

Ranching 101
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Cattle Selection and Breeds

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Match the COW to your environment (ranch land resource) and the BULL to the market.

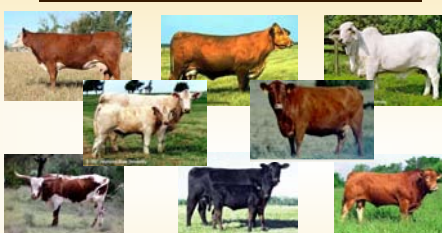





Know the Resource

Which Breed or Breeds?




There truly is just as much (or more) difference within a breed as may be found between different breeds.



Which Breed or Breeds?

- What is the “best” breed?
- Avoid personal preference & fads.
- Be careful of breed stereotypes.
- After deciding on the breed, select individuals from that breed that fit your needs.



Considerations when matching the COW to the environment

- Forage production potential
- Cow size and conformation
- Drinking water availability
- Terrain/Topography
- Heat and Humidity tolerance
- Cold tolerance
- Insect/Pest tolerance
- Labor resources
- Feed resources & strategy

Forage production potential

- Soil survey – County book or Web
- Ranch histories – Caution of ranch history from predecessor or previous owner or seller!
- Forage clip records – start your own database.



Cow size and conformation

- 1 Animal Unit (AU) = 1,000 lb cow with or without calf at side.
- Budget for 3% of body weight consumed per day.
- Cow conformation must be adequate to travel the topography and distance to water.



Well Adapted?



Heat/Cold & Humidity Tolerance

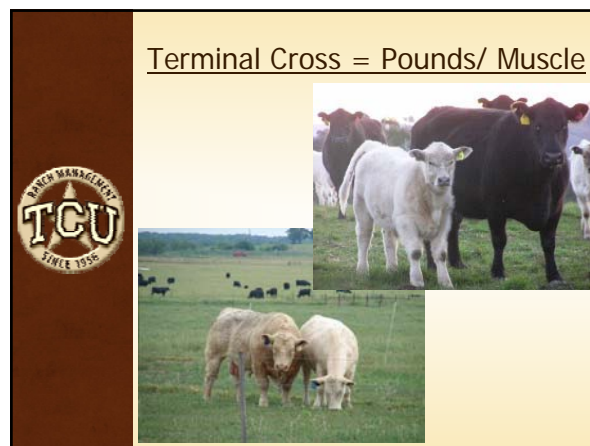
- *Bos indicus* versus *Bos taurus*
- Color and Pigment
- Sweat gland development
- Hair coat
- Heat dissipation and insulation



Which Bull?

- What are your goals?
 - ☐ Raise/keep/sell replacements
 - ☐ Terminal cross
 - ☐ Long term VS Short Term goals
- Breed / breed complementarity
- Important traits to reach goals
- What does the market want?





Terminal Cross = Pounds/ Muscle

Traits to Consider

Female Traits

- Fertility
- Structurally correct
- Volume & Capacity
- Balance & Feminine
- Condition
- Udder development
- Muscling

Bull Traits

- Fertility
- Structurally correct
- Muscling
- Balance
- Capacity
- Testicular devel.
- Masculinity

Keep in mind – this ranking may vary from one operation to another, dependent upon your goals.

Bull Management Issues

- Cows per bull
 - ☐ Min/max
 - ☐ Spread fixed cost
 - ☐ Partner with neighbor
- Replacement heifers/ inbreeding
- Artificial Insemination vs. Bull
- Bull Soundness Exam (BSE)
- Trichomoniasis (Trich) testing



What should I pay for a bull?

- Spread fixed cost over number of calves sired.
- Bull services 25 cows/year for 4 years, with 88% calf crop.
- \$2,500 bull / 88 calves = \$28.41/calf
- Variable cost = feed, vet/med, mineral, pasture, interest.
- What if I upgrade to a better bull?
- \$3,000 / 88 calves = \$34.10 (\$5.68/calf)
- Will the calves be worth \$5.68 more per head?



Contact Info.

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