



Program Requirements, Recommendations & Resources 2026-2027



UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
EXTENSION



Department of Animal and Dairy Science
College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences
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2026-2027 Program Timeline:

Program Registration Deadline:	November 4, 2026
Program Orientation:	November 6, 2026
Online Module Completion:	December 11, 2026
Live Animal Declaration: Participants must begin primary care of animals by this date	December 18, 2026
Record book Submission: Send to: Junior Herd Builder Program Attn: Dylan Davis 25 River Rd., Athens, GA 30602	June 25, 2027
Herd Evaluation & Awards: *during Georgia Cattlemen's Beef Futurity Georgia National Fairgrounds Perry, GA	July 2, 2027*

Resources:

[UGA Basic Balancer](#)

The UGA Basic Balancer is an interactive Excel Spreadsheet that allows the user to input original information to create a personalized diet including available resources.

[UGA Beef Management Calendar](#)

The UGA Beef Management Calendar is a comprehensive calendar that gives helpful tips and reminders of all aspects of beef production.

[Estrus Synchronization Calculator](#)

The Estrus Synchronization Calculator is an interactive platform that allows the user to determine individual and overall cost and labor of estrus synchronization.

REQUIRED VS. RECOMMENDED

One of the most important things to understand about this program is the difference between program requirements and program recommendations. There is no single "right" project. Your project does not have to look like another participant's project. There is no required breed, breeding method, feeding program, facility setup, record-book format, or management style beyond the stated program requirements. Recommendations provided by are intended to give participants a starting point.

Record Keeping: There is no required record-book template. Participants may use a commercially available cattle record-keeping system, a digital record-keeping system, a spreadsheet, or any other organized method that allows you to document and explain your project



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Heifer Selection: The program recommends heifers of similar age and genetics because this makes it easier to manage and compare a pen through the production cycle. The program also provides suggested spring and fall heifer age windows to help participants select cattle that are at a useful stage of development when the project begins. These suggested age windows are recommendations, not requirements.

Heifer Ownership: Participants are not required to purchase heifers for the program, they may buy, lease, borrow from family, etc. as long as the participant assumes primary care and decision making for the animals.

<u>Examples to track:</u>	<u>Spring Heifers</u>	<u>Fall Heifers</u>
• Goals • Animal identification • Starting information • Expenses • Nutrition • Health care • Breeding decisions • Weights • Management activities • Lessons learned	Heifer ages: December 2025 - February 2026	Heifer ages: September-November 2025
	Heifers Weaned: August-October 2026	Heifers Weaned: April-June 2026
	Recommended Breeding Period: February-April 2027	Recommended Breeding Period: December 2026-February 2027

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

Q: Do I have to buy 3 heifers for this program?

A: No. While buying heifers is an option, heifers can be leased or borrowed as long as you are the primary caregiver during the contest.

Q: Where can I keep my heifers?

A: Your heifers can be kept wherever is best for you. School farms, neighbors/friends farm, parents farm and anywhere else you can think of.

Q: Will there be regional contest?

A: Depending on the level of participation and where the participants are from will determine if regional contest will be established.

Q: Do I have to bring my heifers to the program evaluation?

A: Yes, during the program evaluation heifers are evaluated along with your record book and presentation.

Q: Is there a format I should follow for my record book?

A: No. We do not provide a template for record books as we want this contest to be as realistic as possible. However, you are welcome to use whatever template you would like for record keeping. Some good options are Florida Beef Cattle Ranch Record Book, CattleMax, or something similar to either of these.