



Dalebanks Digest

spring
2024

Private Treaty Bulls Available Starting March 12

The annual Dalebanks Angus private treaty bull offering will begin March 12, 2024, and continue throughout the spring. 55 head of excellent **yearling** and fall **long-yearlings** will be available. These bulls will be freeze branded, fertility-tested and ready to work. They have been bred, selected and developed with the commercial cow-calf producer's needs in mind: soundness, rapid early growth, calving ease, fertility and function.

The yearlings were born February-April 2023, weaned last September, spent the fall on native pasture, and have been developed on a moderate-energy ration of silage, grain, DDG and low-quality hay since December.

We will keep these bulls until early April, and they will then be ready for pickup and turnout on a small group of 12 to 15 cows or heifers this spring for a succinct breeding season.

Information and prices will be available upon request, and selections may be made by phone, text, email or in person after 8:00 am, March 12, 2024.

The following outstanding, balanced-trait sires will be represented: Connealy Cool, Tehama Patriarch, OLC Big Texan, Yon Top Cut, Sitz Resilient, Deer Valley Growth Fund, HF Safe & Sound, Dalebanks Composure and PCC Charisma.

Contact Matt today to receive a spreadsheet with information on these bulls in early March.
620-583-4305 (text/call) mattperrier@dalebanks.com

Dr. Phil: "Stop Apologizing for High Prices!"

Last month, we hosted Dr. Phil Bass, University of Idaho Meat Scientist, as our guest on the **Practically Ranching Podcast**. We covered the gamut of issues facing beef producers today, but one of our conversations landed around the topic of beef prices at the retail and restaurant segments.

As Dr. Phil stated, "If you're creating something that is worth the value, then charge that value!" He went on to discuss the huge improvements that cattlemen have made in genetics and management. "There's no tenderness problem (in beef) anymore...and now marbling is in abundance to the point where USDA is having to create higher standards to address the levels of marbling we're starting to see in our North American cattle."

"A High Choice to Low Prime steak is going to be your best eating experience out there. You get to a point of marbling that takes a very refined palate to truly appreciate," Dr. Phil stated.

Given these levels of beef quality today, plus brands like Certified Angus Beef® that have rigid specifications to consistently deliver this quality, beef producers have created a huge "demand-pull" mechanism that has driven billions of consumer dollars into our industry. When I was younger, consumers were very price-sensitive to meat prices. Today, high-quality beef is much less price sensitive...especially when it delivers that value through a tremendous eating experience.

While our industry needs to continue to address the most effective ways to distribute these premium dollars throughout the market, there is no denying that value-based marketing and a focus on the end consumer has been huge for beef producers throughout the supply chain.

If you haven't tuned into Practically Ranching, just go to Apple Podcasts, Spotify or any other listening platform on your smartphone. We're out every other week, so take us with you in the truck, tractor, or anywhere else you want to listen, learn and maybe even laugh.

Windshields and Rearview Mirrors

by Matt Perrier

Many in our industry see the next few years as a significant inflection point for beef producers. Shortages of skilled (and willing) labor, competition for land and other resources, consumer demands/desires and developing technologies could cause significant shifts in the structure and makeup of the beef industry.

It's no secret that cattlemen can be steeped in tradition. Whether it's the way we gather cattle, the day we turn bulls out or the style of headwear we adorn, many of our individual practices haven't likely changed much over the years, decades or even generations. And that is likely one of the reasons that novel ideas like alliances, supply chain arrangements, national ID systems and other collaborations are often difficult notions to consider. We're fiercely independent, self-reliant and often just a tad skeptical of new ideas or partners.

In her January 15, 2024 issue of *Prime Future*, Janette Barnard discussed her thoughts after reading two very different books: *Cattle Kingdom* and *Same As Ever*. The former tells the origins of the U.S. beef business through the late 1800s and early 1900s. The latter simply illustrates that the human psyche doesn't change much over time.

In Barnard's Substack newsletter, she basically stated that cattle producers today face many of the same types of challenges that their ancestors did in the 19th century: market perils, extreme weather woes, huge financial risks and even technological disruptions. While we like to consider "technology" a very modern advancement, just think what the transcontinental railroad, telegraph, barbed wire, large disassembly (packing) plants and refrigerated meat cars did to the beef business in the late 1800s!

As I read her piece and listened to her podcast discussion on "The Future of Agriculture," and then coupled them with a few other historical perspectives that I had recently heard, it reminded me of a quote from my former boss, Dick Spader, while he led the American Angus Association, "There's a reason that the windshield is a lot bigger than the rearview mirror." While it's beneficial to occasionally check what is behind us, we should spend a lot more time focused on what is ahead of us.

Beef producers spend a lot of time reminiscing of the "good old days," often criticizing those in our industry who innovate, grow and adopt technology. Sure, history has provided plenty of lessons from which we have learned. But I often remind myself that we call our livelihood **the cattle BUSINESS, not the cattle LEGACY**. Railroads, central stockyards and barbed wire were not viewed as favorable advancements by some cattlemen 150 years ago. But those who saw them as opportunities were able to build empires. Could notions such as supply chain coordination, electronic cattle management systems and "story beef" be today's equivalents? None of us know, but to capitalize on these opportunities, we're better off looking ahead through the big windshield than backward in the little rearview mirror.

Thank You Your Support

Our Greenwood County 4-H Meats and Eureka FFA Livestock Judging teams wish to thank all of you who supported their trips to their National and International contests. Thanks to Ron Boone, Toronto, KS, who purchased Lot 50 in our fall sale for \$9500. In addition, numerous customers donated additional money after the sale. All of these donations will be used for the 4-H and FFA trips to Denver, CO, and Scotland. **Thank you again for your support of our youth!**

Contact us anytime!

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The Elusive “Perfect Bull”

by Matt Perrier

For much of my life in the cattle business, the question that pervades nearly every conversation with other breeders is something to the effect of “What’s the best bull out there?”

My short answer generally sounds like the classic economist’s response, “It depends.” But honestly, we have never bred the perfect bull or female, and in today’s industry of varying management and marketing situations, most can’t even agree on its definition!

Often, other Angus breeders’ list of reasons of “best bull qualifications” is fairly consistent, and this is supported by looking at the “six-figure sale toppers” at many sales:

“Top 1% marbling”

“High Dollar Values”

“Huge yearling weight”

“Famous cow family/pedigree”

“Birth-Yearling spread”

“High carcass weight”

Instead of joining the “bull of the month” club, we prefer to ask our customers a derivative of the question; “What makes the perfect bull for **your** commercial herd?” Time and again, I hear the following answers:

“The bulls need to stay sound, be gentle, maintain flesh and ‘last.’”

“Their daughters need to breed every year, maintain flesh, be gentle, good uddered and ‘last.’”

“Their calves need to come unassisted, stay healthy, grow quickly and be highly marketable.”

For well over a century, our family’s genetic selection criteria have reflected these desires of our bull customers. Whether it be replacement females, herd bulls, AI sires or donor dams, the four main requirements through the decades have largely remained unchanged. In chronological order, they are: acceptable calving ease, rapid early growth, excellent fertility and longevity.

Sure, we continue to refine and subtly shift trait emphases as new selection tools and needs come about. For instance, the value that marbling has brought to the entire beef industry is undeniable, so we continue to include this in our selection matrix at what we believe are optimum levels, while still allowing us to maintain or improve other foundation traits.

While it would be fun (and honestly, a bit easier) to put our foot on the gas and rapidly change the moderate and highly heritable traits of growth and marbling, we will continue our focus on genetic lines that offer foot and leg soundness, efficiency and fleshing ability, rapid early growth, fertility, docility plus OPTIMUM levels of marbling, post-weaning growth and muscle.

Is it possible? Yes, we believe it is. This breeding philosophy may not produce winners of the race to extreme levels of a few EPD traits or an index. But if it satisfies the commercial cowman’s desire for consistent cattle that quietly do their jobs in the pasture without headaches and loss, PLUS fits for today’s commercial marketplace, then we have done our job.



Will we ever make the perfect bull? Absolutely not...that’s what makes the quest even more of a challenge. But we’re not in it for awards or record-setters, we’re in it for satisfied customers. And we know *that* is of the utmost importance.

It’s what *Practical. Profitable. Genetics.* are all about.

Practical. Profitable. Genetics.
AVAILABLE AT PRIVATE TREATY
Beginning Friday, March 12

Selling 50+ Yearling bulls sired by:

Connealy Cool, Tehama Patriarch, OLC Big Texan, Yon Top Cut, Sitz Resilient, Deer Valley Growth Fund, HF Safe & Sound, Dalebanks Composure and PCC Charisma.

Contact Matt today to receive prices and information (available 3/6/24) to select your next herd bulls.

Dalebanks bulls are:

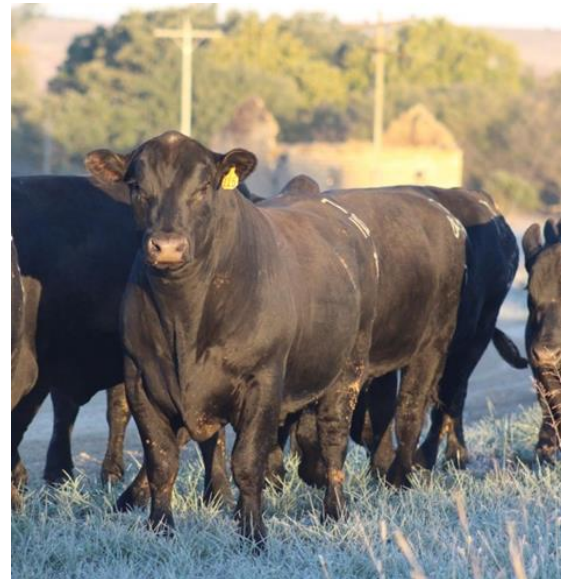
** backed by 120 years of balanced-trait, disciplined breeding and data collection*

** forage developed * fertility tested * foot scored*

**evaluated for genomic & growth traits * docile*

** freeze branded*

** bred to thrive on forage*



Also selling select groups of registered females throughout the spring:

- 15 fall-calving heifers, due October-Nov 2024 (available now)
- 20 fall-calving cows, due October-November 2024 (available late May)
- 20 spring-calving heifers, due March 2025 (available in mid-July)

Dalebanks Angus

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