**Dakota Farm Talk – Calving in Spring**

**Pam Geppert**

A growing number of ranchers are choosing to calve their cow herds in late spring, a season which mimics mother nature. Natural Resources Conservation Service Rangeland Management specialist Ryan Beer is part of a ranching family that's calving in sync with nature. Beer believes pushing calving to May and June can be part of an overall grassland management strategy.

**Ryan Beer**

Once you start managing holistically the stuff all casters tying together and snowballs to where when you start doing the one rotational grazing, then it seems like it makes sense to maybe start doing the calving out there with nature. Let the cows do their own thing.

**Pam Geppert**

Calving a late spring often spurs healthier calves, which avoid the stress of snow and mud that may be common with earlier calving dates. Winter feed costs diminish with late spring calving as cows don't hit their peak nutritional needs until green grasses become available. Beer believes cows mother up well on late spring pasture and breed back can be enhanced due to a higher plane of nutrition.

He says ranchers considering late spring calving need to consider its impact on marketing.

**Ryan Beer**

We're selling more calves because we're able to save more of them and sometimes the market's even a little bit better during that time frame. I know many producers who went to make calving to keep their calves over for the year to grandma's yearly and for the next year which can then aid in their drought plan that's dry, and they have to get rid of something, you know, an option of that can get rid of their yearlings quick.

**Pam Geppert**

The South Dakota Grasslands Coalition has produced a Calving Consideration Video series which highlights both the pros and cons of late spring calving visit S.D. Grass Dot org to access the videos. I'm Pam Geppert reporting for the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Helping people help the land.