

Dalebanks Digest

Spring 2015

Spring 2015 Private Treaty Bull Offering

Mid-March will bring another balanced-trait set of Dalebanks yearling bulls to market.

We will offer a select group of 70 spring yearlings on a first-come, first-served basis beginning Monday, March 9.

Bull Availability and Information

Sires represented are In Focus 5925, Trust, Logic, 5050-0345, Upward 228, Mainline 916, Bismarck, 7229, Confidence, New Day 454, 454-102, Prophet and other sires.

The yearling bulls will be weighed, measured and ultrasounded on February 27, so we plan to have them freeze branded, sorted and ready to select by March 9. The bulls will be evaluated for breeding soundness, vaccinated, poured and ready to breed approximately 15 head of cows or heifers later this spring or summer.

Low-Energy Development

As in past years, these bulls were pasture-weaned in September. They grazed dry grass and were supplemented with 20% range cubes until mid-October. They then grazed cover crop pastures until late November, and we have kept them on a moderate energy development ration since then. Their current feed ration consists largely of ground wheat straw and corn silage. By design, the bulls will be not be as heavy (*fat*) as some yearling bulls, but we are confident that the long-term payout of improved fertility and increased longevity will be beneficial for our customers. As always, please let us know about your experiences with these bulls.

This bull grow out program imitates a pasture development scenario by limiting the number of days in a pen, utilizing larger pens (more exercise) and feeding extremely high roughage rations (mimicking a dormant native grass and protein scenario).

Significant genetic variation is still able to be seen, thus allowing for accurate EPD calculations and selection decisions. *And remember... an extra 1" of backfat on a bull might make him appear "bigger, stouter, deeper, higher performing" or any of the other terms that sound good over a microphone, but it does not actually make him—OR HIS CALVES-- any better than his genetics allow.*

Please contact Matt [anytime](#) to add your name to the list for information on these bulls as soon as it is available. We look forward to visiting with you soon!

What's a Good Bull Worth?

During this era of "new and higher trading ranges" in all beef markets, some form of this question gets asked quite often these days. As many of you have heard us state, our annual sale generally averages approximately what five head of feeder cattle are worth at the time. And our private treaty bulls generally average just under that figure.

Several articles have been written recently in the beef press using this same rule of thumb. But the question might be better structured "***How much will a poor bull COST?***"

Any rancher who has dealt with bull-related issues after getting a "steal" on a bull can attest that they likely did not save themselves any money. Whether it was disease transmitted by a non-virgin, severe calving difficulty, a mean disposition or simply poor calf performance, the money paid for this bull turned out to be a cost instead of an **investment**. And quite often, the seller was nowhere to be found after problems arose.

Now we are not foolish enough to believe that every Dalebanks bull we market will be completely fault-free or perfect. When they *are*, we are very happy. When they are NOT, we do all that we can to help with the situation.

But most importantly, we strive to use the information on these bulls' performance after they begin their "real jobs" to improve future years' bulls. Our goal is just like Dalebanks founder, Bert Barrier's in the early 1900's: "To raise cattle that profit their new owners through their production."

Whether through genetics or management, we strive to make incremental improvements each year. Improved development protocols for feet and leg soundness, higher accuracy genomic-enhanced EPDs for calving ease and performance, increased selection pressure for udder quality and docility...the list goes on and on.

But the reason for this constant quest for improvement is simple: it results in a better product for our customers and THEIR customers. And the best way we achieve this is by sharing information.

So please let us know how our genetics work in your operation. Send us a photo, drop us a text, letter, call or email. Stop us the next time we meet. But keep the information coming. It's invaluable as we improve the genetics- and "delivery systems" – that we produce.

Profit For All

-by Matt Perrier

I recently had the opportunity to attend the Cattle Industry Convention in San Antonio, TX. It was a great experience to see over 8,000 beef producers come together for the educational seminars, trade show, policy discussions and networking. Given moisture and phenomenal markets in 2014, this was obviously one of the most positive, optimistic crowds that I have witnessed at a beef industry event.

During remarks during the general session, National Cattlemen's Beef Association President, Phillip Ellis, commented that 2014 was a tremendous year, as **all segments in our industry experienced simultaneous profitability**. A thundering applause erupted and made me think to myself, "It's a bit sad that we beef producers are this ecstatic over one year of 'mutual profitability' across our industry. Shouldn't this be the norm, instead of an exception?"

In a true commodity industry, there is usually a finite amount of profitability per unit throughout the entire production chain. So in order to capture additional value, it must be made on either the "buy" or the "sell." Unfortunately, our long history of being simply a commodity has given most beef producers the notion that we must rob our share of this profit from the segment above or below us in the industry chain.

But isn't it refreshing to know that 2014 proved that we don't have to steal portions of this profitability from each other, but instead "grow the whole pie" through increased demand, more value-added products and closer alignment with our consumers and their preferences?

Sure, we have seen a retraction from the stratospheric price levels last fall, but today's price ranges should still spell excellent profitability for most cow-calf producers. And most forecasts indicate that the next several years should continue this positive outlook for beef prices.

It is now up to us as an industry to continue the trend of improved beef demand that we have seen over the past 15 years. It has taken progressive ideas like Certified Angus Beef™ (CAB), beef quality assurance (BQA), muscle profile research, new product development and value based marketing to right the course of the beef industry. But it will take just as much effort to continue this course toward beef industry profitability. Work in the areas of **industry sustainability, animal identification, labor efficiency and technology advancement** will be critical as we go forth. And most of all, the **communication of these efforts to our consumers will continue to grow in importance.**

I once heard John Crouch, former CEO of the American Angus Association state that, "There are few things more fragile than an innovative idea in a room full of successful cattlemen." In other words, during times of success, complacency often becomes the chosen path for many.

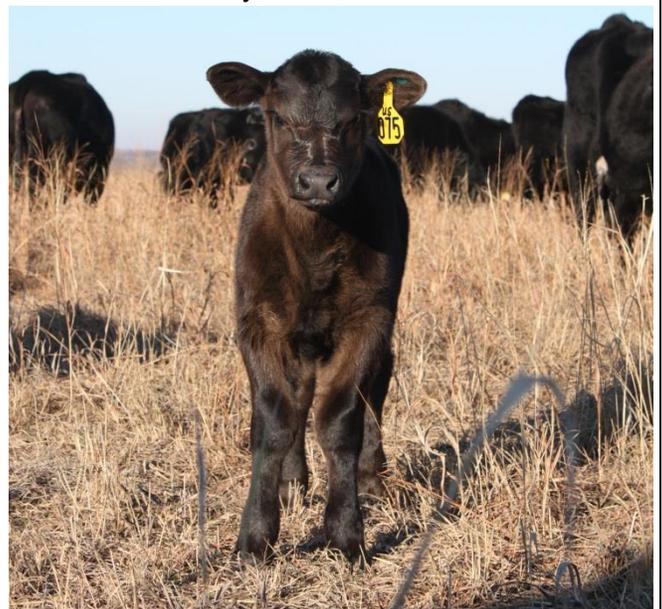
The success stories like CAB, BQA and others were developed out of necessity. Founders and early supporters of these concepts did so because they were desperate to find ways to add profitability to their beef businesses. Most in our industry admit that these "big ideas" would have never occurred during profitable times like we are experiencing today.

Our industry cannot afford to fall victim to the success-driven mode of complacency. We must continue to strive for constant improvement in our genetics, management and marketing of beef to the world. We must continue to think progressively and

"There are few things in life more fragile than an innovative idea in a room full of successful cattlemen."

discover ways to better characterize, select and produce beef for our consumers. We must grow domestic and global demand for our beef products. And--perhaps most importantly--we must effectively communicate the "story" of how we raise beef in a sustainable, wholesome, compassionate way.

It is my hope that in the coming years, when we beef producers hear the words "all segments experienced profitability," we can nod, shake each other's' hands, and say, "*Job well done!*"



A Worthy Advocate

-by Matt Perrier

During the final evening of the 2015 Cattle Industry Convention, Jeff Foxworthy entertained participants with over an hour of gut-busting stories about folks just like most of us in his audience. From driving to parenting, he covered a variety of everyday experiences, making each funnier than the last. Demonstrating that he can make nearly ANYTHING humorous, he even kept the crowd in stitches as he told a ten minute long personal story about passing a kidney stone.

The next morning, I was awaiting my flight home in a corner seat of the airport (writing an article found elsewhere in this newsletter) when Mr. Foxworthy quietly walked by with another gentleman. After obliging a couple of fans with their requested "selfies" (*I suppose autographs aren't good enough anymore*), Jeff sat down three chairs away from me. I waited a few minutes to let him get settled, and then I thanked him for his performance the night prior. As I visited with the duo, we discovered that Jeff's traveling companion had duck hunted at Dalebanks just two months before.

As we talked about the Flint Hills, hunting and the beef industry, I realized that this star was representing his profession in a very positive fashion. Sure he's no Hollywood "A-lister," but his Blue-Collar Comedy Tour, game show hosting and numerous comedy discs have made him a fairly well-recognized comedian.

He could likely have chartered a plane between performances, but here he was...sitting red-eyed in the waiting area an hour before boarding flight 1629 to DFW. No dark sunglasses, no disguises, just his signature blue jeans, feathered hair and good ol' boy charm. And as the stream of fans timidly approached to sneak a photo, he'd extend his arm to the, pull them in close and make sure they were included in the "evidence" of their star-sighting.

I then recalled a missed opportunity that I had on my trip to San Antonio a few days prior. As we were exiting that plane, a petite lady had a large bag in the overhead bin that was nearly bigger than she was. I offered my assistance removing it from the bin. She accepted, thanked me, and she then politely said, "I like your hat."

I smiled and simply said, "Thank you," in reply.

My fellow-KLA member (and beef advocate extraordinaire), Debbie Lyons-Blythe, overheard the entire exchange from her nearby seat. She later teased me a bit and then suggested that the woman's compliment was a teachable moment that



I had overlooked. Instead of stopping with my simple thank you, I should have said something like, "Thanks. I'm a cattleman from Kansas and that's just what farmers and ranchers do."

Estimates are that those of us in production agriculture represent between 1 and 2% of the United States population. Issues that we feel strongly about are often either contrary to the views of our urban neighbors, or are not even on their radar screens. We will never again have the votes in the Legislature, Congress or public opinion polls to override the 98% who live outside of our industry. But by taking advantage of opportunities to "tell our story," I believe we can have great success in educating our neighbors about our livelihood. This can be done through personal interactions with elected leaders and the public, as mentioned above. It can be done by joining and supporting our industry organizations like NCBA and their state affiliates. But it's most effectively done when we do **both**.

Advocacy is not easy. It's not comfortable. But in today's world of social media and always-on news feeds, it becomes one of the most important tools we have in production agriculture to increase the demand for the food we produce. "Story food" is all the rage right now, so who better to tell the beef industry's story than cattlemen? For the past decade, we have allowed other anti-agriculture groups to tell their story about us. It is not flattering, it is incorrect, but it's being heard by millions of our consumers.

If you are interested in equipping yourself with the information and confidence needed to answer questions about beef production, I suggest completing the Masters of Beef Advocacy (MBA) training program. This is a Checkoff-funded program that may now be completed online at www.beef.org. In addition, if you are not already a member of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and your state affiliate group, I suggest you do so today. They do tremendous work in the areas of public policy, issues management and public relations for the beef industry, but they need our help to get the job done effectively.

American farmers and ranchers work hard every day to produce the safest, most wholesome food supply in the world. Quite often, the animals and crops in our care get prioritized over nearly everything else in our lives. So the next time you hear misinformation about production agriculture, don't get upset. Simply find a way to advocate for our industry. School visits, civic group talks, positive posts on social media...there is no end to the ways that we can be ag advocates.



70 Private-Treaty Bulls Available This Spring

Sires include In Focus 5925, Trust, Logic, 5050-0345, Upward 228, Mainline 916, Bismarck, 7229, Confidence, New Day 454, 454-102, Prophet and other balanced-trait sires.

Plenty of calving-ease bulls for heifers, plus high-performance genetics for cows.

Bulls available for selection after March 9 on a first-come, first-served basis. Contact Matt today to receive information on this high-quality set of bulls. They will be freeze branded, vaccinated, fertility tested and ready for use this spring.

Call or email today to receive more information when it is available and make your selections!

Dalebanks Females for Sale Private Treaty

Select groups of bred fall females and spring pairs will be available throughout the spring and early summer. Contact Matt for info.

Annual Bull Sale: Saturday, November 21, 2015

Selling approximately 120 yearling and coming 2-year-old bulls

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FORWARD & ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED