

BEEF BUSINESS 'BULL'ETIN

Midwest Beef Cattle Consultants - W. Mark Hilton, DVM

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900# Weaning Weights

I spoke to a beef producer that called looking for a new herd bull. He had a friend that purchased a bull from us and the friend was very pleased with the calves, so he thought he would give me a call. His first question was, "How many of your bulls have over a 900# weaning weight?" I didn't have to look at my records. I knew the answer immediately. "Zero", I replied. He then explained that he only purchases bulls with a weaning weight of over 900#.

I then asked him a question. "What was your average weaning weight last year?" He responded, "about 550#". I asked how many weighed over 900# and his answer was the same as mine, "zero". My final questions were "How long have you been buying bulls with over a 900# weaning weight and what have your weaning weights done since then." He said about 7 or 8 years and the weights were about the same as before. We hung up and I knew he would not buy a bull from me.

How can you get 900# weaning weights? Some options are: Have really, really big cows; feed the cows silage all summer and winter like you would a dairy cow; creep feed as soon as the calves will eat feed; wean the calves at 10 months of age. As I look at that list *none* are appealing or profitable at all and it is likely the buyer of the 900# weaning weight bull is not benefitting financially from his decision.

What should be **your** criteria for buying a bull? I discussed this some in our February newsletter, so I will summarize:

1. Buy from a breeder that raises cattle the way you do. Our cows are low-maintenance and graze grass and stalks for most of the year.
2. Buy from someone you trust. What other breeder guarantees their bulls for life for disposition and feet and leg structure? I have never heard of anyone else doing this. I talked to one producer that now buys 5 and 6 year-old bulls because he is so tired



Herd-improving Balancer, Red Angus and SimAngus bulls with nuts, butts and guts; ready for fall breeding

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of sending bulls to market at 2-3 years of age due to feet issues. That is an unfortunate solution to this genetic problem. When I told him about our guarantee on feet and legs for life, I am not sure he believed me.

3. Is the bull for heifers or cows? Do not buy a calving ease Angus bull for your cows.
4. Are daughters going to be kept from this bull? If you have a large herd where you have 3 or more bulls, one of those bulls should be a terminal cross bull that produces pounds and excellent carcass.
5. How do you market your cattle? If you sell on the grid, carcass values become even more important. Are you selling bred females? If so, you need a bull that makes moderate-framed, easy keeping replacements.
6. What is the genetic make-up of your average cow. Hybrid vigor is a huge advantage for the commercial beef producer. If your cows are 75% or more of one breed, the last thing you need is a bull of the same breed.

Who will be more successful, the producer buying 900# weaning weight bulls or the producer that can answer each of the above questions and buy a bull that really fits his or her needs?

Customer Success

Our top priority in our breeding program is to produce bulls that will go out and sire tremendous females for the new herd owner. We have selected for calving ease, excellent growth, tremendous disposition, moderate frame, moderate milk and superior fertility for many generations. We have also focused on carcass traits, but trying to produce this superior female producing bull, we have not focused solely on carcass.

Even though carcass is a secondary goal, we still pay attention to quality. I received a note from a feedlot owner that bought 145 calves last fall and every calf was sired by an MBCC or Brooks bull. The results were outstanding. Look at the superiority in % prime, % choice and CAB compared to the national average, and this was with zero YG 5 cattle and well under the national average on YG 4. These cattle averaged 1331# and were slaughtered at 14-15 months of age and gained over 3.25#/day. Their carcass premium totaled **\$4827.78** on 145 head. Superior genetics pay.



MBCC sired calf owned by Heath Jones, Arkansas. 7 year old CharX cow with an outstanding MBCC Balancer steer at side. Calf weighed 625# @ 164 days.

Call me if you have feeder calves for sale this fall. I have buyers that want calves sired by MBCC, Brooks and Muegge bulls.

If you think this is the year to retain ownership of some calves into the feedlot, I agree. Call and I will suggest a place to feed them. You will get all of the gain and carcass data and make some extra \$\$ if your calves stay healthy, perform and grade. We've been breeding for disposition, growth and carcass for years. Getting a carcass premium of over \$30/head could make a big difference in your bottom line.

We are here to help you have a healthy, productive, low-maintenance and profitable herd. Call us anytime.

	Yield	Prime	Choice	CAB	Select	No roll	YG1	YG2	YG3	YG4	YG5
National ave, %	64.3	4.2	71.4	19.0	21.7	2.7	9.3	34.6	38.8	14.9	2.5
Customer cattle, %	64.1	8.3	86.2	54.5	5.5	0	0.7	34.5	55.9	9.0	0

2018 Open House and Bull Sale

Our 2018 bull sale season has been very successful. Thank you! We had 20 buyers sign in to our open house and bull sale in March and we sold 21 bulls. Nearly 70% of the bulls went to repeat customers and every new buyer that came was referred by a previous buyer. We are very appreciative to each one of you that has purchased a bull or referred a friend to us.

We have 5 bulls for sale this fall—3 Balancers, 1 SimAngus, 1 Red Angus and these 18 month old bulls are available on a first-come, first-served basis. These are not “left over” bulls. The 36 bulls we put on test were selected from over 600 cows. The “leftovers” left their testicles on the ground last fall and ended up on a dinner plate. These bulls are herd improvers and if my parents still had a herd, I would put any of them into their herd. See www.mwbeefcattle.com for more details.

Bulls for sale:

Balancer

1E - Out of one of our favorite bulls (SB Arnold 225W) and a cow that has settled first service AI every year. 5 star disposition bull that will make you love working with your cattle.

13E - Carolina Fortune son with tremendous growth, thickness and top 10% marbling.

24E - Highest YW EPD bull available. If you want to add pounds, this guy will do it. Goes back to my 6J cow so the genetics are solid.

SimAngus

7E - Black baldy SimAngus that goes back to “Supercow”. Supercow was a Sim x Hereford that was the number 1 ranked cow in the Coon herd for 16 years and had 18 calves in 19 years. Tremendous longevity bred in here.

Red Angus

C153E - Red Angus bull that was high gainer of his breed. Very moderate frame so making very efficient females should be the hallmark of this sire.

The Value of Hybrid Vigor

I listened to a podcast put on by NCBA and the title was “The 4 S’s of Crossbreeding; Simple, Structured, Successful and Sustainable.” Go to www.ebeef.org to listen.

A few highlights:

- If you have a herd replacement rate of 18% (national average) and moved to 14% (easily done just by having crossbred cows), you increase pounds of calf weaned/exposed female by 23%! In a 40 cow herd that is the same as weaning 8 extra calves!
- The listeners on the live call were asked if you could get hybrid vigor (heterosis) by crossing different “lines” of the same breed. Sadly, the majority answered “yes”! The answer is “No”. Hybrid vigor ONLY comes from crossing two or more distinct breeds. Examples include Angus x Gelbvieh or Hereford x Simmental.
- A crossbred cow, due to increased longevity, fertility and milking ability makes **\$150 more profit per year**, every year, than a straightbred (anything over 75% of one breed) cow. In that same 40 cow herd, that is **\$6000 extra profit** which means that when you buy our high selling bull at our sale, he is essentially free. Next year take the \$6000 and buy some fencing supplies, upgrade your pick-up or take your wife on vacation. The average cow in the US today is 75% Angus. If your herd consists of 100% crossbred cows, congratulations. If not, come and buy one of our bulls to move your herd toward increased hybrid vigor and profit.

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Please contact us with
any questions. We are
here to help.

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Midwest Beef Cattle Consultants — Superior Genetics for Profit-minded Beef Producers

Saturday, December 1, 9:30 am—Educational Seminar

This will be our third year to host an educational seminar at the Muegge farm SE of Greenfield. Please mark your calendar for **Saturday, December 1**. We will start at **9:30am** and finish at noon with lunch. Mark will talk on “The Advantages of Having Crossbred Cows” and Chris will discuss “New Technology in Beef Nutrition”. I know I get frequent questions about chelated minerals and Chris will discuss what you need to use in your herd. We also want to reserve some time for discussion to hear what has been working well (or not so well) for you. We firmly believe that we can and should all learn from each other. Lunch will be catered by Florida Cracker BBQ in Greenfield and Grandma Muegge will have her incredible selection of homemade pies. It will be worth the trip just to have her famous pie!

After lunch you get your first chance to see the bulls that are on test. If you want to stay for a while afterward we will be freeze branding all of the bulls and we will teach you how to do this if you would like to learn.



Saturday, March 16, 10:00am Annual Open House; 1:00pm—Bull and Female Sale

Please write down **Saturday, March 16** for our **16th Annual Open House and Bull Sale**. We will have about 35 bulls available that day. We have heard your comments over the years about our sale and have listened. For the first time ever, we will also have a select group of bred and open females for your approval at the sale. These females are of the same genetics that produce our bulls each year. Come and add a few select females from the heart of our herds.

Directions from intersection of SR 9 and Hwy 40, Greenfield: Go south on SR 9 for 3 miles to 300 S. Turn left and go 5.1 miles to Binford Rd (angles SE). (At 600E you jog south for about 10 feet. Immediately jog back east to stay on 300S. GPS may mess you up here!) Angle right on Binford and go 1.3 miles to farm on left. It is just past the stop sign.