






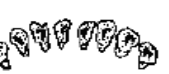


| Diagram 1. Handy guide to determining the age of cattle by the teeth | | |
|---|---------------------|---|
|  | At birth to 1 month | Two or more of the temporary incisor teeth present. Within first month, entire 8 temporary incisors appear. |
|  | 2 years | As a long-yearling, the central pair of temporary incisor teeth or pinchers is replaced by the permanent pinchers. At 2 years, the central permanent incisors attain full development. |
|  | 2-1/2 years | Permanent first intermediates, one on each side of the pinchers, are cut. Usually these are fully developed at 3 years. |
|  | 3-1/2 years | The second intermediates or laterals are cut. They are on a level with the first intermediates and begin to wear at 4 years. |
|  | 4-1/2 years | The corner teeth are replaced. At 5 years the animal usually has the full complement of incisors with the corners fully developed. |
|  | 5 to 6 years | The permanent pinchers are leveled, both pairs of intermediates are partially leveled, and the corner incisors show wear. |
|  | 7 to 10 years | At 7 or 8 years the pinchers show noticeable wear; at 8 or 9 years the middle pairs show noticeable wear; and at 10 years, the corner teeth show noticeable wear. |
|  | 12 years | After the animal passed the 6th year, the arch gradually loses its rounded contour and becomes nearly straight by the 12th year. In the meantime, the teeth gradually become triangular in shape, distinctly separated, and show progressive wearing to stubs. These conditions become more marked with increasing age. |
| Source: R.F. Johnson. The Stockman's Handbook by Ensminger, 2nd ed., page 539. | | |

Know Her Age when Making Culling Decisions

In the competitive world of today's beef industry, producers cannot afford to keep marginally productive cows when they can be replaced by more profitable females. In addition, in the face of high fertilizer prices, many producers are looking at herd reductions. One of the ingredients to selecting the cows to cull is the age of the cow. Determining the age of cows up to 5 yrs is simple and accurate. Simply put, she has two permanent incisors as a 2 year old, four as a 3 year old, 6 as a 4 year old, and a full mouth of 8 permanent incisors when she is five. After five years determination is not as accurate, but close enough for practical purposes since we don't really care how many years old she actually is as much as we care how efficiently she can graze. As she gets older the teeth wear down to be less blade shaped and more triangular and spaces start to appear between the teeth. The above chart should be helpful in learning to age your cows.

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