

Survey of the cattle health and production record-keeping methods and opinions of U.S. cow-calf producers

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Introduction

The objective of this study was to describe characteristics of U.S. cow-calf producers who use cattle health and production records (CHPR).

Materials and methods

We anonymously surveyed 14,294 cow-calf producers across the U.S. Multivariable logistic regression by manual forward selection was used to test demographic factors for association with record-keeping outcomes.

Results

A total of 3,741 (26%) responses were received, with 3,641 (97%) respondents actively involved in cow-calf production. Of these, 87% maintained some form of CHPR. Handwritten records were kept by 62%, and electronic CHPR were kept by 37%. Of respondents who kept CHPR, 56% said understanding currently available CHPR software was a challenge. Factors associated with keeping some form of CHPR were seedstock production (OR = 5.0, 95% C.I. = 3.6, 7.2; compared to no seedstock involvement), age ≥ 64 years (OR = 1.7, 95% C.I. = 1.4, 2.1; compared to age ≥ 65 years), female (OR = 1.7, 95% C.I. = 1.2, 2.5; compared to male), cow-calf operation is primary income source (OR = 1.5,

95% C.I. = 1.2, 1.9; compared to other primary income source), and education (Bachelor's degree or less: OR = 1.1, 95% C.I. = 0.8, 1.4; post-graduate/professional degree: OR = 1.8, 95% C.I. = 1.2, 2.5; compared to high-school diploma or less). Characteristics of producers who found CHPR software challenging to understand were education (High-school diploma or less: OR = 2.0, 95% C.I. = 1.5, 2.6; Bachelor's degree or less: OR = 1.3, 95% C.I. = 1.1, 1.6; compared to professional/post-graduate degree), age ≤ 64 years (OR = 1.5, 95% C.I. = 1.3, 1.8; compared to age ≥ 65 years), no involvement in seedstock production (OR = 1.4, 95% C.I. = 1.2, 1.7; compared to seedstock production).

Significance

Operation type, producer age and sex, level of education, and income source are associated with U.S. cow-calf producer use of CHPR.

