http://www.MSCNews.net/news/index.cfm?nk=70388

Search Engine Your Life

Wouldn't it be nice if we could just use the computer's search engine to get answers to important questions? For example, if I search, should I get married? I got three bad reasons and four good ones on why people get married. If I search, should I vaccinate my child? It tells me five important reasons to vaccinate your child. How about searching should I eat meat? Nine reasons came back on why eating meat is good for your health. I like it.

What should I feed my cattle? Raising beef cattle for dummies, cheat sheets, and cattle feed on Amazon, really?

The single largest annual input into our beef herds is forage. A cow consumes about 3% of her body weight each day. A 1200 pound cow, which is really small these days, will require 36 pounds of forage a day, regardless if she grazes it herself or you deliver it to her. Her nutritional needs increase as calving season approaches and peaks after calving. We expect her to be in good condition when calving, so she produces enough milk for the calf, recover from calving, and prepare to rebreed in 3 months. We ask quite a bit of our mama cows.

Of course, to save on costs, it's usually always cheaper if the cow harvests the forage for themselves. By the time you harvest and haul forages, you've invested a lot into that forage. If you can find some cover crops or corn stalks that you can rent, you can extend that grazing season for a few more months. There are a few farmers that think cattle on corn stalks can cause compaction. When you search on the internet you will find this:

"Sixteen years of corn residue grazing in eastern Nebraska did not result in detrimental effects on soil properties (including bulk density and penetration resistance) or crop yields. These fields had silt-clay-loam soil, were managed under no-till and were in a corn-soybean rotation. In fact, fall grazing (November to February) of corn residue improved soybean yields by 3.4 bu/ac. In a western Nebraska field managed in continuous corn, grazing corn residue for five years did not affect corn yields (148 versus 154 bu/ac, for not grazed and grazed, respectively).

A three-year study with five locations in eastern Nebraska also showed that grazing had no impact on subsequent crop yields. Three locations were managed under continuous corn with corn yields of 239 bu/ac for grazed and 223 bu/ac for ungrazed (which did not statistically differ). Two locations were in a corn-soybean rotation with soybean yields not differing between grazed (59 bu/ac) and ungrazed (62 bu/ac). During the last two years, soil penetration resistance was measured in the spring and was found to be slightly increased at two

locations. However, the increase in penetration resistance was below the threshold for impeding root growth and did not carry over into the next year."

One word of warning, when you are searching on the internet, you can get information that may not be true, shocking, I know! If you want to know what research has been done on the subject, then just type in ".edu" at the end of your search, and you will only get information from Universities and not people just trying to sell you something.