

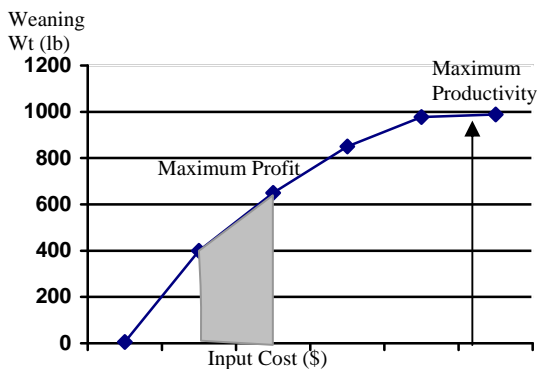
Optimum Production Vs. Maximum Production

Producers have a tendency to focus on measured traits to evaluate their production systems without looking at the whole picture. For example we tend to strive for maximum weaning weights in order to maximum profit. However, there are many other traits or functions for the beef herd that are adversely affected and may decrease profit if weaning weights are maximized. Likewise, too few pounds of calf at weaning can adversely affect other traits and functions of the beef herd. Maximum production does not accurately predict profit.

Too Few Pounds	Problem	Too Many Pounds	Problem
Low sale Weight	Fewer Dollars	Heavy Birth Weight	Higher calf losses; longer to rebreeding
More days to slaughter weight	Higher gain cost, poor feed efficiency	Heavy Mature Cow Weight	Higher Maintenance feed cost: Loss of Maternal Traits
Light Carcass Weight	Overhead cost per lb of carcass too high for packer	Too High Milk Production (weaning weight)	Higher Maintenance feed cost: Loss of Maternal Traits
Light Weight Replacement Heifers	Will not calve at 24 months of age	Heavy Carcass Weight	Size of cuts too big: loss of consumer acceptability

Taylor, Rober E. and Field, Thomas G. 1999. Beef Production and Management Decisions

Figure 1. Maximum Profitability and Maximum production for average weaning weights of calves (5-9 months of age).



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Producers can find optimum production by evaluating both financial statements and production data. Optimums are found by having sustained low breakeven prices and net profit.