



photo courtesy J. Freeman

**SOUTH POLL
MAKES IT TO
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HERE!**
SUMMER 2020

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Teddy Talks

Resisting the desire to maximize certain traits is difficult sometimes...especially when our eyes tell us that is a great looking bull! The key word here is 'looking'.

Maternally speaking you can't tell very much by looking at the individual animal especially if it's not linebred. That is the big problem with trying to judge young females by looks alone. A show judge can only pick his favorite 'looking' one on that particular day.

I would like to think of the South Poll as a real maternal breed that lets the records tell us which one is best. The best cannot be measured by what happens in a year or two. It has to be measured in lifetimes of efficient production. Never failing to breed on time and have a calf every year. Remember the best average with the fewest faults always beats the extreme.

Let's be the best at maternal and let the other breeds do the chasing of the other things.

Teddy Gentry



Photo Contest!
We want to see your
BEST Photos!

Submit your ORIGINAL photos to Ann at southpollgrasscattle@gmail.com for publication in the Newsletter or maybe even some of our advertising!

Winners will receive a prize from SPGCAI



From Pooler Creek Farms

South Poll Field Day

**12TH ANNUAL FIELD DAY TO BE HELD
SEPTEMBER 18TH AND 19TH 2020**

Pooler Creek Farms, along with the 'Copan Contingency' will be hosting our Fall Field Day in 2020. Doug Rodgers, Brent Hawkins, Greg Buie, Tommy Carithers, Brent Mackey and Bryan Beene have offered to host the Field Day for 2020. The June 26-27 dates that were scheduled have been cancelled due to the uncertainty of travel restrictions related to Covid-19.

Wally Olson of Olson Ranch, LLC at Vinita, Oklahoma is our keynote speaker. Wally will be speaking on knowing your costs--which is a timely topic given the challenges our industry is facing.

Registration is open-you may register online at www.southpoll.com. If you had signed up for the June dates, your registration will roll over to the September date.



Wally Olson Olson Ranch, LLC

I have been very blessed in life. There have been very few days that I didn't get up and enjoyed, and I was at work when I walked out my door. As I write this I got to thinking that I have always been employed in ranching or the livestock business. My work ranged from hauling hay and cleaning stalls to the manager and then owner and everything in between.

I graduated from Kansas State University-this was because of my mother. She made me promise that I would get a degree and then I could go be a cowboy. She was very concerned someday I would do something stupid and at least I could make a living with my mind. Two good things about having a degree is it gives you entry in getting jobs, and you can't lose it in hard times.

My life growing up was blessed with some great people and characters. Some of these people were very good to me and some were very tough. But I learned from all of them.

The ag crisis of the 80's was hard on me. To financially survive I resorted to custom haying. With that, I had great conflict, because it doesn't bother me to roll in cow manure, but I hate to get one drop of hydraulic fluid on me-so you see I had a great conflict.

In the mid 80's I was blessed to get a job on the Kelley Ranch in Vinita, Oklahoma. In my opinion, this is one of the best ranches in the world, and I had the best ranch job that has ever been. The owners of the ranch were business people and the ranch was run as a business. While working on the ranch my emphasis changed from the animals to the land. By increasing the production from the land and harvesting it with the animals at profit was job one.

One of the big benefits of working on the Kelley Ranch was that we had a continuing education budget. With these education opportunities, knowledge was gained and through this continuing education is where I came to know Bud and Eunice Williams. We first started out with the Stockmanship and then moved into Bud's marketing. Marketing is a powerful tool that can make a great unfair advantage for somebody that will use it. It has been a life-changing experience for me.

For the last eight years I have had the privilege to lease the Kelley Ranch. I was able to put Bud's marketing to work and learn how to implement it. I am now retired and willing to help people learn what Bud and Eunice were so kind to help me learn.

Wally will be talking about how to buy a ranch in today's challenging ag economy and how South Poll cattle will fit that business model.

Submit your favorite recipes for the next Newsletter!
psst...there are PRIZES!
southpollgrasscattle@gmail.com

From the Kitchen

Yvonne's Sloppy Joes
From the Kitchen of:
Yvonne Whisonant

Sloppy Joes
2 pounds grass fed beef
1 medium onion diced
1 lg. bell pepper diced
2 T. minced garlic
1 1/2 c. ketchup
1 c. water
2 T. butter
2 T. brown sugar
1 t. dry mustard
2 t. chili powder
Worcestershire to taste
Salt to taste

Melt butter in pan
Add beef & cook until brown
In separate pan cook onions, pepper & garlic until soft
Add veggies back to beef, add ketchup, chili powder, brown sugar, dry mustard, water, worcestershire sauce and salt.

Simmer for 15 minutes
Toast your hamburger buns to keep juices from making them soggy!
Enjoy!!



HEREFORD HISTORY

THE origin of the Hereford has been lost over time but it is generally agreed that it was founded on the draught ox descended from the small red cattle of Roman Briton and from a large Welsh breed once numerous along the border of England and Wales.

Herefords have taken their name from the country of Herefordshire, a historic agricultural region of England where this breed has evolved.

The origins of this breed of cattle in the County of Herefordshire have been mentioned by various agricultural authors as long ago as the early 1600's. During the 1700's and early 1800's documented records were maintained by individuals in and around the Herefordshire area.

These early Hereford breeders molded their cattle with the idea in mind of a high yield of beef and efficiency of production, and so firmly fixed

these characteristics that they remain today as outstanding characteristics of the breed.

Beginning in 1742 with a bull calf from the cow Silver and two cows Pidgeon and Mottle, inherited from his fathers estate, Benjamin Tomkins is credited with founding the Hereford breed. This was 18 years before Robert Bakewell began developing his theories of animal breeding. From the start, Mr. Tomkins had as his goals economy in feeding, natural aptitude to grow and gain from grass and grain, rustling ability, hardiness, early maturity and prolificacy, traits that are still of primary importance today.

Other pioneering breeders were to follow the Tomkins' lead and establish the world wide renown for the Herefordshire cattle causing their exportation from England to wherever grass grows and beef production is possible.

Herefords in the 1700's and early 1800's were much larger

than today. Many mature Herefords of those days weighed 3000 pounds or more. Cotmore, a winning show bull and noteworthy sire, weighed 3900 pounds when shown in 1839. Gradually, they type and confirmation changed to less extreme size and weight to get more smoothness, quality and efficiency.

Herefords were the first English cattle to be recognized as a true breed.

The modern Hereford is colored dark red to red-yellow, with a white face, crest, dewlap and underline. Herefords with a white flanks and white markings below the knee are also common. Most animals have thick, short horns that typically curve down at the sides of the head, but there is a polled strain in North America and the UK (Polled Hereford).

Mature males can weigh up to 1800 pounds, while mature females weigh around 1200 pounds. They are muscular,



www.thecattlesite.com

home is
where
the herd
is.



moderate to long in length of the side, adequate in length of leg, large in size, trim and smooth. They are also well developed in the regions of valuable cuts—the back loin, hind quarters and round.

These cattle are known for their vigor and foraging ability as well as for their longevity. Many females live and produce calves beyond the age of 15 years. Bulls are capable of remaining profitable at stud to the age of 12 or more. Many breeders keep their elderly cattle until they die of old age.

Herefords will stand out in the arctic snows of Finland, endure the heat of Northern Transvaal, withstand the tough climate and rough grazing of northern Uruguay or the sub-tropical zones of Brazil and continue to thrive.

Herefords are generally docile and fast growing cattle with good beef quality.

More than five million pedigree Herefords exist in over 50 countries. The export of Herefords began in 1817, spreading across the United States and Canada through Mexico to the great cattle raising countries of South America. Today, Herefords dominate the world scene from the prairies to the pampas and from the Russian steppes to the South African veldt.

Source: www.thecattlesite.com

Photos: www.thecattlesite.com

www.holdenherefords.com

www.americancowboychronicles.com

www.orvisranch.com



PRETTY SIMPLE.

By: Steve Freeman

Developing an adapted cow is obviously an undertaking that varies from region to region and operation to operation. Our farms' initial plan for a cow herd was pretty simple and we've tried to keep it that way. Profitability in the commodity cow/calf business seems to boil down to two major things.

- Good grass management that works with the natural cycle of the place and allows a profitable stocking rate without the need for too many 'off the farm' inputs.
- Fertile cows that can give you an acceptable calf every year, utilizing the grass and grass management that fits the place.

In our early years of cattle farming we went through as many cows that could, perhaps, produce on a more intensive, input driven management system but couldn't produce satisfactorily on what our farm could provide. Our region in Southern Missouri, like all regions, has unique challenges. We become jungle-like in the summer with high humidity, heat, and endophyte-infected fescue (which makes cattle even hotter) and yet, can have temperatures dip well below zero in the winter. It has been suggested that in parts of the country where KY31 fescue predominates, fall calving should be used to avoid the difficulty of breeding cows in July and August. But, we felt then, and feel now that calving in April and May, in sync with nature, is the key to a low cost, profitable operation. Stubbornly, we decided many years ago that selection pressure could give us the animals that could thrive and breed in the hottest months of the summer. However, there were many years in the beginning when we questioned that decision, because although the breeding system we use is simple, it is not easy. When you have 30-40% of the cowherd failing to fit the most basic requirement, which is breeding back it can create a lot of doubt about your system.

The goal of our breeding program is to develop a cow that is extremely adapted to our region, farm and grazing system, providing us not only good net income, but confidence that we are not asking anything of the cows that is beyond their capabilities. The way they show this is adaptation is to thrive on grasses the farm can produce with good management and low inputs. And the way to judge if a cow is thriving in our system, is if she produces a good acceptable calf beginning at 24 months of age and does it again, year after year, in the 45 day window of our breeding season. Any cow or heifer that fails this test is sold. It's a very simple system and we feel the key is calving at the right time of year, to give the females the best chance to breed, and keeping the window short to put pressure on the herd, so there is always room for improvement. Once the breed back became high enough, we added other considerations to culling, such as temperament, udder quality, etc., but fertility is by far the most important factor in whether we are profitable and a cow can't (shouldn't) be rewarded by staying in the herd, even if she has outstanding characteristics, without first passing the fertility test. As Tom Lasater (developer of the Beefmaster breed and this system of selection) said *"The object of cattle raising and maximizing profit from a given operation, is not to set the goals so low that cattle pass effortlessly, but rather, to set them so high that only the best survive."*

This is why our program emphasizes calving, beginning as a 23-24 month old heifer, once every 365 days, as the most important trait in staying in our herd. We like to call our cow development system a breeding program rather than a culling program, though in the early years it sure felt like all we did was cull. We had to learn quickly how to make an open cow marketable and profitable while we kept the heifers and cows that were able to fit in our system. In those early years, all the cow needed to stay was a temperament that didn't include trying to kill us, a functional udder, and four healthy legs and feet. We simply asked her, "Did you raise an acceptable calf" and "Did you breed back this year?" If not, she was gone.

Producing a calf every 365 days is not asking too much of a cow when her calving/breeding season takes advantage of the fertility window nature provides. Except for breeding in the high humidity and heat of midsummer and this is a big "except"- our cows have no excuse for not breeding back. By breeding in July and August, nature picks the cattle that can handle the heat and humidity of an Ozark summer. This is where South Polls came to be the catalyst to success for our program-making quicker improvement in development of adapted heifers and emphasizing the importance of finding bulls that fit our place. Though we had used Brahma crossed breeds to help with heat tolerance, they didn't have the adaptability to the differences in grass quality, or the ability to put on flesh and keep it on during the changing seasons. They were not also nearly as fertile an animal as the South Polls turned out to be. We told Teddy Gentry, the founder of the breed, that it seemed he had developed a breed made specifically for our place and our management. Fertility that is bred into the animal, not fed into the animal is what drives profitability in the cow/calf business.

Con't next page

Pretty Simple-con't

We allow nature to select our replacements and find this system of selecting the animals best adapted to our farm better than other systems that give humans almost all decision making in what makes a good cow. This natural system means we keep almost all of our heifer crop and give each of them a chance to breed and then calve as 24 month olds. We raise them like we do a stocker heifer, using the spring flush of grass to put on most of the additional pounds after having been weaned in January or February. No grain, no protein, just hay and grass, gives you a heifer that, if she breeds (and then breeds back for the 2nd calf), fits your place and management. If the heifer doesn't breed in this period we still have a good, profitable stocker calf to put on the truck to the market with the other stocker cattle.

The benefits we see with a short (45 day) window:

- We can treat our cows as a herd, not individual animals. Calving in a short window allows us to graze the herd as a unit, and enables us to utilize grass that matches the cow's nutritional needs without harming production. Cows don't always need the best grass and can be used to manage over rested and weedy pastures when their nutritional needs, such as when they are dry, are lower. We can also ensure that they are on a rising plane of nutrition and gaining weight as they go through calving and breeding season by calving at the peak time of grass growth. Calving when the grass is abundant allows a slightly thin cow to put on weight when going into breeding, which acts very much like the more common practice of flushing sheep. It's very important for a cow to be putting on weight going into breeding season, as it increases her chance of conceiving early. Calving in the middle of the spring flush of grass means no supplement is needed to achieve these gains and increased body condition.

- Not only does this short breeding season allow the breeding and calving season to be in sync with our grass growth, but also with the bovine's natural breeding season. Though man has bred cattle so they can come into estrus year round, cows are naturally long day breeders, meaning they come into estrus quicker after calving if the breeding season is close to the longest days of the year. Calving and breeding close to the summer solstice (June 21) has been shown to be the best way to shorten the time it takes a cow to return to estrus after calving.

- All cows are in the same ballpark, playing on the same field and in our herd it's always a competition. So, everyone calving in a short window makes for a fair, easily comparable competition between players/cows.

- Calving in a short period in the spring flush of grass means all the resulting heifers and steers will be gaining weight on grass as they reach 12 months of age. This greatly increases the likelihood the heifers will be cycling, and it's very important that the yearlings be gaining weight during this time, so as to be forming fat cells rather than more connective tissue. This is not only important for breeding, but also for the ability of the female to flesh easily and for the steer to grade well. (Dr. Dick Divens <https://ucanr.edu/sites/placernevadasmallfarms/files/79825.pdf>). Timing the calving season so the yearling cattle are putting on weight, during this critical time in their lives, on the spring flush of grass rather than having to feed to accomplish this growth, provides another large cost savings in the program. It means we don't feed the heifers to an acceptable weight to breed, we work with nature, to put the weight on in a way that naturally makes them more fertile for their first breeding and become easy fleshing, fertile cows.

- Calving in a short window gives us enough even-sized yearling steers to sell in a potload. Though we now sell to a different market, grass finishers, who don't always require a potload, in the past, selling a potload (50,000 pounds) of like kind cattle would add \$5-\$10,000 to our income over selling a set of steers at the sale barn.

What kind of cow does nature produce in our environment?

She seems to select a big bellied, slick, smaller framed cow that's able to handle almost any grass and environmental challenge the seasons and our management throws at her.

Sometimes our grass is too lush, sometimes it's mature and lignified and sometimes it's just right. We need cows that can tolerate a wide range of conditions by putting fat on their backs when all is going well and keep much of it there when life isn't as easy. Still, as nature intended, our cow weights will fluctuate throughout the year, and we find the cow's ability to put on weight quickly when conditions are right makes management much easier when the conditions become tough.

Con't next page

PRETTY SIMPLE. *con't from previous page*

By: Steve Freeman

As opposed to the early years, selecting cows to be sold has become much more difficult, as our breed back has reached the low to mid 90's. Fewer open cows, combined with the large number of two year olds entering the herd, requires us to use additional criteria, such as ranking metrics (cow weight/weaning weight %) and looking for the very best udders, feet and disposition to make our decisions on which cows to keep and which to sell. But the first questions we ask the cow are, "Did you raise an acceptable calf?" and "Are you bred back for next year?". Tom Lasater also had another piece of advice-- "The cow calf business is a simple business, the hard part is keeping it simple."

Steve and Judy Freeman have been managing Woods Fork Cattle Company near Hartville Missouri since 1987 where they calve out a couple hundred cows (and plenty of heifers) and graze stockers that end up going to a grass finishing farm in Arkansas.

Additional Reading about this subject:

I wrote a little story about baseball and breeding cattle. You need to sign on to OnPasture, if you are not a subscriber, to receive 3 free articles.

<https://onpasture.com/2017/03/13/building-a-cow-herd-billy-bean-style/>

Johann Zietsman's book is one of the best on cattle breeding. Starting off with the Lasater system, Zietsman takes it even farther while explaining in detail what the adapted cow and bull should look like, it still comes back to letting nature and the system pick the female for your environment.

<https://www.amazon.com/MAN-CATTLE-VELD-Johann-Zietsman/dp/0990467813>

Burke Teichert is one of the top ranch and cattle managers of our generation. His blog in Beef Magazine is important for those interested in developing a profitable ranch or farm. His articles on profitable heifer development should be required reading.

<https://www.beefmagazine.com/blogger/burke-teichert>

OFFICE UPDATE

By: Ann Demerath

Hello from the office!

WOW! South Poll people--you are amazing!! The Association is growing like crazy--we are adding new members every week! There are several ways for you to be a part of our growth and I wanted to make sure you know all the ways you can receive the latest and greatest South Poll information. We have two great social media outlets and we are working on developing some more, including Instagram and Pinterest. Our two major social media outlets for now are both on Facebook. The South Poll Grass Cattle Association Page is where we post the information regarding meetings, Field Day, current office updates and more. Please consider 'liking' this page to stay current on the latest news. The South Poll Grass Cattle Forum is where things are really happening--there is lively conversation, learning opportunities, networking and more there--and we are adding somewhere in the neighborhood of 30-35 new people every week. It is a safe place to ask questions, see what your South Poll friends are up to and learn things. If you are not already a part of this fun page, I highly encourage you to join us. There is lots of great information here!

The 2020 Fall Field Day plans are well underway--Dave Roberts, Josh Erickson, Josh Gentry and I visited the location last week, and it is beautiful. Pooler Creek Farms and the 'Copan Contingency' are making some great plans to host us this year. We have Wally Olson on board as our keynote speaker as well as some great producer panels and some other special guests to make this a great event. Our hosts are working on securing us a couple blocks of hotel rooms in nearby Bartlesville, as soon as that information is available, we will be posting on the website and social media outlets. If anyone is considering flying in, Tulsa would be the closest large airport- Tulsa is approximately 60 miles from where we will be holding the Field Day. If you are traveling in and making this a little vacation--there are lots of things to do including the Woolaroc museum, a Frank Lloyd Wright designed hotel and more right in Bartlesville. Pawhuska, the home of Pioneer Woman is also within 30 miles of Bartlesville if anyone is interested in visiting. Let's all hope and pray that there are no more travel restrictions and everyone can join us for a great time!

There are a few things that I would like you all to keep in mind for our upcoming events. We normally would have the calendar ads for sale on our silent auction at a June Field Day, but since we didn't get to have that event--we will be offering those up for sale. Full page ads are \$225 and 1/4 page ads are \$50. We send out calendars to all Association Members as well as give several away throughout the year to events and new members. Full page sponsors will receive 40 free calendars to distribute as they see fit and 1/4 page sponsors receive 12 free calendars.

We are also taking consignments for the Field Day Auction--please send your submissions to the office at southpollgrasscattle@gmail.com. Deadline is July 25th for getting them into the catalog.

One more bit of exciting news--we have received NEW t-shirts and caps in! We will be updating the website as time allows--but if you can't live without some new 'swag'--give me a call, I am sure we can work something out!

Hope this finds you all well and knee deep in grass!
~Ann



Happy 4th of July!

Ann Demerath

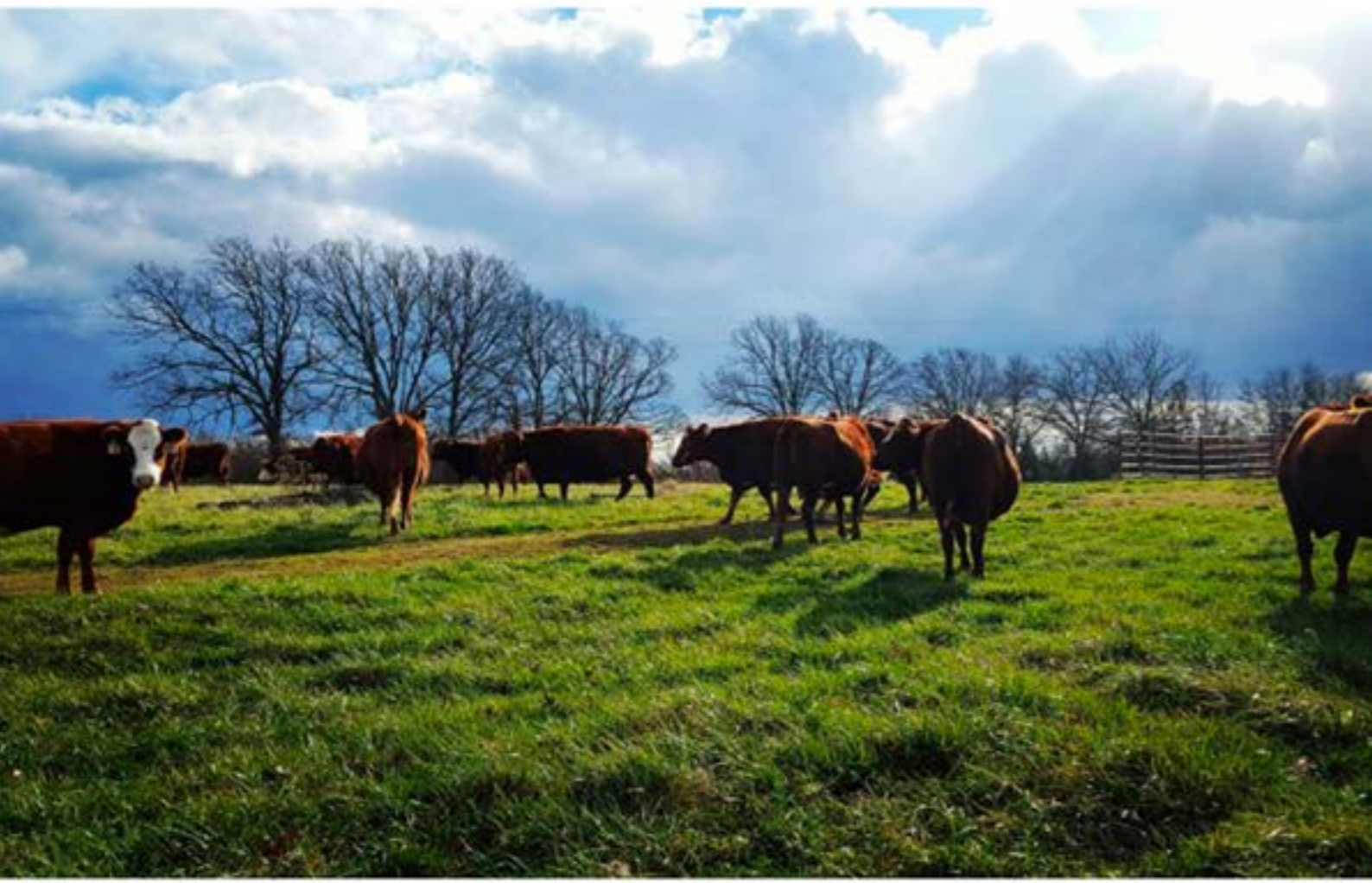


New Hats \$15/each + s/h

Please Don't Forget!!

Email your favorite recipes, photos and anything else you would like to see in the SPGCA Newsletter to the office!
THERE ARE PRIZES!





Are you next?
Your ad
could be here!



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ASSOCIATION FOR DETAILS!
417-256-8355**

Field Day Auction!



WANTED



Any Registered South Poll Stock you would like to sell in the
12th Annual Field Day Auction!

Please submit your animals via email to:

southpollgrasscattle@gmail.com
or call the office at
256-996-8355
Deadline July 25, 2020

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“He was gentle
and kind.
His moo, refined.”

— Ferdinand the Bull



In the next issue

- Cattle History
- Field Day Updates
- Andy's Advice
- Teddy Talks
- More!

Photo: Dave Roberts Bull: Voss Land & Cattle Co.

Let's keep in touch

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SOUTH POLL
The Southern Mama Cow Breed