



Our Beef is...

100 % grass-fed. No grain

All natural. No hormones or antibiotics.

Certified by A Greener world as 100% Grass-fed and Animal Welfare Approved.

That's No Bull...

It's time to rotate in a new bull into the herd. We keep two bulls on the ranch to service about 60 cows. Our beloved bull, Dillon, is getting up there in age. I have spent a lot of time recently researching bull sales and individual bulls. There is so much information out there now compare to just a few years ago. My research is focused on traits and characteristics that are critical to our 100% grass-fed/grass-finish operation.



As I have written before, getting the genetics right is so important to our operation. Our cattle must be able to thrive on a 100% grass-fed diet throughout their time here on the ranch. Grass efficiency and weight gain on grass are just some of the attributes we are looking for. Disposition is also at the top of the list. Cattle that are difficult and dangerous to

handle are no fun to deal with, and we have had plenty of experience in that area in the past. Other traits that we look for in bulls include calving ease (pulling calves is also not fun), fleshing ability, thickness, muscling, masculinity, fly resistance, hair coat, marbling ratio, and tenderness. The measurement of some of the traits are subjective, but many are determined through ultrasound, DNA testing, or genomic analysis.

Finally, a very important trait that we look for is frame size. Conventional wisdom is that bigger is better. After all, if the cattle are bigger, won't we make more money? Not necessarily...we believe in quality over quantity when it comes to the size of our cattle.

Our typical hanging weights are generally 500-650 lbs depending on the year (wet vs. drought). Hanging weights for cattle in a feed lot are typically 750 to over 1000 lbs. Of course our cattle are not confined and dosed with steroids or growth hormones, but another of the many differences is due to the frame size of our cattle. The frame score is a convenient way of numerically describing the skeletal size of cattle.

The frame score cattle is based on the hip height of the animal at a given age.

A study at University of Arkansas bears this out and showed that smaller-framed, early-maturing cattle are better suited for pasture-finishing operations. The nine year study found small-to-intermediate framed cattle that were finished on pasture had carcasses with higher marbling and quality grade scores than larger-framed, later-maturing cattle. Additionally, a 2016 study in



Wyoming concluded that smaller framed cows will produce more beef per acre per ranch (not beef per animal), allowing our operations like ours to be more efficient.

We will let you know in next month's newsletter how our search for our next generation bull turned out.

(Note: The column on What's New On the Ranch is on Page 2)

Beef Updates:

BULK BEEF

Whole, half, or quarter beef

- We are currently sold out of our pre-sales for 2024. We will put those still interested on a waiting list.
- The way it works is: 1) You tell us you want a quarter, half, or a whole. 2) We will follow up with you with additional details. 3) You can confirm your interest and send a deposit (\$100) to reserve your beef
- Please contact us with any questions.

RETAIL BEEF

Cuts directly from MJ Ranch

- We will have a very limited quantity of retail beef, primarily ground beef, available on the farm in late April. Contact us if you are interested.



What's New on the Ranch

This past weekend we started moving the herds from their winter pastures to full rotational grazing. It is fun to watch the sheer joy of the cows as they are finally put out from their winter pastures to the spring pastures after eating hay for 4 months. Since the grass is not well established, we will need to move them quickly. We have eight pastures that we rotate the cow/calf herd through. At this time of the year, we will move them every 2-3 days. The yearling herd (those that we sell in the spring and fall) are also on the move. They will be moved to another large pasture separated into sections with mobile electrical fencing.



We will have some very limited quantities of retail beef available at the end of April, primarily ground beef. Purchases will be limited. Contact us after April 16th if interested in purchasing some retail beef.

Our beef is all 2-year old, 100% grass-fed Angus beef, that has **never** been fed grain, always been kept on pasture, never in a feedlot, no growth hormones or antibiotics, and always been given humane care....as certified by A Greener World. We have 2 certifications: Animal Welfare Approved (humane care) & Certified Grass-fed (fed only grass/hay)!



Connect with us!

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