



photo courtesy Bruce Shanks

SOUTH POLL NEWS WINTER/SPRING 2023

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Teddy Talks

We will be begin taking nominations for our National Field Day sale in February and March of 2023. If you are willing to sell one of your very best animals, we would welcome you to nominate that bull, cow or heifer.

The goal of our breed is fertility and longevity. Keep that in mind when you are selecting an animal. Complete records on calving intervals for cows and records on the mothers of heifers and bulls that sell will take precedence over jsut how the animal looks. This is not a sale for anything you are culling, it should be the very best our breed has to offer. The Sale Committee will have the right to cut any animal that doesn't fit the sale standards.

Please no crooked testicular bulls or females with questionable udders. These South Polls should be calving early in your calving season, not late ones or opens.

Nominations should accompany complete records, a good picture and a 30 second video of the animal walking if possible.

Let's make this a sale with a set of cattle that are second to none as far as what our breed stands for. We are looking forward to having a wonderful set of South Polls and a great event in September.

Respectively,

Teddy Gentry



Submit your ORIGINAL photos to Ann at

Winners will receive a prize from SPGCA!

SOII Livestock Show and Rodeo

March 1, 2023 Sale @ NRG Arena **Houston Livestcock Show Grounds**

Once again, the South Poll Grass Cattle Association will be selling one pen of five Open Heifers and one pen of five Bred Heifers. Traditionally, we are one (or both) of the top selling pens of cattle at the All-Breeds Sale. This is a perfect chance for you to purchase some of the finest cattle in our breed. Online bidding options are available in addition to having someone in attendance bid for you via phone. The on-line link to bid is available here or you can call Dave Roberts at 256-996-1788 and he will find you someone to bid via phone. Please call Dave prior to 12 noon CST, March 1, 2023 so he can assist you before the sale.

See the pedigrees and photos of the sale offerings below or you can also see them by clicking here! Click the pedigrees below to see them on the registry.

BRED HEIFERS

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Bred Heifers Continued



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OPEN HEIFERS

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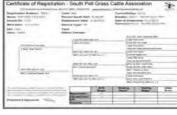
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Submit your favorite recipes for the next Newsletter! psst...there are PRIZES! southpollgrasscattle@gmail.com



from familyfreshmeals.com

2 lbs. ground beef 2.5 tsp. seasoned salt

1 tsp. garlic powder

1/2 tsp. black pepper

3 tsp. worchestshire sauce

4 T. butter

2 c. mushroom slices

ranch for topping

2 c. shredded cheddar (divided) 10 slices cooked bacon, diced chopped chives, bacon BBQ sauce

Mix ground beef, seasoned salt, garlic powder, pepper and worchestshire sauce together.

On a baking sheet lined with foil, form 4 meat bowls using a clean jar or can. Set aside.

Saute mushrooms in butter, season

Fill each bowl with 1/4 c. cheese, mushrooms, 2 slices diced bacon, top with another 1/4 c. cheese.

Bake at 350 degrees F covered with a foil tent (foil loosely coving) covering for 30 mins. Before serving, top with diced bacon, bbq sauce, ranch and diced chives.



LET THE COW DECIDE BY STEVE FREEMAN

I was discussing the natural time for cattle to calve with a farmer friend who is somewhat new to cattle. I was a bit taken aback when, after hearing me explain the short 45 day breeding program we utilize, he asked "why impose a breeding season on the cows?". He said "it's more natural to let them decide when it's best for them to calve." He told me using this method, his herd reached a "100% breed-up" - the first time he ever had all the cows breed back. When I asked him how long he left the bulls in with the herd, he said he never takes them out. This is a fairly common way of describing the breeding percentage in a herd and it's not uncommon to keep the bulls in with the herd year round to ensure all cows get bred. However, it doesn't bring much clarity to the question of the fertility of the herd. Tom Lasater used "reproductive efficiency" to describe true fertility in a beef herd. This can be achieved simply by following a program requiring every female in the herd to have a calf every 365 days, beginning at two years of age. That's a pretty simple, but clear way to define reproductive efficiency. And while we use a short breeding season to improve reproductive efficiency, we have found other benefits to the short season.

Reasons for a short breeding season:

- 1. Fertility- Fertility is number one, two and three in importance when it comes to making money in the cattle business. Having a calf every 365 days should be expected of the cow.
- 2. Grass management- Having the entire herd in very nearly the same stage of gestation and lactation allows the grass manager to match the nutritional needs of the cows to the nutritional stage and quantity of the grass.
- 3. Marketing- The larger the number of calves of the same size and sex that can be marketed through conventional outlets, the higher the price will usually be.
- 4. Simplicity: It's so nice to be finished!- It's always a good day when the last healthy calf of the season is born.

Fertility - Fertility is far and above the biggest driver of profitability in the cow business. We ask so little of a beef cow - to have a calf every year and raise it to 40-50% of her weight and then breed back to have another one approximately 365 days later. It seems like the modern cattle industry has turned what is a pretty simple, straightforward task into a difficult one for the cow. Without added feed, supplements, hormones and expensive minerals, it seems difficult for many cows to accomplish this feat. It appears we have lost the inherent natural fertility in the US cow herd. I believe the bred-in fertility is the number one trait the South Poll can bring to the commercial cattle industry, and it's something we need to constantly work hard on to keep improving.

When I was young (1980's), I worked for a good cattleman, one who saw the Continental (large European cattle) invasion as the beginning of the end for the small, efficient, maternal cow. He almost went broke while in the purebred Charolais business. He was full of advice, and two statements he made still resonate with me. He said, "If you expect to bring fertility to your herd, don't buy breeding animals from a brood stock producer who has two calving seasons, or even one long one." Then he explained that, "High priced cattle are difficult to cull and with two breeding seasons you can bet the "pretty" cows that come up open will just be shifted to the opposite season." This is a way to forgive low fertility in a "pretty" cow. Another statement that we actually worked out on paper was that even if a cow is an above average calf raiser, and misses calving one year, she will never produce the same pounds of calf over a lifetime as the 'average' cow that has a calf in a short, 365 day window every year. He had switched from a purebred type of operation to one as extensive (large amount of rented land with few improvements or inputs) and hands-off as possible. His cattle were mostly Brahman cross cattle, and we didn't do a thing to help these cows breed except wait for good growing grass before putting the bulls in for 60 days. Every cow that was open was sent to a new home. Fertility was high in the herd, but disposition was terrible always wore tennis shoes so that I could run from, and dodge, crazy cows when necessary!

Johann Zeitsmann, Burke Teichert, Tom Lasater- three legends in the cow/calf business- all agree that for a cow to be profitable, she must have a calf every year, beginning at 24 months of age, and do so with few to no crutches to aid her. I believe the South Poll was built to accomplish this very task, and do it in the heat and humidity of the South and Southeast. But why can't the cow pick her individual calving season as long as she continues to have a calf every year? Well, they certainly are able to do so, and we all know producers who have cows calving almost every month of the year. This is because cows have been domesticated for thousands of years and one of the traits we have selected for is to breed almost any time of year. So the question to answer for my friend is not, why can't they calve when they choose, but perhaps, why, it may not be the best way to manage grass, marketing, and as previously stated, create the highly fertile herd of cattle most producers desire.

Grass Management - If the cows are also close to being in the same stage of gestation and/or lactation, it makes for more effective and easier forage management. There's a time when it's of utmost importance to have enough quantity and quality of forage for the cows to succeed (breed back) and other times when it's important to have them become grass conditioners or even bushhogs to knock down lower quality, mature grass and small brush. During the calving season and on through the breeding season, cows should have as much quantity and quality grass as they can eat - and eat they do - for after calving they will almost double their intake. We want cows to put on weight after calving and through the breeding season. Calving during the spring flush makes it easy and inexpensive to put weight on cows before turning bulls in for breeding. Putting weight on after calving and before breeding signals to the cow that all is right in the world and she begins cycling quickly and has no excuse for not ending up pregnant. To calve in winter, cows usually require supplementation to raise the level of nutrition. Calving in the fall has the issue of the greatly increased appetite of newly fresh cows when the forage (stockpile/hay) is becoming the most expensive. "One bite of grass in the winter is worth two in the spring."

Cows don't need high quality forage year round. The herd at times should be thought more as a clean up tool for coarse grass and lower quality forage during periods in their gestation and lactation when nutritional needs are lower. The best grass is better utilized for more profitable animals such as yearling steers and breeding/growing heifers. If we have long calving seasons, two calving seasons or even year round calving, using the cows as tools for grazing management becomes difficult, as there are greatly varied nutritional needs within the spread out calving herd.

Marketing - Marketing is the reason we originally went to a short breeding season and found all the other benefits after doing so. Dr. Gordon Hazard, the famous grazier from Mississippi, stated at a forage conference I attended in 1990, "you aren't really in control of your cattle prices until you can sell a potload." He went on to say, "when you can put a potload together (50,000 lbs) of like kind cattle, somebody is going to want them and your chances of being paid fairly, rise dramatically." We had Brangus and Beefmaster crossed cattle at the time and the local sale barn buyers always docked us for the ears. We are small cattle producers and we needed to have a short calving season so the calves were more uniform and all could go on the truck as a unit. We found selling a potload on the satellite sale increased our take home price \$3,000 - \$8,000 through reduced shrink, no hauling costs and increased price received. It's amazing how popular 800 lb, heat tolerant, grass raised steers can be in August even if their ears droop a bit. If you can't put a pot together, selling larger numbers of uniform, same sex animals at the sale barn will still bring you a higher price.

Simplicity, It's so nice to be finished calving. - My wife, Judy, manages the cow herd, and during calving she is very busy. She records all the births in her red book, makes daily moves of the cows with all the new babies, and is always quite cheerful when the last calf is born. She loves the calving season-for about 30 days! Moving cows with very young calves is a bit of a challenge at times, as we have roads, creeks and long distances we have to cover in our grazing system. The closer the births are bunched together, the sooner all the calves reach the age when moving them is more easily accomplished. Over the years, calving in sync with the spring flush, we have found that 90% or more of the calves are born in the first 21 days and the thought has to come to mind that maybe this is natural for a spring calving, adapted, herd of cows.

I understand the reasoning behind calving in the fall on fescue to avoid breeding in the heat of summer, or calving in the winter to wean a larger calf and avoid breeding cows in the heat of summer. We've tried both of these seasons. However, having some diversity of forage, plus adapted cows that thrive in the heat of summer, allows cows to breed and calve in a short spring season. This allows the herd to mimic all the North American wild herbivores who have their newborns in a short season - during the warm, spring flush of grass.

So, the reasoning for the short, managed breeding and calving season is straightforward. However, calving in the spring flush of grass is not as simple as it sounds, as we found out in 30 years of aiming for this goal. South Polls accelerated our summer breeding program. Because of the dominance of KY31+ fescue in our paddocks, we had to develop a herd of cows that could not only tolerate the heat and humidity, but also have the adaptability to graze weeds and forbs during the summer breeding season that most cows avoid (anything besides fescue). These South Poll traits, as well as easy fleshing and natural fertility, were the last piece of the puzzle that allowed us to put this "natural" system together.

Let The Cow Decide was contributed by Steve Freeman of Woods Fork Cattle Company out of Hartville, MO. If you have any questions please feel free to reach out to him via email at stevfreeman@gmail.com





The Classified Section of our website is available to the public for viewing. Unfortunately, that opens up an opportunity for some folks that may be up to 'no good'. Please make sure that when you are dealing with a potential buyer that you are using caution. Do your due diligence and homework to make sure the deal is above board.

All transactions that result from the Classified Section of our website are between buyer and seller.



ONLINE REGISTRATION TIPS!

Many of you have been utilizing the online registration tool on the website. Please reference the tips below to help you have a more complete and correct set of papers.

- * Make sure you have a Livestock Genetics Account set up. This is DIFFERENT than what you have set up for the website. If you don't have your LG account set up, you will need the following information.
- 1. Member number--5 digits usually and is found on your welcome letter or any registration in your name.
- 2. Username--please use first name.last name or some combination of that so you are easily identified by the office--it makes it easier for the office to find your information.
- 3. Choose your password and make a note of it.

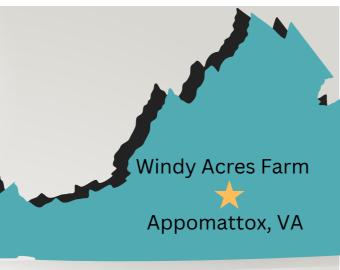
Online registration is fairly easy! Here are a few more things that you will want to do when you are getting ready to register animals!

- 1. Fill out the spreadsheet under cattle/cattle forms on the website and print it off--all of your information will be in one handy spot to make the process easier.
- 2. Once you have your information compiled and you are logged in click Calving Sheet tab.
- 3. You can choose to enter from Active Dams tab or enter the calves individually.
- 4. Naming a calf--this is how calves are named in the system: Herd Prefix Sire TAG number Dam TAG number Calf TAG number. Please make sure to put a space in between each section of the name Example: CSR 4440 12345 2201 If you are choosing to add a name of calf, please do so after the calf tag number with NO space between.
- 5. Once you are all done entering information, you must click the Proceed to (year) calf crop-this is located at the top of the screen and is underlined.
- 6. You may see some errors--some of the more common ones are 'dam not owned at time of conception and no permit on file' If you see this error, it is most likely due to a transfer date conflict OR you are trying to register a calf that you weren't responsible for the breeding of. If you see this error, you need to contact the office and we will resolve it. Another common error is 'dam had calf within 274 days' this is also an error that will need to be looked at by the office. Most commonly, the calf is already registered, or there is a birthdate conflict.
- 7. When you are done entering in all of your information and have hit the SYNC button, please email the office and let us know how many animals you think you have entered along with any work order number you have noticed. That way, we know you have something in the system and can track it down as well as make sure we know your order is complete.
- 8. We will review your order, check for any errors, print and bill.
- 9. A couple of other things to note: We don't use the Livestock Genetics billing option--if you see a 'balance due' on your account in LG- please don't be concerned, all of your billing will come either on a QuickBooks statement on paper with your order, or in your email if we are not mailing you anything.
- 10. On the website, if you haven't already done so, please set up your website profiles. If you click this link it will take you to the setup link. Again, please use the first name last name option when choosing your username so we can easily find your member name if we need to help you out. Take the time to customize your profile with pictures, bio, and social media links. The more links we have amongst us, the more powerful this tool will be for all of us!
- 11. As always, I am here to help you! If I don't answer, leave me a message and I will get back to you as soon as possible! I am trying to take a couple days a week away from the phone so I can dedicate more time to entering in data, but I WILL call you back!

VIRGINIA SOUTH POLL **CATTLE SALE**

Producers:

Windy Acres Farm - Appomattox, VA Bent Creek Farm - Prospect, VA Ellett Valley Beef Co. - Blacksburg, VA Mountain Glen Farm - Fairfield, VA Harris Homeplace Farm - Snowcamp, NC



May 27, 2023 9am-3pm

Agenda:

Register by May 20th

\$35/person

After May 20th \$60/person 11:00 - 12:00pm

Kids 12 & Under -**FREE**

9:00 - 9:30am

9:30 - 10:30am

12:00 - 2:00pm

Hosted By

2:00pm

Welcome

Low Cost Cattle

Production

10:30 - 11:00 am Break/Cattle Viewing Pasture Walk

Lunch Provided

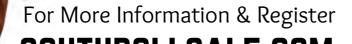
SALE

Speakers:

Virginia South Poll Cattle Associates Bruce Shanks- Sassafras Valley Ranch

Dr. Gabe Pent - AREC Superintendent

Females, Pairs, Bulls



SOUTHPOLLSALE.COM

Please register online or call

WINDY ACRES FARM

2853 SPRING GROVE ROAD APPOMATTOX, VIRGINIA, 24522 (434) 942-5210

Windy Acres Farm & Virginia South Poll Cattle Associates

OFFICE UPDATE

By: Ann Demerath Hello from the office!

Wow! What a winter it has been! We have recovered from our deep freeze here over the holidays and things are shaping up nicely for spring!

I have some numbers that you all may find interesting from 2022:

- * 2517 Animals were registered
- * 1876 Animals were transferred
- * 105 new Active Members were added.

Whew! That's a good year!!

All of the Whole Herd reports have been sent out, the last of them went out the first part of this week. The reports were mailed along with annual dues statements for 2023. If you have any questions once you have your report, feel free to reach out with anything! A couple things to note: 1) You can input your herd changes on your own if you are logged in to your account. 2) If you choose to have the office make your changes, all reports MUST be mailed back to the office by US mail.

One other change you may have noted is that I am taking a few days of the week to not answer calls in order to get paperwork and other items caught up in the office. If you have anything that needs immediate attention, please email me or text me during business hours. This 'downtime' allows us to work more efficiently in processing paperwork, updating things and get some other work done.

Field Day plans are coming along nicely. We are super excited about some of the things we have planned for this 15th Anniversary! There will be more current details posted on the website soon, including hotel accommodations. campgrounds available and more! Don't forget that if you have the ability to spend an extra day or so, you will be in the heart of where South Polls were developed. Take advantage of it and see if you can arrange some farm visits with some folks that have a lot of great history and info!

There will be some changes rolling out soon on how we accept and process requests sent into the office. We are migrating towards being more efficient and timely and that will involve some cooperation from everyone. We will no longer accept forms that are only partially filled out and requests for registration and transfers that come via text and social media messaging. All registrations must be submitted either via the spreadsheet that is on-line or done through your on-line account. All transfers must be submitted either on the back of the original papers (please don't mail originals-make a copy) OR you can fill out the transfer paper form on-line and email it in. You can send or scan both of those forms and email it in if that is more convenient. If you are THERE ARE PRIZES! going to print them off and fill them in, please make them legible.

I think that is about it from here....Praying all of you are well and loving life!

Happy Grazing!!

~Ann







Email your favorite recipes, photos and anything else you would like to see in the SPGCA Newsletter to the office!

Are you next?
Your ad could be here!
\$100 Full Page Ad!
\$50 1/2 Page Ad!

CALL ANN AT THE SOUTH POLL GRASS CATTLE ASSOCIATION FOR DETAILS! 417-256-8355

High School Seniors!!

Don't forget to apply for the SPGCA SCHOLARSHIP!!

Any high school senior for the 2022/2023 School year is eligible to apply!

Click for Application!



As we all know, the price of everything has increased across the board. We have held off on this as long as we could, but with the price of postage, paper, etc. we have had to re-evaluate our registration and transfer prices.

Effective April 1, 2023 the new prices will be:

Member Pricing

Registrations (cattle under 2) \$20/head Registrations (cattle over 2) \$40/head Transfers (no age limit) \$25/head

Non-member Pricing

Registrations (any age) \$40/head Transfers \$40/head



Upcoming Events!

February 21, 2023 February 16, 2023 May 27, 2023 June 2-3, 2023 Spring Forage Conference
Roane Co. Grazing Conference
VA South Poll Sale
The Homestead Festival

Springfield, MO Kingston, TN Appamatox, VA Columbia, TN



South Poll Grass Cattle Association New Membership Application

Name to be on Certificate	
Farm Name	
First Name	Last Name
Address	
Email Address	
Phone	
Cell	
Herd Letters:	
Choice 1	
Choice 2	
Choice 3	
() Email List Opt in-p	lease check box to be added to the South Poll newsletter email list
OFFICE USE ONLY:	
	Membership Fees \$100.00 year.
	Please send check or money order to: South Poll Grass Cattle Association
	5235 Gravel Point Road
	Mountain Grove, MO 65711
	256-996-8355
Signature	Date
	form you agree to abide by the rules and regulations and the by laws of South Poll Grass Cattle Association

WITHOUT MY CATTLE, MY WALLET MIGHT BE FULLER. MY HOUSE WOULD DEFINITELY BE CLEANER, BUT MY HEART WOULD BE EMPTY...



In the next issue

- Teddy Talks
- Field Day Information
- More!

Photo: Bruce Shanks, Missouri

Let's keep in touch

South Poll Grass Cattle Association 5235 Gravel Point Road

256-996-8355 southpollgrasscattle@gmail.com Mountain Grove, MO 65711 www.southpoll.com

