

Why Vaccinate Adult Beef Cows? ¹

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Only a few of the diseases we vaccinate adult cows against actually cause death. In Florida, to protect adult cows against death, we generally vaccinate for Redwater (*Clostridium haemolyticum*). Occasionally, but not often, adult cows die of other diseases that they could have been vaccinated against.

We don't vaccinate adult cows only to raise the resistance to a particular disease to ensure survival. We also vaccinate to raise the resistance to certain diseases to enhance reproduction; protect the fetus (unborn calf); protect the new-born calf during its first 3 to 4 months of life (via fortified colostrum); and provide a barrier to prevent diseases from being introduced into the herd or reduce the spread of a disease once it has been introduced (Table 1).

If you choose to vaccinate adult cows for survival only, then gather the cows, run them through the chute, give them one injection, and turn them out.

If you choose to vaccinate adult cows for survival, enhance reproduction, and protect the fetus (unborn calf), gather the cows, run them through the chute, and give them three injections. But with a total of only three injections we could also vaccinate the adult cows to provide a barrier against introduction of

most infectious diseases (Figure 1). By doing so, you would also be vaccinating the cow for survival, enhancement of reproduction, protection of the fetus, and protection of the new-born calf via colostrum.

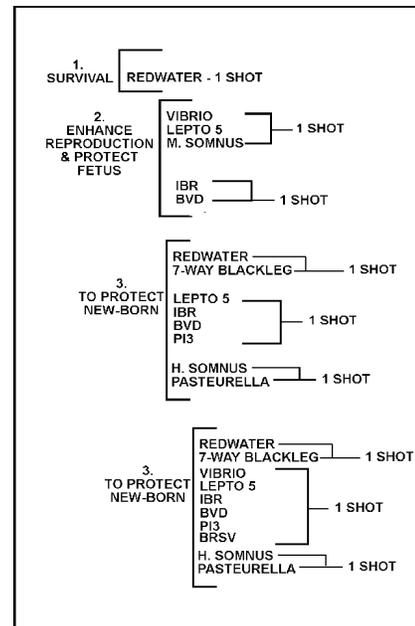


Figure 1.

Don't waste that gathering and trip through the chute; vaccinate them properly.

1. This document is VM54, one of a series of the Veterinary Medicine-Large Animal Clinical Sciences Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Original publication date December 1994. Reviewed May 2003. Visit the EDIS Web Site at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.
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Vaccinating adult cows for Redwater, 7-Way Blackleg, Vibriosis, Leptospirosis, Hemophilus somnus, Pasteurellosis, Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis (IBR), Bovine Virus Diarrhea (BVD), Para-Influenza Type 3 Virus (PI₃), and Bovine Respiratory Syncytial Virus (BRSV) creates an umbrella of protection that is needed in most beef herds in Florida (Figure 2).

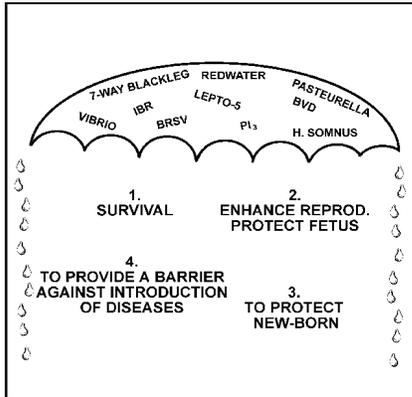


Figure 2.

Also keep in mind that prolonged use of a vaccine will not only raise the resistance of the herd to a particular disease but will also eventually reduce the challenge of that disease. The reason is simple: after a prolonged use of a vaccine against a particular disease, you will not have a susceptible herd for the disease to propagate within; thus the challenge is reduced (Figure 3).

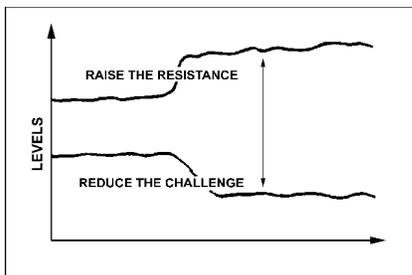


Figure 3.

Table 1.

<p>Table 1. Four reasons to vaccinate adult cows and what to vaccinate against.</p>			
1.Survival	2.Enhance Reprod. Protect Fetus	3.To Protect New-Born	4.To Provide a Barrier
Redwater	Vibrio Lepto 5 IBR BVD H. Somnus Bang's AV*	Redwater 7-way-Blackleg Lepto 5 IBR BVD PI ₃ H. Somnus Pasteurella	Redwater 7-way-Blackleg Vibrio Lepto 5 IBR BVD PI ₃ BRSV H. Somnus Pastuerella Bang's AV*
<p>*Brucellosis vaccination of adult cows. Administered by a USDA or Florida Dept. fo Agriculture veterinarian to enhance eradication of Bang's from an infected herd or prevent introduction of Bang's into a "high risk" herd.</p>			