



photo courtesy Troy Lohman

**NEW VIDEOS
AND PODCASTS!
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Teddy Talks

The past 30 plus years have come and gone really fast. I've seen a lot of dreams come true in my life, but sometimes I feel like I am so undeserving of all the blessings I have received. For all of the blessings, I am thankful to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ for letting me be here today and for giving me the time, vision and financial means to be a part of developing a breed of cattle that I truly believe will help commercial cattlemen make a living off of grass long after I am gone.

I dreamed of a breed that was of the most efficient size and shape. A breed that was gentle and a pleasure to be around. A breed that if given grass and clean water would be pretty much problem free and give you a merchandisable calf on time for 15-20 years!

The South Poll breed was meant to be different from other beef breeds. I had been through the purebred wringer more than a few times. I saw the damage done by chasing extreme traits and the problems associated with getting our cows too big and not paying attention to adaptivity.

Well, today, a lot of folks are buying into our South Poll vision. A cattle business that puts the emphasis on fertility and longevity. A cattle business that thrives between breeders in an honest, open way. A cattle business without all the sale barns, ring men and auctioneers. A cattle business with never having to have a sale (in the traditional way) and unnecessarily give away 16-30% of this years income.

I will end this by saying I flushed cows for many years from many breeds and never made any real progress towards helping that breed go forward. If every cow raises her own calf every year and we as breeders keep honest records on the whole herd report then even I can (with a copy of your records) go into your herd and pick the most profitable cows.

If you love a cow and want to produce more like her, then use as many of her sons as possible. Stack as many great old cows as you possibly can in the pedigree.

Closing question?? How can we continue to improve our South Poll breed? With breed up genetics from other great purebred cows!! Let's move this breed forward together.

*Passionately Yours,
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 SPGCA!

Scenes from Field Day!

From the Kitchen

The secrets to making great sausage are:

- Use quality meat. Never make sausage out of old or tainted meat.
- Use quality non-extracted spices. Quick cures and Prague Powders are not recommended by Hi Mountain Jerky.
- Follow the instructions exactly, not "close."
- Don't ever add your secrets until after you have made at least one batch; however, we'd like to point out that Hi Mountain got to where we are today by listening to how other people make their sausage, especially recipes handed down from early-day pioneers. If you have a secret and it makes our product even better, share it with us if you wish.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. If you are making a full 30#, mix the two bags of seasonings (darker colored pouches) with the two bags of cure (cream colored pouches). Blend thoroughly. Set aside until ready for use. If you are making a smaller batch, mix seasonings and cure proportionately to the amount of meat being used. **DO NOT OVERKILL!!** It's better to have too little rather than too much seasoning.
2. Mix 24# lean beef or venison (ground twice) with 6# lean pork (ground once). Blend thoroughly. Note: If you are using venison that has been made into hamburger, be sure it has not been prepared with added pork, pork fat, beef or beef suet.
3. Add 24 oz. Ice cold water and continue blending, adding the seasoning and cure mixture a little at a time. Continue mixing approximately 15 minutes until all the seasoning and cure has been thoroughly blended into the meat mixture.
4. The casings provided are 2 ½" x 20" and will hold approximately 3# of raw meat. For best results, soak casings in warm water for one hour or more before stuffing.
5. Place stuffed sausages in refrigerator overnight; do not leave in refrigerator over 24 hours.
6. When ready to smoke or oven cook remove stuffed sausages from refrigerator and let stand at room temperature for 2 hours. **DO NOT SMOKE OR OVEN COOK ICE COLD SAUSAGES!**
7. Cook in oven or smokehouse to an internal temperature of 156°F (see Cooking Instructions)



Paige & Sunshine welcoming guests



Danielle & team in the Swag booth



Cattle Viewing



WHAT'S MY JOB?



by: Steve Freeman Woods Fork Cattle Co.

Having been either a farm employee or farm owner for most of my life, where job descriptions were mostly discerned by the job that needed to be completed that day, (shoveling manure, building fence etc.), I was ill prepared to fully understand the necessity of letting an employee know what was expected of them after we became partners in a small post manufacturing plant 15 years ago. I tended to be the kind of boss, and father, who had difficulty not understanding why one couldn't read my mind about what needed to be done. I found this trait not conducive to a smooth operating workplace for 10 employees trying to understand my telepathic wishes.

My grown children, much more knowledgeable than me, explained the importance of job descriptions and outlines of the duties that came with the position. Not only did I find developing and writing the job descriptions, duties, and expectations helpful for employees, the practice forced me to really think of what the company needed from them to make it successful. In turn, I came to realize there should be expectations of me to make the workplace productive, safe, and to allow the employees to be satisfied and happy with their jobs. It's a two way street.

We no longer own the post manufacturing factory, but still have our solar manufacturing factory that produces plenty of forage to be harvested by our bovine employees. Learning the importance of a job description in helping me really think about what was needed for the post factory, Judy and I decided to write job descriptions for our cattle - and expectations the cows should have from us.

Job Position: Fertile Female Forage Harvester

- Calve the first time at 24 months
- Calve every 365 days for the rest of your life
- Heat tolerant - breeding season is 42 days in July/August
- Raise an acceptable, marketable calf every year
- Adapted - be able to tolerate the seasonal, natural fluctuations in quality and quantity of forage
- Do all the above with no supplementation other than salt/mineral and hay
- Sunny disposition (no Prima Donnas)

You will notice there is nowhere in the job description that calls for perfect heads, udders, size or not allowing for a white face or white on the body. We keep the job description short for a reason- we are selecting for profitable financial traits. In thirty years of raising cattle, we have gone through hundreds and hundreds of cows that could not fill this position adequately. It's a simple description but tough to follow. It wasn't until we found South Polls, which we feel were made just for our farm, that we had animals that can consistently produce well in our fescue based system and thrive in a short breeding season during our hot and humid summers.



It doesn't mean we don't have some cows with excellent udders, that we think are perfect in size and conformation. It just means that we don't cull cows because they have less than what we think is a perfect body. The cows with the excellent udders and conformation raising very good calves are given a promotion with a new job title - Master Cow. And like many a person has found the new title doesn't come with an increase in wages (more feed or supplement) just a nice sounding title. She still has to meet the requirements in her original job description, only now we will allow her sons to remain intact.

And here's what the cows should expect from us:

- To be bred for adaption to our heat and humidity and able to thrive on our farm and in our region**
- Will provide adequate forage at all stages of gestation and lactation**
- Won't ask them to produce more than the environment can provide**
- Will treat them humanely - they deserve a good life with, hopefully, only one bad day**

We have been farming since the late 70's and during that time not only have most cows become much larger, but so have the inputs needed, from feed to hormones, to ensure that many of these unadapted cows can breed back and not fall apart on what is usually inadequate forage for what is expected of the animal. We have learned that what is most important, several times over other measures, is a cow having a calf every year with few inputs. The South Poll has been built to provide us a fertile, fleshy, easy keeping female that can keep us profitable. It's a joy raising cows like this. It's also a joy, as Gabe Brown has been heard to say, mostly signing the back of checks, not the front.

I always enjoy discussing cows, grass and grazing so feel free to email me at stevfreeman@gmail.com

Southern Mama Cow is Thriving @ Face to Face Farming

by: Charles Hord

Reprinted w. permission from Tennessee Cattle Business

The South Poll Grass Cattle Association recently held their annual field day June 25-26 in Trenton Tennessee at the home of breeders Gary and Diane Graves. Approximately 600 producers attended the event to learn more about the breed which bills itself as "The Southern Mama Cow."

The South Poll mission statement reads: To promote gentle South Poll Cattle as the premier heat-tolerant maternal breed for the efficient conversion of grass to tender beef. Their website goes on to say South Polls are bred to be slick-haired, small-framed cows with emphasis placed on high fertility, longevity, and calm disposition. South Polls are bred to excel on a grass-based grazing system. Ultrasound and actual carcass data on the South Poll tells us that they are as tender, or more tender, than straight bred English cattle.

The South Poll breed originated in Fort Payne Alabama. It was developed by Teddy Gentry, best known as a member of country music super group Alabama. Gentry was looking for a cow that was moderate sized, could handle the heat and humidity of the south, and had the fertility and longevity to be profitable for cow calf producers. Gentry developed a four way cross and called it the South Poll. Gentry crossed a Senepol (composite breed made up of Bos Taurus and Red Poll) to a Red Angus. He then crossed a Red Angus to a Barzona (a composite breed developed in Arizona made up of Africander, Santa Gertrudis, Hereford and Angus). He bred the offspring of these two crosses and this four way cross produced the first South Poll which was registered in 1986.

As Gentry explained in a [YouTube video](#) in which he discusses the origination of the breed, he was looking for a cow that was smaller and more efficient at a time when many breeds were focused on extremes in growth, milk or carcass traits. Gentry believed if you only focused on these traits it would have a negative impact on the maternal traits. Gentry wanted a red coated, slick haired animal that could finish on grass in the heat and humidity of Alabama and produced 10 to 12 calves in its lifetime. (The across breed average for calves produced in a cow's lifetime is currently less than 5.)

South Poll are small framed (mama cows will average about 1,000 lbs) and Gentry believes they are a better use of your grazing resources than some of the larger cattle other breeds promote. Many producers wanting to sell grass finished beef have incorporated South Polls into their herds. Gentry has also become a well respected speaker on rotational grazing and regenerative agriculture and will be speaking at the Regenerative Agriculture Summit being held September 22-24 in Greeneville TN. Visit usaregenalliance.org for more information.

Gary and Diane Graves started their herd with 19 black heifers in 2009 before adding their first South Polls in 2011, two bulls and two heifers. A few years later they added a South Poll bred heifer. Diane shared the original heifers are still on the farm and producing calves each year. They bred the two bulls to their angus stock and over time went from 50% crosses to predominantly South Poll genetics. Gary shared that the South Poll and Angus crosses did well on the farm and finished well on a grass based diet. Gary's goal is to raise 100% South Poll grass finished beef for his freezer beef customers. "There's nothing wrong with Black Angus if that's what you want" shared Gary, "but there are some things we were looking for that the South Poll offered like a gentle disposition, heat tolerance and I think they will finish easier on grass." Diane also discussed the breeds disposition and shared they had no trouble moving multiple bulls from pasture to pasture using a single poly wire. When I asked about hosting the South Poll annual field day on their farm this year Diane laughed and said Gary got her into it. "When Gary agreed to do it a couple of years ago there were about 250 members of the association. Since then, the association has grown to over 400 and we had 550 producers register to attend." Despite the record attendance from producers from across the country, everyone had a good time learning about South Polls and visiting with like-minded producers. For more information about South Poll cattle visit southpoll.com. Gary also invited producers in Tennessee to email him at ggraves84@yahoo.com or call 731-267-6373.



Stanley Sumners & Mike Clark



Dave & Doyle



Keynote Speaker Bill Hodge



John Reeves of Smokin'X



This crowd <3



Checking out the cattle

Thank You!!!

To our retiring Board Members!



Randy Whisonant
remains on Field Day Team



Greg Judy
remains on Honorary Board



Damon Folmar
remains on Social Media team



Tim Gillis

Welcome to our New Board Member!

Doug Rodgers-Copan OK





Dave and his new sign



Mike Clark, Guille Yearwood & Joe Hopping on the Producer Panel



Bruce & Kay w. shear force/sous vide demo



Gregg Brann on the Pasture Walk



SPGCA Board Members Andy Summers; Doyle Unruh, Judy Freeman w. one of our guests; Mike Harris; Becky Szarzynski --all working hard & having fun!



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!

OFFICE UPDATE

By: Ann Demerath

Hello from the office!

I have two words for you. FIELD DAY!! Y'all were rock stars! The SPGCA had the BIGGEST field day to date and we couldn't have done it without you! There were over 600 in attendance and for the most part--it all went off without a hitch. I would like to thank you all for your patience with the few things that had a hiccup, the food truck and parking were a couple, and we all truly appreciate your patience with us. Rest assured, we are working on a few more things to help with this and other details for the upcoming years.

Now that I have recovered (mostly) from that event, I am back in the office and processing registrations, transfers and memberships. Speaking of those things- here are a few numbers for you to summarize the year so far for you!

- * 1487 Animals registered this year (August 2021). For reference we registered 1463 animals in 2020
- * 746 transfers as of August 2021. 910 animals were transferred by the same time in 2020
- * 85 new members as of August 2021. In 2020 we added 85 for the year.

So, as you can see, the office has been busy!

The SPGCA team will be in a couple of locations coming up soon--the Ozark FarmFest will be held in Springfield, Missouri the first weekend in August. This event will be a bit different this year as we finally have a pen available for cattle for everyone to look at! If you are in the area, stop by the booth in the annex and the cattle will be located in the Wells Barn. December 6-9 there will be a few SPGCA folks in the booth at the ACRES conference in Cincinnati. At press time--Mike Harris and Becky Szarzynski are working hard at Polyface Farms at one of the on farm events they are hosting.

Some of you have asked questions about the Member Section of the new website. Membership doesn't automatically get you listed on that section. A while back, anyone that receives the newsletter was emailed a link to set up profiles. If you didn't receive that email or need help with your profiles, just let me know--we can get you fixed up! We are still working hard to get you some items in the shopping section and get some tutorials for you as well.

I would like to take my last couple of lines and thank you ALL for your patience and being such amazing humans to work with... each one of you make my job a true blessing!

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

~Ann



Happy
Fall
Y'all!

Ann M. Demerath



Day one under the tent!



Thanks Randy!



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Cows:

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Semen Lots:

4 LOTS SOLD AVERAGE PRICE \$696.25



In the next issue

- Guest Article
- Field Day plans
- Teddy Talks
- More!

Photo: Dave Roberts Daughter of 24 Bull & 6404 cow. Calf is hiding behind momma :)

Let's keep in touch

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