

SANTA GERTRUDIS *Source*



SEPTEMBER 2024 • VOLUME 27 • NUMBER 8

Integrity, Quality, Tradition & Hospitality

36th Annual Santa Gertrudis

ALABAMA CONNECTION SALE



Mark your calendar!

11:00 a.m.

October 5, 2024

Cullman Stockyards
Cullman, Ala.

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SANTA GERTRUDIS Source

SEPTEMBER 2024
VOLUME 27 • NUMBER 8

FEATURES



- 10** BIF 2024: Matching Genetics to the Environment



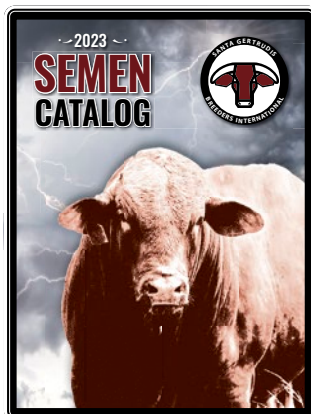
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ON THE COVER

Pinnacle Cattle Co., LLC, Schulenburg, Texas
Photo by Cate Doubet.

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GCR 361

Calf at side

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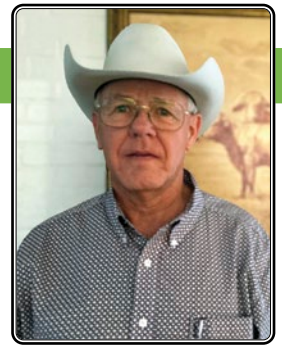
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(512) 508-6747



Business or Busyness?

Do you view your cattle business like a true business? Do you have a plan? Do you know your costs of operation, your value of inventory, your bottom line? If you don't, you aren't running a business, but I suspect there is a lot of busyness going on.

What is your marketing program for your business? Do you have a marketing budget? Do you have a marketing calendar? Do you hire someone with creative expertise to develop your marketing materials, or do you "cobble it together" yourself?

What are some elements necessary to begin treating your business like a business?

- Start with a vision of where you want to be one, three, five and 10 years down the road. Learn how to articulate that vision in 30 seconds or less. Strip out all of the fat and get focused.
- Develop a plan that includes a series of goals to achieve your vision. These should be concrete, measurable steps that you plan to accomplish. Each step should take you closer to achieving your vision for your business.
- Part of your plan should be a couple of calendars. You need an operations calendar that includes breeding season, calving season, weaning, DNA sampling, ultrasound and all of the other steps necessary to build the data from which to make quality breeding decisions. The other calendar is a marketing calendar. This one is your plan for representing your cattle to potential buyers. For this calendar you need to work backward from your target sale. Advertising requires a lead time. Most publications must have content at least 30 days prior to going to print. Plan to email and

Start with a vision of where you want to be one, three, five and 10 years down the road. Learn how to articulate that vision in 30 seconds or less.

call prospective customers over a series of weeks prior to any sale. If you don't ask people to be there to bid on your cattle, they probably won't be.

- You need to develop a budget for your business. In order to build that budget, you must first know your costs – for everything – including your time. Just like measuring various phenotypic traits to inform your breeding plan, you must measure the costs of doing business.
- Breeding plans are also a necessary component for success. This ties directly into your vision. If that vision includes producing calves that are in the top 1 percent of the breed, you need a plan to get there. Remember, one-half of that equation is the genetics of the cow. You can't fix everything with the "right" bull, but you can make significant progress.
- You need a maintenance plan for equipment and infrastructure. Preventive maintenance is much cheaper than triage. If something is going to break down, it seems to always happen at the worst possible time. A little prevention can eliminate that type of panic.
- Do you have a regular training program for your staff? Do you evaluate them on their areas of responsibility on a regular basis? It is very expensive to hire and train employees, but it is almost always better to educate and motivate than to replace. That's just my experience. The corporate world has a very different philosophy.

- Do you invest in your own education? The business environment in which we operate changes rapidly, and it is necessary that we constantly update our knowledge.
- Part of that change is in the area of environmental and societal responsibility. Does your plan include those aspects of doing business?
- Write out your plan. It is critical that your plan – all pieces of it – be in written form. Your calendars should be visible and readily available to all involved so they can plan for upcoming events and procedures.

Nearly everyone involved in the breed is a successful business person, however, there are some who fail to treat their cattle operations as a business. If it truly is "just a hobby" for you, that's great and I hope that it will always be enjoyable. If, on the other hand, it needs to contribute to a positive bottom line, how you approach it becomes extremely important.

The bottom line is that your success is your responsibility – no one else can do it for you. If no one shows up at the sale to buy your cattle, that's on you. If your animals don't perform as expected, that's on you. Okay, I realize there occasionally are factors that are out of your control, but at the end of the day, we are each responsible for our own actions and how we respond to those unexpected challenges.

There are experts who can help you with many of the items mentioned here. Always feel free to reach out to me and I will do my best to point you in the right direction. 🐾

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A Look at the Future

As time allows, I enjoy reviewing beef industry publications. Reading articles written by producers in other areas of the country provides me with a different perspective on herd management and marketing practices. These articles also offer the thoughts of industry leaders from the nation's different beef-producing regions. Last month, an interview in *Illinois Farmer Today* of Paul Walker, Ph.D., caught my attention. Walker spent more than 30 years as a professor of animal science at Illinois State University and has served in countless state and federal industry leadership positions, including serving as co-chair of the Nutrition and Health Committee of the Cattlemen's Beef Board that administers the national Beef Checkoff.

In the interview, Walker touched on a number of topics regarding the future of the beef industry. However, it was his thoughts about the future role of the seedstock producer that caught my attention and made me think about our asso-

ciation and its future in this rapidly evolving industry.

Walker believes there will be two types of seedstock producers in the future. He thinks there will be larger-scale, production-oriented producers, and there will be smaller scale producers whom he refers to as "lifestyle producers." In his

What remains critical is that Santa Gertrudis breeders continue to turn out numbers of cattle that are eligible for registration and are made available to either lifestyle markets or commercial markets.

opinion, lifestyle producers will have cattle because they like cattle and they like the lifestyle that owning cattle provides. They may raise and sell show cattle, or they may target a direct-to-consumer market. He made the point that these producers may make serious income selling high-valued show cattle or they may have a substantial tax-deduction. However, he noted that changes made by these producers have little impact on the commercial industry.

Walker said changes made by the large-scale producers do have consequences for the production chain. He pointed out that large-scale producers are more likely to adopt and utilize the latest technology, especially those that increase efficiency. By taking advantage of economies of scale, these large operations can create efficiencies in production, marketing and distribution, which reduces costs and, ultimately, increases net profit.

According to Walker, the bottom line is that larger beef operations generate more revenue than smaller ones due to economies of scale and have an impact on the commercial industry. However, he is quick to point out smaller operations that produce a superior, value-added product at a lower volume of production can be profitable. Walker concluded that there is a need for both types of operations, and I agree.

That said, these changing trends in breed associations will continue to unfold. What remains critical is that Santa Gertrudis breeders continue to turn out numbers of cattle that are eligible for registration and are made available to either lifestyle markets or commercial markets. 🐄

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TRESSA LAWRENCE,
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

“We have the technology now to measure traits that are greatly impacted by environment and generate genetic evaluations for these traits.”

—Jared Decker,
Ph.D.

Matching Cattle Genetics to the Environment

The Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) was founded in 1968 with the purpose of advancing and coordinating all segments of the beef cattle industry, connecting science and industry to improve beef genetics. The annual symposium was held June 10-13 in Knoxville, Tenn., with presenters coming from across the country to share their expertise.

The presentations kicked off with Jared Decker, Ph.D., Wurdack Chair of Animal Genomics and Associate Professor of Animal Sciences at the University of Missouri, sharing about matching cattle genetics to the environment.

“Is it worthwhile to try and match your genetics to the environment?” Decker asked at the beginning of his presentation.

Environmental Stressors

Decker explained that environmental stressors such as extreme heat and cold, high altitude and fescue toxicosis cost the beef industry an estimated \$1 billion every year. This has been a concern in the cattle industry over the last 70 years. Decker referenced a study conducted in the 1960s that took cattle from a research facility in Miles City, Mont., and moved them to Brookfield Research Station in



Jared Decker, Ph.D.

Florida, and took cows from the Florida research station to Montana. The notable takeaway from the study was that the cows native to Montana that were relocated to Florida had a pregnancy rate of 55 percent, which was 21 to 28 percent lower than the other groups of cattle in the study. The results highlighted the emphasis on genetics by environment (G x E) interactions, specifically the focus of G x E interactions on reproduction.

“When cows are under environmental stress, you tend to end up with more open females, and the females that do get pregnant tend to have poor body condition scores because of the stress,” Decker explained.

G x E interactions have the most significant impact on reproduction, body condition and metabolism. According to Decker, there are currently three different U.S. Department of Agriculture grant-funded projects that are studying the influence of G x E interactions on cattle. The first project has honed in on local adaptation functions that affect blood vessel constriction and dilation, which is important when regarding heat and cold weather tolerance, altitude stress and fescue toxicosis. Other impacts associated with G x E interactions were metabolism and immune response,

Continued on 12 »

GENOTYPE BY ENVIRONMENT INTERACTION: REPRODUCTION					401
TABLE 4. REPRODUCTIVE PERFORMANCE OF LINES M ₁ AND F ₄ AT EACH OF THE TWO LOCATIONS DURING PHASE 2 OF THE STUDY					
Group or item	No. of matings	Pregnancy rate, %	Calf survival, %	Weaning rate, %	
Subgroups					
M ₁ in MT	398	83.0 ± 2.2	90.5 ± 1.9	75.1 ± 2.2	
F ₄ in MT	93	80.9 ± 4.3	86.8 ± 3.7	70.2 ± 4.7	
M ₁ in FL	98	55.0 ± 4.1	86.8 ± 4.4	47.7 ± 4.5	
F ₄ in FL	370	76.1 ± 2.2	89.1 ± 2.0	67.8 ± 2.3	

21 to 28 percentage points lower than the other subgroups!!!

This slide from Jared Decker’s presentation shows data collected from the cattle swap experiment of the 1960s that took cattle from Montana to Florida and vice versa. The data shows that cattle from Montana living in the heat of Florida had significantly lower pregnancy rates.

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Matching Cattle Genetics to the Environment

Continued from 10

ultimately affecting the ability of the livestock to cope with stressors and adapt to their environment.

The other studies that Decker spoke on are focused on developing tools that are designed to help producers match cattle genetics to their environment, giving producers more tools to work with instead of solely relying on buying cattle from similar environments. After studying dozens of different loci associated with environmental selection in beef cattle, they have found that many of the allele frequencies are converging back to the breed average, meaning that cattle are likely losing local adaptation abilities because of the lack of tools to select for it. Utilizing crossbreeding and emphasizing expected progeny differences (EPDs) are steps that Decker recommended to help address G x E interactions.

“We have the technology now to measure traits that are greatly impacted by environment and generate genetic evaluations for these traits,” Decker explained.

Current Technology

EPDs are beneficial to genetic evaluations in terms of predicting G x E interactions in cattle. Pulmonary arterial pressure (PAP) is an impactful tool for producers who run cattle at high altitudes. Fertility indicators and stayability continue to be a top priority for cattlemen across the country. Hair shedding is a more recent evaluation being added to some breed production EPDs, such as in the Angus association.

Decker explained that hair shedding is an economically relevant trait as it directly measures an animal's ability to deal with stress as well as to measure the animal's ability to sense and respond to the environment. Producers concerned with heat tolerance in cattle will find this predictor extremely relevant.

“[Hair shedding] is a moderately heritable trait, and the repeatability tends to be slightly above the heritability, so with each record we get on an animal, it gives us a clearer picture of the genetic potential,” Decker said. “I think most people would be completely comfortable calling something that

measures the ability to sense and respond to the environment ‘adaptability.’ If you’re going to count adaptability as a strength of your breed and as a strength of your herd, and you’re not measuring it and you’re not predicting it, you’re just telling stories.

“If you’re going to promote something as a strength of your breed, you better be measuring it and you better be predicting it.”

According to Decker, hair shedding can influence other EPDs such as maternal growth, which is labeled as “milk” on most EPDs. It can also influence overall reproduction and animal welfare.

Sustainability

The ultimate goal for producers is to cultivate a sustainable herd and business, and they do so by increasing efficiency with many producers working toward requiring fewer inputs.

“There are going to be farmers and ranchers, as we move toward more sustainability [and] push for more ef-

iciency in the beef industry, [who are] going to work to decrease inputs,” Decker explained. “One of the questions that I got from this research was ‘Do we have the genetics and the genetic tools to identify those cattle that are going to work under fewer inputs?’ The bigger take home from this is the management and environment.”

Biological Rules

Decker went on to discuss the environment, biological rules and laws, and how they tie into the study of G x E interactions. Bergmann's Rule states that as you move farther away from the equator, animals tend to get larger, and therefore the thermodynamics and nutrient requirements of those animals vary. Surface law explains that differences in metabolism are largely driven by the surface area of the animal. Decker discussed utilizing new technologies such as 3D imaging to measure surface area for a more accurate evaluation of metabolism. 🐄

To watch the entire presentation or for more information on the symposium, visit beefimprovement.org.

 University of Missouri

Why Hair Shedding?

Heat Tolerance
Economically relevant trait (ERT) directly measuring heat stress

Adaptability
Appropriately Sensing and Responding to the Environment



This slide from Jared Decker's presentation explains the significance of the hair shedding EPD. Decker emphasized that hair shedding is an economically relevant trait as it directly measures an animal's ability to deal with stress as well as to measure the animal's ability to sense and respond to the environment.

 University of Missouri

Indirect

What traits suffer the quickest under environmental stress?

- **Reproduction**
 - EPDs
 - Heifer Pregnancy
 - Stayability
 - More in development!
- **Body Condition and Metabolism**
 - EPDs
 - Fat Thickness
 - Mature Cow Weight (select smaller cows)
 - Feed Intake

This slide from Jared Decker's presentation shows some of the ways that cattle can suffer under environmental stress.

SANTA GERTRUDIS SMALL BREEDERS GROUP

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Congratulations Juniors!

We offer our sincere congratulations to Re'ana and all the juniors who showed Ridge Point cattle at the 2024 NJSGS!

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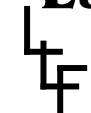
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Terminal Crossbreeding

A MISSED OPPORTUNITY IN THE BEEF INDUSTRY

GRACE VEHIGE, CONTRIBUTING WRITER

"Net potential for growth" - a phrase that, in some shape or form, has crossed the minds of beef producers who are striving to optimize their operations.

For a cattle producer, this phrase translates to increased profitability, efficiency and productivity. Whether it involves maximizing genetic potential, improving management practices or refining business structures, the goal is always to have higher returns and better pathways for your herd and breeding program.



Mark Thallman, Ph.D.

With this in mind, Mark Thallman, Ph.D., and research geneticist at the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center (USMARC), opened his presentation at the 2024 Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Symposium with this thought-provoking message – "If the genetic potential for growth is the same in commercial cows as it is in the bulls they are bred to, some

profit potential is probably left on the table."

For beef producers, the opportunity for increased profit potential is always worth exploring, and in this case, Thallman was referring more specifically to the use of terminal crossbreeding as an avenue for growth. In doing so, producers are challenged to make more targeted breeding choices, utilize new technologies and more.

Throughout his presentation, Thallman spoke on a variety of contributors relating to this breeding approach, including:

- An overview of terminal crossbreeding systems
- The practicality of raising replacement heifers in one-bull herds
- The need for producers to specialize in producing young, bred cows with maternal genetics
- Obstacles to implementation
- Advantages to the entire beef industry
- Breeding maternal cattle

What Is Terminal Crossbreeding?

While crossbreeding is not a new topic of discussion for the beef industry, looking into the potential of terminal crossbreeding systems and the possible benefits is a notion not often explored. As Thallman shared, not only is this

concept a sustainable approach to genetics, but it is also one to uncover new profit opportunities.

Terminal crossbreeding involves mating a specific group of cows, typically breeds known for their maternal traits, with sires selected for their strong terminal traits. The progeny, which are not kept as replacements, are intended for the market.

This system became popular in the 1970s with the introduction of exotic/British breeds and allows producers to specialize in producing market-ready cattle while maintaining their maternal herd for replacement purposes.

The Benefits and Obstacles

As with any business model, there are obstacles and benefits to this breeding system.

In a perfect world, every business model we use would be efficient and profitable. If that were to be true for this model, terminal crossbreeding has exceptional benefits, such as the ability to focus on specific traits for different purposes.

For terminal crosses, traits such as early growth rate, carcass quality and feed efficiency are emphasized. In contrast, maternal programs prioritize fertility, low maintenance requirements, milk production and longevity. So, when we utilize a combination program, this distinction allows for more targeted genetic progress in each area.

"With the fundamental principles of animal breeding, if we can focus on pure traits, it allows faster progress per trait," Thallman said, emphasizing this concept. "That's one of the advantages of having different sets of traits. Each of them can be focused and make greater progress."

However, the adoption of terminal crossbreeding is not without its complexities. Thallman emphasized the need for a systemic change in how producers approach breeding and herd management, particularly in adopting strategies that prioritize efficiency and profitability.

A standout obstacle he mentioned was a simple yet loaded word – tradition. Oftentimes as an industry, if it is not something that we have traditionally done, we may be hesitant to proceed, though that is not always the case.

In this instance, however, the advantages to this approach can positively impact both your operation and the beef industry as a whole. Such advantages include, but are not limited to, having natural efficiency of heavier calves and carcasses from smaller cows, less calving difficulty in heifers, a more uniform stream of calves with better carcass characteristics going into feedlots and having smaller producers focusing one thing within their herds and operations.

“If the genetic potential for growth is the same in commercial cows as it is in the bulls they are bred to, some profit potential is probably left on the table.”

— Mark Thallman, Ph.D.

With such a variety of impacts, we all have a piece of the puzzle.

The Future of Terminal Crossbreeding

Thallman concluded his presentation by challenging the industry to rethink its approach to breeding and herd management. He argued that terminal crossbreeding offers a valuable opportunity but requires a shift in mindset and management practices.

Key takeaways from Thallman’s presentation include:

- Smaller cows may or may not be inherently more efficient, but they are almost certainly more profitable if they can be bred to bulls of greater genetic potential for growth.
- As a whole, most breeds need to decide whether they are a maternal or terminal breed.
- Complementarity and terminal crossbreeding systems are underutilized.
- A change in industry structure with regard to replacement females could benefit the entire industry.

- An economically feasible sexed-semen technology could make terminal crossbreeding more practical.

In simple terms, Thallman suggested the following as a guideline for those interested in a terminal crossbreeding program: Maternal breeds should generally be selected for lower mature size and maternal calving ease, whereas terminal breeds should generally be selected for greater growth and greater calving ease.

By leveraging the strengths of both terminal and maternal breeding systems, we can make waves as an industry in areas of sustainability, efficiency, profitability and business growth. This involves not only adopting new technologies like sexed semen, but also altering traditional practices and exploring a more strategic approach to cattle breeding and management.

Now more than ever, the beef industry stands at a crossroads. The adoption of terminal crossbreeding systems is a viable option for producers seeking to specialize their operations or explore new growth opportunities. However, it will require further exploration and collaboration from producers, researchers and industry leaders to overcome the obstacles and to fully draw out the benefits of such an approach.

As with anything in the cattle business, innovation and efficiency are key. The practice of terminal crossbreeding perfectly combines these two principles and opens the conversation for beef producers to make actionable progress.

If you are interested in hearing more from Thallman on this topic, visit beefimprovement.org. 🐄

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AI Program Realities

Implementing a successful artificial insemination (AI) program does not occur in a vacuum. It takes planning, hard work and attention to detail. In addition to making sure your females are ready to breed, post-pubertal heifers and at least 60-days-postpartum mature cows should have a sufficient body condition score (at least 4.5 on a 1 to 9 scale); and a synchronization of estrus program must be selected and understood. In addition, should I go conventional semen or sex-sorted semen? There is a plethora of estrus synchronization programs available for use and each is designed to work well, depending on the specific management preferences. Semen sex-sorting technology can almost guarantee (>90 percent) calf gender.

One must realize that no AI program will ever match the pregnancy results one can achieve with a breeding soundness exam-tested, fertile bull and a 90-day breeding season. That is unless we are evaluating an AI-bred herd of fewer than 10 females. Those realities are often disappointing to producers new to AI programs. Honestly, achieving an overall AI pregnancy rate ($\frac{\text{\# pregnant cows bred by AI}}{\text{\# cows inseminated} + \text{non-estrus-responding cows}} \times 100$) greater than 50 percent should be considered a win. Successful AI-pregnancy results of ≥ 60 percent would most definitely be a “home run.”

Therefore, cost of synchronization program, semen and time should always be a consideration. Producers need to understand that the amount of money spent per cow in an AI program may need to be doubled when calculating the cost per AI calf pro-

duced. Females selected for an AI program, as well as the AI sire, must be of significant genetic merit to overcome the added cost of each AI calf produced. Genetic merit in terms of the top and bottom pedigree, specific crossbreed makeup, added pounds to weaning weight or beautiful replacement heifers can all contribute to the added value of an AI-produced calf.

One must realize that no AI program will ever match the pregnancy results one can achieve with a breeding soundness exam-tested, fertile bull and a 90-day breeding season.

Nonetheless, sexed-semen AI programs have not been widely adopted by the commercial beef cattle industry. This is mostly due to lower AI conception rates, fewer sperm cells per straw and higher per-straw cost compared to conventional semen. Sexed semen arrives to your semen tank in .25-cc straws as opposed to .50-cc straws of conventional semen. These .25-cc semen straws are half the volume and diameter but are the same length as .50-cc straws. This can be a “shocker” to “old-school” AI technicians and are a little challenging to handle at first exposure. Word to the wise, all semen straws will soon be .25 cc in volume due to superior thawing characteristics, and their use will require the purchase of a “universal” semen gun.

Recently, data from a collaborative study between West Texas A&M and University of Arkansas was presented at the Annual American Society of Animal Science Meetings in Calgary,

Canada. This study used 130 postpartum, multiparous commercial beef cows exposed to a relatively new synchronization of estrus protocol (8&c6 Synch). An EAZI-Breed CIDR was inserted on -14 day concomitant with a 25-mg injection of prostaglandin $F_{2\alpha}$ analog (PGF: Lutalyse HighCon). Factrel (100 μ g GnRH) was administered on -6 day. All EAZI-Breed CIDR were

removed simultaneous with a second PGF injection on 0 day. All cows received a fixed-time AI with sex-sorted semen at either 66 ± 2 h (65 cows) or 72 ± 2 h (65 cows) after CIDR removal. Pregnancy rates were determined with ultrasound on day 42 ± 1 d after AI. Neither cow age, cow body weight nor time of estrus influenced pregnancy rate. However, time of estrus was divided into four time groups with respect to fixed time AI. Groups included non-estrual cows and cows in estrus >22 h, 11-22h, or <11 h prior to fixed-time AI. Fixed-time AI pregnancy rates were as follows: 64 percent, 50 percent, 74 percent and 53 percent, respectively.

The best time to artificially inseminate a beef female to achieve pregnancy is 11 to 20 hours after first observing standing estrus. In a controlled environment, more than 50 percent of cows given an opportunity to conceive to artificial insemination may conceive, even with sex-sorted semen. I would call that a “home run.” 🐾

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Q: HOW WILL WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED IN THE NJSGA HELP YOU IN YOUR FUTURE?

A: One of my favorite things about the National Junior Santa Gertrudis Association (NJSGA) is all of the learning opportunities that the breed provides. From all of the contests at the National Junior Santa Gertrudis Show (NJSGS) to the simple act of caring for an animal, this association has prepared me for my future. One of my favorite contests at the NJSGS is public speaking because it has a real-world aspect to it. Personally, I haven't always been open to talking in public, or really talking to people in general, but this specific contest has helped in ways I can't even describe. I once was a timid little girl hiding behind her flashcards who now speaks proudly and managed to win my division at nationals. Public speaking is something that I will use every day of my life, and without this contest I wouldn't be where I am today.

Another thing this association has taught me is how to be a leader. Serving on the NJSGA Board had always been a dream of mine and, when it finally came true, I learned what it felt like to serve an association that had given so much to me. I learned to put others before myself and how to be a role model for the people around me. I've learned so many life lessons over the years that I don't think I could've found anywhere else other than the NJSGA. All of these lessons have made me not only a better leader, but a better person, which is what is going to ultimately help me the most in the future. 🐾



JUNIOR Board Retreat

The National Junior Santa Gertrudis Association Board of Directors had their directors retreat at Strait Ranches in Streetman, Texas. They discussed the past National Junior Santa Gertrudis Show (NJSGS), proposed changes and things they would like to keep for the **2025 NJSGS, which will be held in Chickasha, Okla. June 15-21.**



The first day of the retreat, the board had a day of water fun with ice breakers, leadership games and a dinner cooked by Cynthia Strait followed by a ranch tour from Yancy Strait. The second day, the board zip lined, had their board meeting and then another amazing dinner. The directors ended their retreat with breakfast and wrote thank you notes for NJSGS sponsors. The Junior Board would like to thank their host, Strait Ranches, Cynthia, Yancy and Heather Strait, Callie Loden and Trai Stegall. 🐾



Santa Gertrudis Source Upcoming Changes

As the landscapes of the cattle industry and communication change, it is important that we adapt and change as well. The increased use of digital communication, social media, short message service (SMS) texting and other forms of communication have made long format, print communication more unique than ever. We no longer need to be all things to every reader or member due to other forms of communication. Print media needs to do what it does best – inform readers on topics of broad interest in a manner that is more in-depth and timeless. Therefore, as we head into the winter and what's ahead for 2025, we are pleased to announce the following upcoming changes to the *Source*.

- The *Source* will be published eight issues per year vs. 12. Beginning with the last issue of 2024, the *Source* will be published on this schedule: Nov./Dec., January, February, March, April/May, June/July, August, Sept./Oct.

- The SGBI Semen Catalog will now be published annually vs. bi-annually and included with the January issue of the *Source*.

- Show results will now be published on the SGBI website and not in the *Source*. Publishing show results on the website allows for more timely distribution of the results while allocating more space in the magazine for content that is informative and more comprehensive to all members. We will continue to publish results of the National Santa Gertrudis Show and the National Junior Santa Gertrudis Show in the appropriate issues of the *Source*, as well as on the SGBI website.

- Subscriptions will no longer be available, but the magazine will be sent to all classes of SGBI membership, including Associate and Commercial members.

We greatly appreciate our advertisers and their continued support of the *Source*. Each issue will continue to be available and distributed at trade shows and other venues in order to multiply the impact those advertisements have on potential customers.

As we move ahead to 2025, additional improvements will be unveiled and communicated to members. Thank you for your continued support of Santa Gertrudis Breeders International and the *Source*. 🐾

ACTIVITY REPORT



Youth Activities Committee | Trai Stegall, Chair

We had an awesome National Junior Santa Gertrudis Show (NJSGS) in Little Rock with almost 600 head of cattle and more than 200 juniors. It was a successful week. It has been busy wrapping up magazine and National Junior Santa Gertrudis Association (NJSGA) Board thank you notes. We have started preparing for the 2025 NJSGS, which will be June 15-21 in Chickasha, Okla., at Grady County Fairgrounds. The junior board is working on the new theme, and I will be making some final plans this fall. A NJSGA Board retreat was held at Strait Ranches with 11 of the 14 board members in attendance. Read more on page 17. A Youth Activities Committee meeting is planned for the second week of August. There will be some exciting changes and additions to next year's NJSGS. Look for more details in upcoming reports. 🐾

SALE REPORT

KENTUCKY NATIONAL SALE

July 20, 2024 • Bowling Green, Ky.

• SALE AVERAGES •

27 Lots: \$3,300

The 46th Kentucky National Sale was sponsored by the Kentucky Santa Gertrudis Association and the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. The auctioneer was Corbin Cowles, the sale chairman was Cody Mattingly and the sale manager was Darren Richmond.

The high-selling female, an open heifer, was consigned by Mattingly Farm, Battletown, Ky., and was sold to Flying Double A Farm, Gray, Ga., for \$6,200. The high-selling bred heifer was consigned by Pitchford Cattle Co., Eustace, Texas, and was sold to Kelly Copas, Franklin, Ky., for \$6,000. The high-selling STAR 5 female was consigned by Callie Derossett, Sulphur, Ky., and was sold to Kelly Copas for \$3,500. The volume buyers were Flying Double A Farm and Kelly Copas. 🐾



2025 SEMEN CATALOG

Market Your Elite Genetics



The 2025 SGBI Semen Catalog is an incredible marketing tool available to Santa Gertrudis breeders, so don't miss your chance to be included in the 2025 catalog. As part of the January 2025 issue of *Santa Gertrudis Source*, the SGBI Semen Catalog will once again be produced in English and Spanish. As a bonus, it will also have expanded distribution at Santa Gertrudis events, internationally

and by request. Don't miss your chance at this is unique opportunity.

For more information and to reserve your space in the SGBI Semen Catalog, contact Darren Richmond at (423) 364-9281 or djrichmd@gmail.com. 🐾

EVENT CALENDAR

September

- 3 Reds to Die For: Volume IV, steerbldder.com
- 7 Creech Farms Field Day, Zebulon, N.C.
- 11 Proud to Be American Sale, Shidler, Okla.
- 13 D6 Larry Osborne Memorial SGBI Point Show, Corydon, Ind.
- 13-14 District 6 Haltered Heifer Show & Sale, Corydon, Ind.
- 13-14 Reese Ranch Annual Red Dirt Gert Sale & Field Day, Encinal, Texas
- 16 Southeastern Empire Livestock Show, Lawrenceville, Ga.
- 22 B Square "The Commitment" Production Sale, sconlinesales.com

October

- 5 Alabama Connection Sale, Cullman, Ala.
- 8 Red Royalty Elite Haltered Heifer Sale, sconlinesales.com
- 18-19 Strait-Hefte Tried & True Production Sale, Streetman, Texas
- 25 Tri Star Sale, Bloomington, Texas
- 26 Briggs Ranches Annual Bull & Commercial Female Sale, Bloomington, Texas

November

- 2 Mountain Laurel Classic Sale, Calhoun, Ga.
- 8-9 Quail Valley Farms Annual Bull & Female Sale, Blountsville, Ala.
- 21 Semen Catalog Space Reservation Deadline

2025

February

- 4-6 Cattle Industry Convention & NCBA Trade Show, San Antonio, Texas
- 7 Banners & Buckles Sale, Jackson, Miss.
- 8 National Santa Gertrudis Show at the Dixie National Livestock Show, Jackson, Miss.
- 14-15 Wiley Ranch Spring Sale, Effie, La.
- Nov. 23 South Texas Heritage Sale, Robstown, Texas

March

- 22 Purple Reign IV Sale, Magnolia, Ark.

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Plantersville, Texas
Anna Rustyn Phelps,
Prattsville, Ark.
McKamie Jean, Emerson, Ark.
Elizabeth Hutton, Linwood, N.C.

SGBI CONNECTIONS

SANTA GERTRUDIS BREEDERS INTERNATIONAL (SGBI) Executive Director Chris McClure hit the ground running as soon as he came on board and has not stopped since. McClure is the first to emphasize that the member visits, trade shows, event attendances and other activities are very reflective of the interest and enthusiasm for Santa Gertrudis cattle, and the dedication and commitment of Santa Gertrudis breeders to develop productive, profitable cattle that fit today's industry.

For more on the travels of SGBI, visit www.linkedin.com/company/santa-gertrudis-breeders-international/ or our other social media accounts on Facebook and Instagram.



LEFT: People often ask how straight Santa Gertrudis perform in the feedyard. The answer is, quite well. For efficient gain they are exceptional. How about 3.7 ADG with a 5.7 DMI? And if crossed with a *Bos taurus*, Santa Gertrudis-influenced feeders can exceed those performance metrics. These straight-bred Santa Gertrudis cattle, owned and bred by Strait Ranches, are on feed at Southwest Feedyard, Hereford, Texas.

RIGHT: SGBI members Brian Bruner (Texas State University) and Heather Blewett (Buena Vida Cattle Company) discuss the new crop of Santa Gertrudis ET calves at the Freeman Center of Texas State University. The Freeman Center is a 3,500-acre teaching and research facility that allows the university to provide hands-on experience to students as well as contribute valuable research focused on practical applications for not only agriculture, but wildlife, horticulture, riparian science, climate change and other projects focused on sustainable food production that protects the environment. It is uniquely placed at the intersection of rapidly growing urban and suburban areas with the rural agricultural base of food production. Santa Gertrudis cattle are part of their research into sustainable livestock production.



SGBI HAD A PRODUCTIVE AND BUSY TIME at the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association (TSCRA) Convention and Expo in March. Executive Director Chris McClure talked with members, breeders, cattle industry producers and professionals about the value in adding Santa Gertrudis genetics to cow herds. The message: look to Santa Gertrudis to increase hybrid vigor, fertility, productivity and profitability. 🐄



LEFT: Brian Blakey and Bobby Johnson of Bluebonnet Meat Company stop by for a visit with Chris McClure. **RIGHT:** Allan Richards once ran more than 1,100 Santa Gertrudis cows. Now retired, Richards remains a staunch supporter of the breed and the value they bring to the industry.



This group of students from Texas State University pose challenging questions during a stop at the SGBI booth at the Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course. The future looks bright with this great bunch of students.



A group of young graduate students from Brazil visit the SGBI booth at the Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course. All of them were interested in adding Santa Gertrudis genetics to their family operations back home. Bags containing catalogs and other information are flying south along with them on their return journey.

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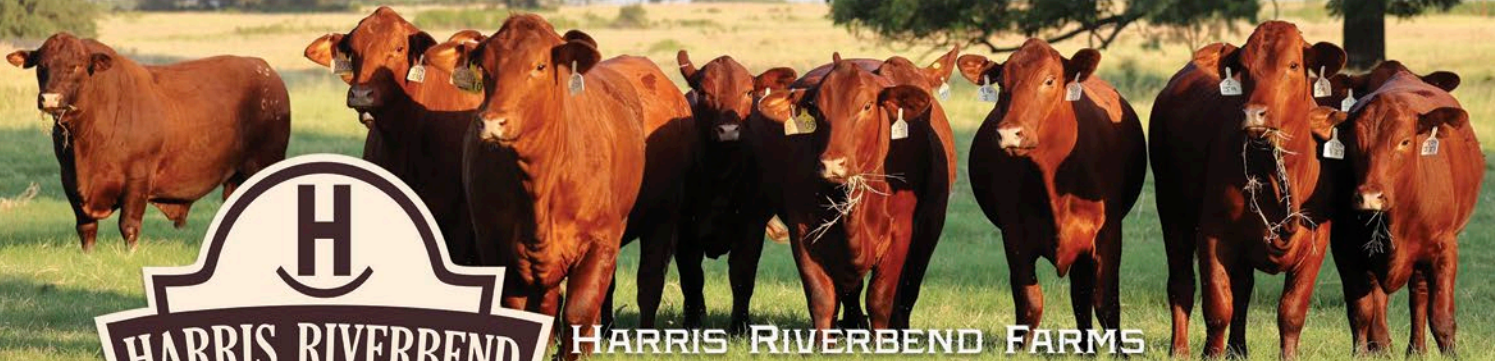
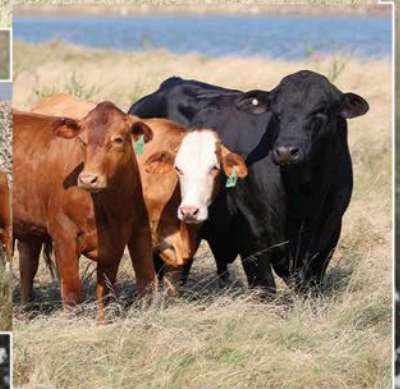
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