



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.

How Cold is Too Cold?

With the extreme winter weather (for Kansas) the last few weeks, I began giving a lot of thought to how cold is too cold for the cattle? After a quick internet search, the first hit was an article from a academic institution that claimed cattle start having significant stress at temperatures around 25F. The article claimed that they should be brought inside the barn and given more bedding at these temperatures. I chuckled to myself as my herd has not seen anything above 25F for over a week and the current temperature was -10F that morning. As you know, we do not confine our cattle and they are out in the pasture constantly.



So how do they survive in that extreme cold? Cows have a natural tendency to huddle during cold weather in order to conserve body heat. By forming a tight-knit

group, they can collectively generate and retain warmth. They acclimate to cold weather by growing a longer, thicker hair coat in the winter. Thanks to the heavy, thick hair coat, they have natural insulation that protects them from the bitter cold. Then when it snows, the hair catches the snow and forms a layer over the cow. This creates an air pocket between the snow and the cow's skin, which is then warmed by the cow's natural constant core body temperature of 101F. So when you see pictures of cows with snow on their backs, that is a sign of healthy, happy cow.

Additionally, their digestive process generates quite a bit of heat. In the winter, cattle eat more food. This in turn increases the amount of fermentation in the rumen, and one of the biggest waste products of fermentation is heat. When we provide our cattle with more forage for their rumen, more fermentation happens and more heat is produced.

There are a few things we do for our cattle when the temperatures dip below 10F and the snow starts

flying: 1.) We bring out the hay to where they congregate to conserve their energy from having to graze, 2) We feed them in low areas that are out of the wind, 3) We feed them extra amount of hay, and 4) We feed them as close as possible to a reliable water source.

Of course the real challenge is keeping waterers unfrozen. Since our cattle are in the field, we do not have electricity and heat on the waterers. So we had to get creative in insulating the waterers, check them frequently, and break the ice as needed. All of this takes extra work on our part.



In the end, the herd made it through fine with the exception of a few limps and sore joints due to walking on the frozen hard ground for a long period of time. So, we may not have found out the answer to the question of how cold is too cold, but we came awfully close this year. We sure are enjoying the 60 degree weather this week!

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.
- For those on the waiting list, we will contact you when there is availability in the order you were added to the waitlist. Then, 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 have a limited quantity of retail beef , primarily ground beef, available on the farm. Contact Joyce at mjranch66044@gmail.com or 785-865-2503 if you are interested. Please leave a message if we do not answer.



What's New on the Ranch

In addition to just keeping the herd fed and watered during the winter, we have a list of things that will need to get done before spring including, overseeding pastures, equipment maintenance, soil testing, fecal testing for parasites, and fertilizing hay fields. There just never seem to be a “down time” on the ranch.

This year again, we have sold out of our pre-orders for 2025 for both the spring and fall. We are so grateful to our of our loyal, returning customers. We are putting new customers on a waiting list. We always hold back a few head from our pre-orders in the event of loss in the herd (death or “escape”) over the spring or summer months. If all goes well, we will open up these additional head for ordering from our waiting list in late summer.



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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And on Facebook and Instagram [@MJRanchLLC](#)