are discounted, leaving cow/calf producers wondering what they did wrong. To help clarify what value-added means, CENTRAL LIVESTOCK developed an easy guide called the Stairway to Marketing Value-Added Feeder Cattle.

**The key to successfully marketing value-added feeder cattle, and maximizing your value added potential, is to complete each step indicated below before moving onto the next one.**

**STEP 1 - RIGHT OFF THE COW:** This is the first step in the stairway to marketing feeder cattle. The calf is simply taken right off the cow and sent to the auction market. No vaccination or back grounding is performed on the calf.

**STEP 2- DEHORND. CASTRATED. VIP SHOTS:** The calf is dehorned, castrated (preferably by knife) and given one round of VIP shots. VIP stands for Vaccination Identification Program, and includes CENTRAL LIVESTOCK's recommendations for preconditioning. Recommended shots include: a combination virus vaccination for IBR, BVD, P13, BRSV; Clostridials, typically a seven-way (may contain Haemophilus); and the Pasteurellas. Dewormer (injectable or pour on) is also recommended.

**STEP 3 - VIP PLUS:** The third step is really where the completion of previous steps come into play. To qualify for VIP Plus, the calf must be boosted at least three weeks prior to sale date with a virus, Clostridial and Pasteurella product. Along with that, the VIP Report Card can either be certified by the producer or the veterinarian. The calf can also be Beef Quality Assurance (BOA) certified.

**STEP 4 - BUNK BROKE. WEANED:** The calf has been dehorned, castrated, dewormed, given two rounds of shots and is now completely weaned from the cow. There are various types of weaning, and it is at the producer's discretion to choose which type. Now that the calf is completely segregated from the cow, the calf eats a ration on its own from a bunk. Once the calf is fully eating this ration, the calf is considered bunk broke.

**STEP 5- WEANED 45 DAYS:** The calf has been dehorned, castrated, dewormed, given two rounds of shots, bunk broke and is now completely weaned from the cow for 45 days.

**STEP 6 - AGE AND SOURCE VERIFIED WITH TAGS:** The calf has been dehorned, castrated, dewormed, given two rounds of shots, bunk broke and is now completely weaned from the cow for 45 days. The producer selects an age and source program, also referred to as a USDA Process Verified Program (PVP). Common PVP providers include: AgInfoLink, IMI Global and Micro Beef Technologies. The producer must comply with all of the guidelines, paper work and proper tagging of the particular PVP. The PVP information **MUST** be sent with the cattle on sale day. If all of the qualifications are not met properly, the calf will not qualify for the PVP. Furthermore, the producer cannot say, the calf can qualify for a PVP. When sale day comes, the calf either is or is not age and source verified.

In preparation for calving season, and throughout the year to marketing time, keep this Stairway to Marketing Value-Added Feeder Cattle in mind. Also contact your CENTRAL LIVESTOCK field representative to help you develop a solid marketing strategy.

