

Southland Elk/Wapiti Advance Party

Delaying Yearling Kill Date to Improve Profitability

Background:

With our group members running wapiti and/or hybrid finishing stock a large proportion of the male yearlings have comfortably reached slaughter rates in the spring (Sept-Oct)

But would there be an advantage in holding these animals longer to achieve even heavier weights?



Delaying Yearling Kill Date to Improve Profitability

Thought Process; Factors to Consider:

➤ Advantages

- Heavier weight; more venison
- More velvet
- Opportunity to assess velvet to assist selection of animals to retain for velvet herd

➤ Disadvantages

- More feed required
- Potential drop in schedule



What was Done?

- Two Properties:
- Farm A: Animals ready for slaughter on 10th Oct were held until 20th Nov
- Farm B: Animals ready for slaughter 5th Oct were held until 26th Oct
- Assumptions made:
 - Carcass yield; 56%
 - Pasture consumed; 3kg DM/head/day
 - Feed cost; 20c/kgDM



Results: Farm A (40 day delay)

Animals increased LWT by 21 kg but schedule dropped by 75c/kg

10/10/15: 107kg LWT x .56 yield x \$8.75 = \$524/head
(predicted)

20/11/15: 128kg LWT x .56 yield x \$8.00 = \$573/head
(actual)

Difference; \$49/head

Add: spiker velvet return; + \$54/head

Less: cost of additional feed; - \$24/head

Nett Benefit: \$79/head





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