

## UNIT : THE BEEF COW – BODY CONDITION AND CONDITION SCORING

### STAFF

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Unit is to introduce the role of body condition scoring in the management of beef cows.

On completion of the Unit students will be able to describe the body condition scoring technique and identify target condition scores at key stages in the production cycle.

### KEY WORDS

#### ASSESSMENT OF BODY CONDITION SCORE

- Tail head
- Loin
- Ribs

#### KEY REASONS FOR MANAGING BODY CONDITION

Aim is to ensure cows :

- are not too fat at calving
- produce as much milk as possible
- are fit enough to get back in calf quickly
- put on weight and condition when the cheapest feed is available (usually grazed grass)
- use body condition to reduce expensive feeding costs (especially in winter)

#### KEY TARGET PERIODS

- Calving
- Service
- Turnout
- Housing

## RESOURCES

Defra (2001) Condition Scoring of Beef Suckler Cows and Heifers

HCC (2007) Making the Most of your Suckler Cows

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

*Activity based on Target Recognition*