

Mineral supplement can have a big return on investment

From Marty Morgan, Talley Ranch Manager and Vigortone Dealer, April 2005

"I have been preaching this for years to my fellow Ranchers, heck even my Dad. Granted it takes a great quality mineral, but I have proved it over and over that it will put 30-40 extra pounds on your calves, Increase breed back and calving rate by 5-10%, decrease calf morbidity to less than a half percent. And it all but eliminated my vet and medicine bills. What is the secret? Quality Minerals, Formulation, and Consumption!! Salt incorporated in feed is a limiter, but in the case of minerals it also gets them to eat the bad tasting stuff. So get rid of your salt blocks and get some great mineral with 18-20 percent salt in it and medicated if you're having disease problems. You will like the dividends it pays!"

From Dr. Jeffery Hall, Head of the toxicology lab for the Utah Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory. 2018

If you can help your clients understand mineral problems and correct them, you should unlock significant improvements in performance, reproduction and potential profit. Depending on severity of mineral problems and money spent to correct them, the return on investment can be five to one or slightly higher, Hall says.

Dr. Hall says based on thousands of samples from across the U.S. that come through his lab each year, the most common mineral deficiencies in beef cattle are:

Copper -- 60-70%	Selenium -- 10-70%	Vitamin E -- seasonal or drought-related
Vitamin A -- seasonal or drought-related	Zinc -- 2 – 10% or drought related	

Here are three examples of why the return can be significant.

1. Correcting mild deficiencies can improve reproduction, decreasing open cows by 2-4%. Correcting severe deficiencies can decrease the number of open cows by 5-15%.
2. Improvements in neonatal calf health from correcting these common mineral deficiencies can include more saleable calves, less sickness, less labor expense and less medicinal expense. Improvements in the health of young calves can include less summer pneumonia, fewer weaning health issues and improved vaccine efficacy.
3. Weight gain improvements in a cow-calf operation can be 20-35 pounds per calf when correcting minor deficiencies, and 50 pounds or more when correcting major deficiencies.

These are particularly good numbers to remember when newly supplemented cattle that have been deficient, are eating the producer out of house and home and trying to get caught up from their mineral deficiency. It may seem horribly expensive at the time, but consumption will drop to normal when their bodies are recharged.