

Santa Gertrudis Breeders International continues to prove why the breed remains one of the most versatile and adaptable beef breeds in the industry today. Developed in the United States and backed by decades of performance, Santa Gertrudis genetics are working successfully in a wide range of environments, from the heat and humidity of the Gulf Coast to the cold, rugged conditions of northern Utah.

As the first beef breed developed in the United States, Santa Gertrudis cattle hold a unique place in the American cattle industry. Named for the Spanish land grant where Captain Richard King established the historic King Ranch in South Texas, the breed was developed with one goal in mind: creating cattle that could survive, perform and remain profitable in the harsh conditions of the South Texas brush country.

The foundation of the breed began in the early 1900s when King Ranch systematically crossed Brahman cattle with Shorthorn genetics in search of a more adaptable and productive animal. After years of selective breeding, ranch managers determined that a blend of 3/8 Brahman and 5/8 Shorthorn produced cattle with the ideal balance of hardiness, fertility, growth and adaptability. In 1920, a legendary bull named Monkey was born and would eventually become the foundation sire of the Santa Gertrudis breed. Known for his muscle expression, structural soundness and ability to thrive in difficult conditions, Monkey helped establish the traits the breed is still recognized for today.

In 1940, the United States Department of Agriculture officially recognized Santa Gertrudis as a distinct beef breed, marking a milestone not only for King Ranch but for the American beef industry as a whole. More than 80 years later, the breed continues building on that legacy through modern genetic evaluation, commercial cattleman success and increasing demand for adaptable, efficient cattle that can perform in a variety of climates and management systems.

During the Utah State University heterosis project, Santa Gertrudis-sired calves demonstrated exceptional hardiness during February calving conditions where average temperatures reached highs of just 26°F and lows near 10°F. The project reported zero Santa Gertrudis calf losses due to freezing, compared to six Angus calf losses under the same conditions. The results continue to reinforce what commercial cattlemen across the country already know: Santa Gertrudis cattle are built for longevity, adaptability and hybrid vigor.

Those traits continue to drive interest in the breed as commercial cattlemen search for genetics that can perform in increasingly demanding environments while maintaining maternal strength, fertility and efficiency. Today, Santa Gertrudis cattle are registered to breeders in 37 states and nine countries, with genetics continuing to expand into diverse commercial and seedstock operations nationwide.

In 2025 alone, 30% of all calves registered through Santa Gertrudis Breeders International were out of cows over the age of eight — a testament to the longevity and long-term productivity the breed is known for. For many producers, keeping productive females in the herd longer directly impacts profitability through lower replacement costs and increased lifetime production.

Under the leadership of Keaton Dodd and Arlin Taylor, along with the rest of the SGBI board of directors and staff, the association continues working to move the breed forward through commercial cattleman outreach, data-driven genetic progress, youth involvement and expanded breed promotion efforts across the country.

That effort includes continued emphasis on performance data, breed improvement and educating producers on the advantages Santa Gertrudis genetics can bring to both commercial and seedstock operations. Across the country, breeders are seeing success utilizing Santa Gertrudis cattle in a variety of programs ranging from purebred seedstock operations to crossbreeding systems focused on maximizing hybrid vigor and maternal efficiency.

Across the country, Santa Gertrudis breeders are continuing to showcase the breed's ability to perform in both seedstock and commercial settings. From progressive crossbreeding programs focused on heterosis and maternal efficiency to purebred operations emphasizing longevity and adaptability, Santa Gertrudis genetics are helping producers build practical, profitable cowherds that can withstand environmental and market challenges alike. The breed's continued expansion into new regions and management systems reflects growing confidence in cattle that are functional, efficient and built to work in real-world conditions.

For producers searching for practical cattle that can withstand environmental stress while maintaining productivity, fertility and longevity, Santa Gertrudis cattle continue proving themselves in real-world conditions across the United States.

Today's Santa Gertrudis. Longevity. Adaptability. Hybrid Vigor.