



SOUTH POLL NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2010

It's in the Genes...

By SPGCA President Teddy Gentry



Building a good cow herd is almost a lost art. Because of the emergence of EPDs and the misuse of the growth EPDs in particular, most breeds have got the mature size of the mama cows so big that an efficient, productive, profitable herd is not possible in the real world because of production costs.

There are just no shortcuts to building a great cow herd.

I may sound like a broken record, but fertility and longevity are still the way to profitability. Using bulls out of those cows that have never missed and relentlessly stacking these bulls into the pedigrees of our cows is the best way to ensure the success of our great breed going forward.

Pulling a cow out of production and flushing her changes the meaningful data on that cow as well as her calves - forever. If a cow is really that good, just keep using sons and daughters of hers and start linebreeding back to those bulls that are out of the cows that are ideal in their production size, udders and longevity.

Because these traits are highly heritable, we need to be patient in our pursuit of the perfect cow - one that is bred up for generations from good-uddered, good-dispositioned, efficient-sized, easy fattening, very healthy, no-excuse cows. If this is what we put into our cow herd, that's what we'll get out.

I still believe that if we stick to the simple philosophy of growing good grass the cows will sort themselves. The records on these cattle will tell us what is the most efficient shape and size for our individual farms and management systems. If you have a wonderful smorgasbord of grasses you can probably support a little heavier cow. The farther South you go, the less quality (nutrition) is in the grass and the ideal cow will probably change shape and weigh less as well.

Good records on your own herd is the best way to build a cow herd. After a number of years of breeding it should be hard to find bulls from off the farm that can compete with the best bulls raised on your own place.

Most of the time your most efficient cow will be that little cow that maybe doesn't get a lot of attention but goes about doing her job weaning about 50 or 60 percent of her body weight every year and doing it well into her teens. When you identify that little cow in your herd she will probably be the most profitable one. No, it's not rocket science, but it's good honest records, patience, a disciplined breeding program based off maternal reasons for selections and time.

By building these economic traits into our great breed we ensure a real genetic value for the efficient production of tender beef by commercial cattlemen long after we're gone.

May the profits be with you.

Teddy Gentry

Large crowd turns out for second annual field day

Over 100 people, including many from the Lone Star State, turned out on May 8 for the South Poll Grass Cattle Association's second annual meeting and field day held at the home of Tom and Toyah McGrady in Montgomery, Texas.

Speaking at the field day was Dr. Jim Sanders, professor and leader of the animal breeding and genetics section of Texas A & M University, nationally-known grazier and association vice-president Greg Judy, association president Teddy Gentry and host Tom McGrady.

Sanders spoke on the art of feed-

ing cattle and the necessity of having cattle that will
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South Poll Vice-President Greg Judy explains the art of grazing cattle to attendees of the annual field day held in Montgomery, Texas in May.

First ever South Poll auction

The first-ever South Poll auction held in Texas at the association's annual field day saw an average of \$2,140 paid for five heifers and a \$2,750 average for two yearling bulls.

Consigning heifers to the auction were J.A. Girgenti of Amite, La.; Holiday Ranch of Vernon, Fla.; Bent Tree Farms of Fort Payne, Ala. and McGrady Ranch of Montgomery, Texas; Stanley Sumners of Boaz, Ala. and Voss Land & Cattle Co. of Linn, Mo.

Buying the heifers were Paul Shanks of Belle, Mo.; Voss Land & Cattle Co., Doug Barkley of Tennessee; Marion Garber of Commerce, Texas and Nick Estrella of Mount Pleasant, Texas.

Consigning bull calves were John Lyons of Piedmont, Ala. and Bent Tree Farms and McGrady Ranch.

Buying the bulls were Greg Judy of Clark, Mo. and Voss Land & Cattle Co.

The auction brought in a total of \$16,200.



Cliff White of Florida and Bruce Shanks of Missouri look at the animals to be auctioned.



Nick Estrella of Texas and Greg Judy bid on one of the South Polls sold at the auction. Estrella is a new member of the association.

Field Day

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work with the feeding system. Gentry spoke on the need for a healthy type of food for families and McGrady gave a short history of his area. Judy spoke on the unique method of high stock density grazing that he uses and how South Polls are the type cattle he, as a grass farmer, needs to make money.

After lunch, Judy led a pasture walk and discussed the varieties of grass in the fields as well as the part they play in the nutrition of cattle.

Next year's annual meeting and field day will be held at Bent Tree Farms, the home of Teddy and Linda Gentry, in Fort Payne, Alabama. The Gentrys said they would like to make it a two-day event next year. Watch for details in future newsletters.



Tom McGrady writes plans for the field day on a note board, while his grandson, Kit, writes his plans at the bottom of the page. At right, Toyah McGrady licks the mixer beaters after spending many hours in the kitchen cooking meals for the board members.

CHARTER MEMBERS

Receiving charter memberships in the association are:

5R Farm, Dave Roberts;
7H Farms, Steve Hampton;
Agricultural Production Enterprises, Nick Estrella;
Altai Meadows, LLC, Jeff Cook;
Beef of Chatham, Mike Harris;
Belle Field Farm, John Eldridge;
Ben Coleman;
Bent Tree Farms, Teddy and Linda Gentry;
Bill Legg;
Bluebird Farm, Anthony Koehn;
Conrad Totemeier;
David and Weldon Hawkins;
Double T Farms, Todd Thompson;
Drum Creek Cattle Co., Joe, Lara and Larin Tucker;
Flying S, David and Penny Shaw;
Green Pastures Farm, Greg and Jan Judy;
Harrison Valley Farms, LLC, John and Kem Harrison;
Holiday Ranch, Cliff and Kay White;
Hope Hill, Timothy Gillis;
Horace Holderfield;
J-Jank Farms, John Lyons;
Jamie A. Harris;
Jerry Cunningham;
JG Ranch South Polls, J.A. Girgenti;
Jon Marshall;
Lone Oak Farm, Patrick Hankins;
Lucas Farms, Joan Strong;
Marian Garber;
McGrady Ranch;
Merritt Farms, LLC, Randy and Yvonne Whisonant;
Mike and Mary Wilbers;
Reid Farmer;
Sassafras Valley Ranch, Bruce Shanks;
Scott Klor;
Shades of Green Farm, Julie Assata and Susan Beckwith;
Stephen Stephenson;
Steve Thomas;
Steve Watson;
Stone House Ranch, Beth Braid;
Straight Creek Farm, Mike Eberhart;
Sumners Farm, Stanley Sumners;
Voss Land & Cattle Co., Ralph and Jerry Voss;



Lisa Sanders shows the charter member certificates she created to board member Ralph Voss of Missouri.

W.L. Bond Ranch, Bill Bond;
Wallace South Polls;
William and Julie Totemeier;
Youngblood Grassfed Farm, Andy Youngblood and
Woods Fork Cattle Co., LLC, Steve and Judy Freeman
The association's only junior member is Paul Shanks.



President Teddy Gentry presents Paul Shanks, the association's only junior member, with his charter membership certificate.

South Poll Grass Cattle Association

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Join the
South Poll
Grass Cattle
Association
today!
Contact
Lisa Sanders
at □□□□□□□□

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information you
would like to
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