



Érimax Farm Inc.





Feeding Strategies



Érimax Farm Inc.

- Property of Serge Leblond
 - Son of dairy farmers
- Started in beef production in fall 2002
- Cow-calf producer with minimal infrastructure
 - 120 cows
 - Gelbvieh, Angus and Simmental x Charolais
 - Calves sold as backgrounders
- Objective: increase the breeding stock to 200 cows

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- 2017 brought a lot of changes:
 - Loss of 300 rented acres
 - Purchased new land
 - Land clearing
- 630 acres in 2017 vs 300 acres in 2018
 - The potential yield of crops must be maximised
 - Use of tile-draining, lime, fertilizers, and certain cultivated species
 - Herd and field management is a priority!

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- Upgrading to no-till techniques
 - Frost seeding
- Forage mixtures with red clover and timothy
- Intensive pasture management
- Use of custom work
 - Seeding and harvesting corn silage (40 acres)



Winter Feeding

- Self-serve corn silage system at a heap silo
 - 2 heap silos of 50 x 100 feet
 - Rationing with an electric wire
 - The less dominant animals have no problem with access
 - Animals adapt to the system... and find tricks!
 - Animals have free choice access to straw

Self-serve corn silage system at a heap silo



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Winter Feeding

- Self-serve corn silage system at a heap silo
- Need to bring down/rotate new material daily
 - More than once a day during very cold weather due to ice creation
- Heap silo acts as a windbreak
- Feeding at a heap silo is possible until the last frost in spring
 - After thawing, grass silage bales are fed on a concrete platform

Animals have unlimited/free-choice access to straw



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Winter Feeding

- Animals have unlimited/free-choice access to straw
 - What is wasted becomes their bedding
 - The large amount of left-over bedding acts like a sponge in the spring
 - Excellent retention of liquids during the spring thaw
 - With cereal rotations, it becomes necessary to bury the straw to return organic matter to the soil
 - Less availability on the market
 - Win-win strategy: trade manure for straw

Summer Feeding

- Intensive management of pastures
 - Rotational grazing varying from 1 day to 6 days per paddock
 - Grazing from mid-May to November
 - Free-choice salt and minerals
 - Water available all the time

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- The feeding strategies used allowed the following results for the calves born in 2016:
 - Average age at weaning: 240 days
 - Average actual weight at weaning: 679,5 pounds
 - Actual ADG prior to weaning: 2.47 lb/day
 - Calves mortality rate prior to weaning: 4.9 %



Questions?