



## SUCCESS STORY

# Farm Management

David Appelman, Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Agent  
Bracken County Cooperative Extension Service



Very few beef producers record or measure performance or production information from their herd. Without this information, informed and evaluated decisions are difficult to make.

To help beef producers in Bracken County start collecting data, a scale was purchased to be used in educational programs. Farmers can request that the agriculture agent bring the scale to their farm to weigh calves to evaluate weaning weights, or rate of gain to determine if feed programs are meeting expectations. It will also show the effects of calving dates on growth.

The first farmer to participate in the program found that the biggest difference in calf weights was determined by calving date. He is now making plans for the next breeding season to synchronize the herd using MGA to get cows bred earlier and avoid later birth dates. Also, two calves born early showed less growth, thereby showing those cows may not have the milking ability or growth compared to the other cows in the herd.

With this new information, the producer will now be able to make informed decisions regarding breeding and culling along with the possibility of adding artificial insemination to his breeding program to gain better genetics for future herd replacements.