

Success is Cooperative: Regional Cattle Marketing Initiative

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Being a 'Price Taker'

Most cattle produced in Virginia come from cow-calf farms. Profitable cattle marketing involves more than just getting the highest price. It involves producing the type of calf the market desires, marketing that calf through the best outlet and at the best time. Knowing that beef cattle producers have tremendous investments in their cattle, equipment and land, not to mention their time investment in herd health, they need a way to 'market' their cattle. **The large majority of these cattle are sold at weekly scheduled sales at local livestock markets. Buyers at these markets have no prior knowledge of any of the cattle coming into the facility. Therefore, cattle producers selling cattle at these facilities are 'price takers.'** Marketing cattle via tele-auctions gives producers numerous advantages including increased competition in purchasing their cattle, direct buyer-to-seller transportation thus less stress and shrink, and reduces buyer and marketing costs.

There is **POWER** in numbers:

| | Local Sale barn | Comingle/Tele-Auction |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| # of Cattle sold | Avg. 1,200-1,800 per sale | Avg. 4,200 (4 yr average) |
| # of Potential Buyers | 10-15 | 120 |
| # of Actual Buyers | 5-6 | 40+ |

"I joined the 'Regional Cattle Marketing Initiative' three years ago. We were marketing our cattle through feeder sales at the local market. Since learning about the program, we have started focusing on genetics, feed and improving health in our herd. Her hard work and dedication has made us better beef producers."
~2025 Participant



Cooperate, Comingle, Market

Success for a multi-producer feeder calf program demand cooperation. Led by VCE Pittsylvania County - ANR/Animal Science agent, annual producer meetings were scheduled and educational material was developed. Resources on feeding weaned cattle, vaccination technique and specific protocols were distributed. All resources aligned directly with the Virginia Beef Quality Assurance program and the existing Virginia Quality Assured program. Partnerships with Central Virginia Cattlemen's Association, Virginia Cattle Company, Virginia Department of Consumer Services, and VCE-Pittsylvania County were utilized to facilitate information and processes. The agent conducted individual farm visits to evaluate cattle and assist with vaccination protocols. The agent coordinated with aforementioned parties to conduct on the farm evaluation and grading of all cattle. Calves are grouped, marketed to hundreds of feeder buyers and sold based on weight and comingled at load out.

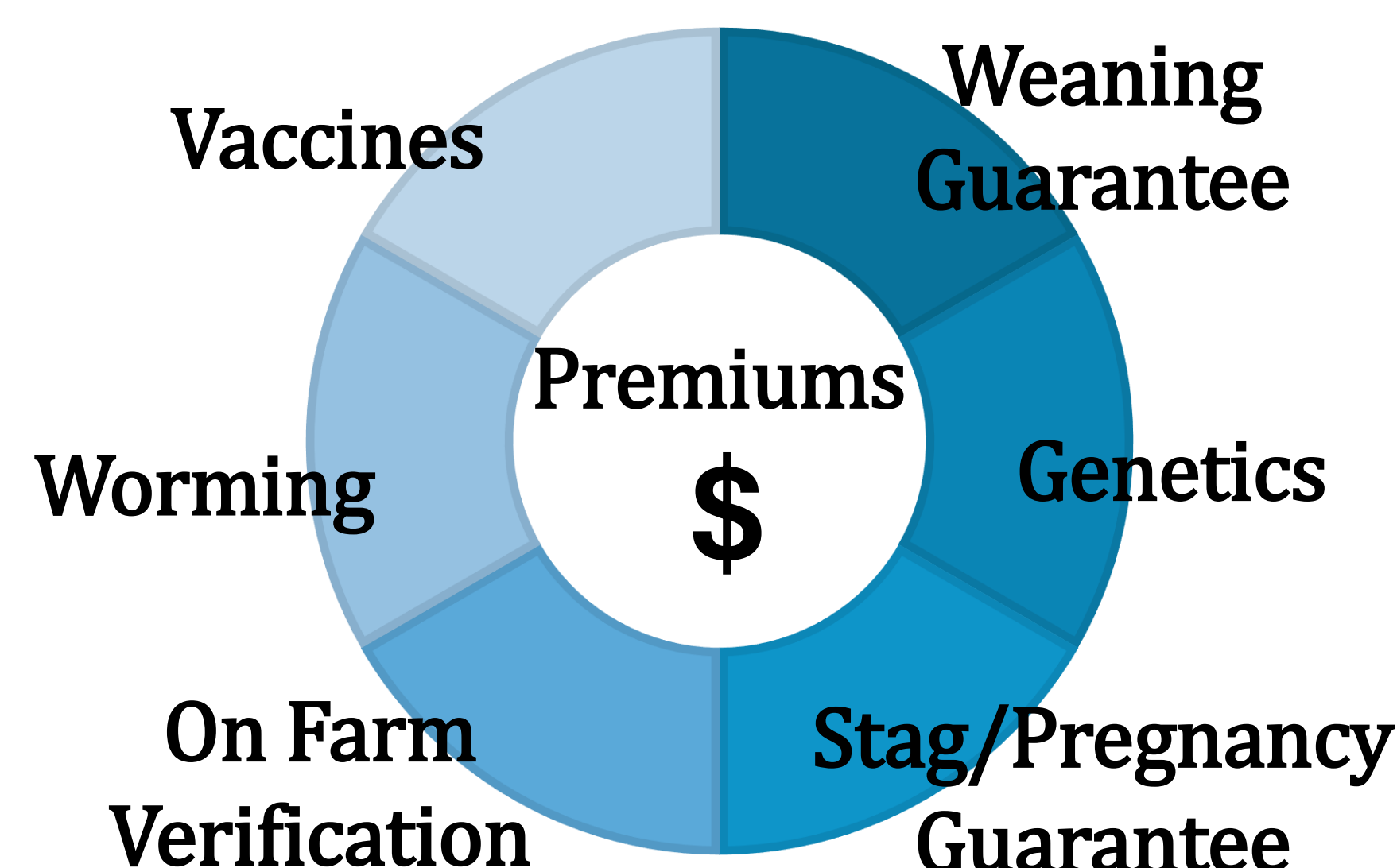
What does it mean to Co-mingle cattle?

Multiple producers with like type and kind cattle, grouping and selling their calves together, working cooperatively.



Quality Guarantee

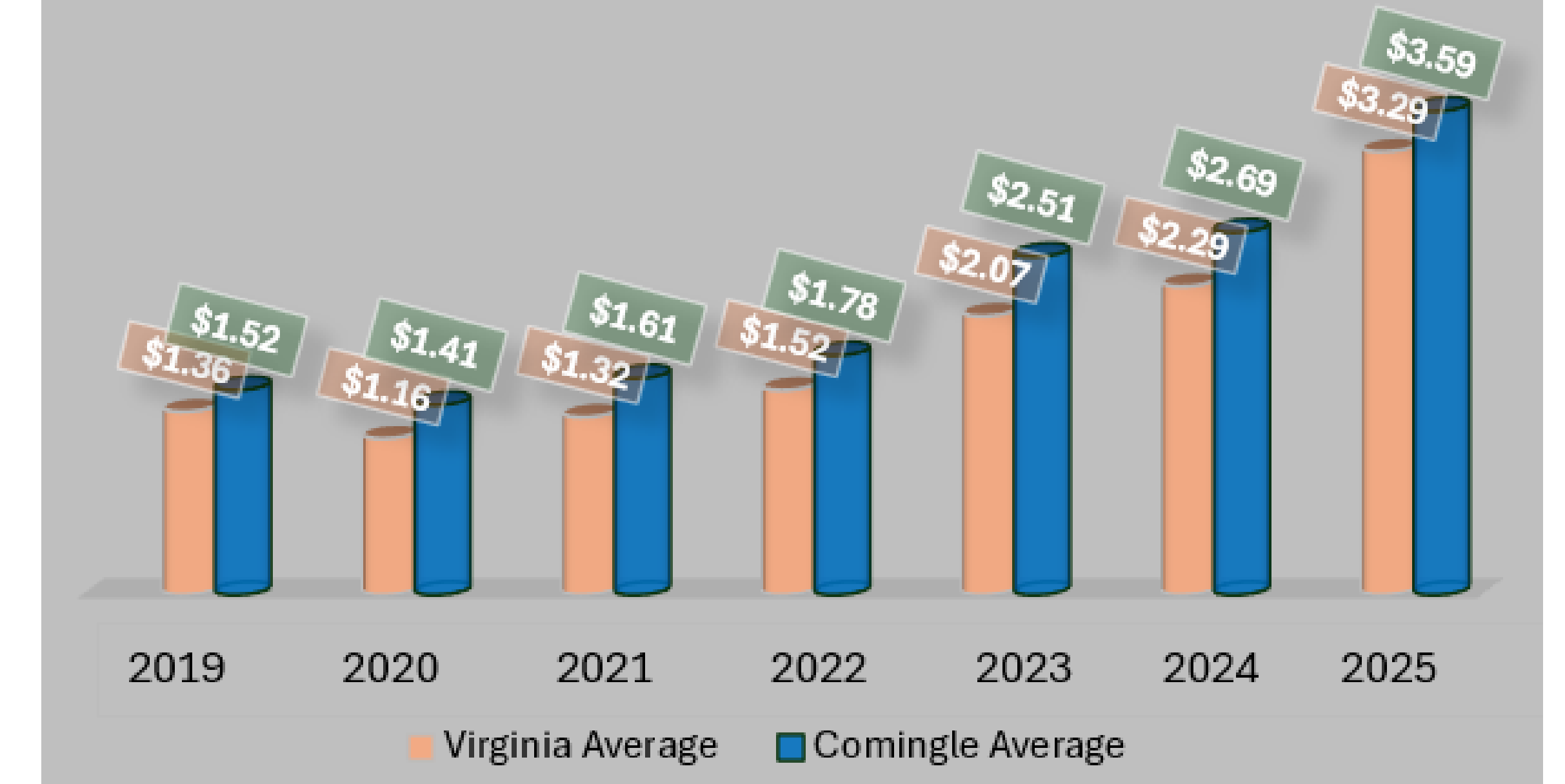
Specific protocols are required to be followed of all cattle consigners. Documentation of these practices is also required.



Marketing = Premiums

Overall producer participation, over the 7 years the sale has been in existence has increased from 14 to 32 producers (7 counties represented). The number of cattle consigned and sold in 2019 was 590 head and in 2025 that number was up to 2800 head. The total amount of premiums generated by this sale was over the 7 year span of its existence is **over \$3.63 Million dollars**. Over the life of the program, the **premiums per producer increased 7.5 fold** and the premiums per head sold increased nearly 4 times in value. These premiums prove the success of the program and directly benefits cattlemen in the Region. In a 2025 post-sale survey, **100%** of participants stated that Extension information/guidance caused them to make a change in their production practices which directly resulted in a positive gain for their operation. Additionally, **100%** of the participants stated that they experienced greater marketability of their cattle through this Extension program.

7 YEAR PRICE COMPARISON



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**7 Years
\$3.63 Million
in Premiums.**

