

Griggs Cattle Company – More About Your Farm

Our cow herd is our brood herd made up of primarily Red Devon/Angus crossed cattle. They are naturally bred by one of our pure Red Devon bulls during July to September. This results in most calves being born April to June. Calves stay with their mother (dame) most of the year after birth and are weaned (separated) typically during their 11th month. This allows the dame some time off nursing this calf before giving birth to her next calf.

When calves reach 24 months of age they are selected to become beef or to be bred. Typically all bull calves become steers for beef. Some heifers become part of the breeding herd while others are selected for beef. These cattle are a very hardy breed and spend their winters on pasture where they are fed hay on a daily basis. We never feed them grain or manufactured foods. If they become sick and we administer antibiotics for their health they are never selected to become beef for our commercial trade. They are never fed or administered any hormones.

During the summer grazing season we rotate the herd through 10 pastures (“paddocks”) which cover 134 acres. All pastures are interconnected throughout the entire farmstead using high-tensile steel wire electrified fencing. During the grazing period (summer between snow storms season) we subdivide the paddocks into 1 to 2 acre grazing areas using “portable” fencing called “braided polywire”. The cattle will consume roughly 1/3 to 1/2 of available forages within 2 to 4 hours and are then moved on to another grazing area. Using this pattern we will move them 3 to 4 times a day. This practice enables better control the amount forage they consume, improves the regrowth of the stand, better insures we have enough grass to last the growing season, and spreads their manure naturally throughout the entire grazing area.

During the winter months the herd dwells in a selected paddock for a month or more before moving while we fed them hay bales weighing from 800 to over 1,000 pounds. This practice spreads the hay across the paddock, rejuvenating existing forages with organic residue and seed, while spreading the cattle manure naturally. We believe this to be an important conservation practice reducing greenhouse gas emissions and helping the environment while allowing the cattle to live relatively free to roam and graze.

When calving begins we typically move the herd to a clean pasture they haven't been using during the winter months. The herd is visited several times each day to check for new calves and while feeding hay. When a calf is born it is weighed with a portable scale and ear-tagged with the mother's number, so to keep a record of who belongs to who. Every attempt is made to weigh and tag every new calf within the first 12 hours after birth. Every calf birth is recorded in a master cattle document which is kept ad infinitum.