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Brangus Are Not “Eared” Cattle

First and foremost we need to wrap our minds around the fact that God created cattle, he did not create breeds. And while in some cases natural barriers such as oceans and mountain ranges did affect genetic selection, for the most part it is humans who created breeds. And, if you go back far enough in history there really are no pure breeds, only our inflated misconceptions that they exist. That being said, there are two species that make up all cattle of the world; *Bos Taurus* cattle are primarily cattle populations that originated in the more temperate climates and *Bos Indicus* cattle populations developed in the more tropical regions of the world.

Generally the US beef industry further subdivides *Bos Taurus* beef cattle into two groups. Continental Breeds of cattle are those breeds originating on the European Continent while British Breeds were originally from selections of bovine populations from the British Isle. It is also typical of US producers to wrongly lump all *Bos Indicus* breeds of cattle together. This is rather astounding as there are more recognized different breeds of *Bos Indicus* derivation scattered around the world than specific breeds of *Bos Taurus* derivation. Americans have also further compounded the confusion by creating new breeds by crossing a variety of specifically recognized *Bos Indicus* cattle to create the American Brahman and crossing cattle of *Bos Indicus* and *Bos Taurus* origin to create what some refer to as the American Breeds. While it may not be absolutely scientifically correct, Brahman and the various American Breeds all seem to be referred to as being *Bos Indicus*. Many unknowingly lump these cattle together and refer to them

collectively as “eared” cattle and it seems anything with some *Bos Indicus* gets this handle, even when the genetics of that animal’s ancestry are totally unknown. But the breeds of *Bos Indicus* cattle, especially those created in the US have dramatically different attributes and their contributions to the beef industry are totally different. Beef producers would make huge errors if they attempted to use these breeds interchangeably. They are not the same cattle.

Let’s take this thought to similar extremes. Charolais, Tarantaise and Simmental are all *Bos Taurus* Continental Breeds. Do they all have the same attributes? Obviously they do not. Angus, Hereford, Belted Galloway and White Park are all *Bos Taurus* British Breeds. Do they have the same attributes? Again, obviously they do not. Then why do we wrongly insist on equating the *Bos Indicus* breeds; Brangus, Santa Gertrudis, Beefmaster and others as being the same cattle. Even more obviously than with the Continental and British breed examples, they definitely do not have the same attributes.

Why are Brangus cattle different from the other *Bos Indicus* Breeds?

- Brangus cattle are all 3/8 Brahman and 5/8 Angus or Red Angus from their original genetic makeup.
- Since there is no “grading up” program from other registered breeds or commercial cattle, there are no genes other than Brahman and Angus/Red Angus in Brangus.
- Brangus has the largest performance record data base of all *Bos Indicus* Breeds.
 - Brangus register close to 25,000 animals annually and the next closest *Bos Indicus* breed registers approximately 1/3 that number.
 - Brangus is one of only two registered cattle breeds in the US to have mandatory Total Herd Reporting (THR) where every cow on inventory has to have a reported weaning event. The THR system collects more birth and growth data, eliminates reporting bias and provides more accurate EPDs.
- Brangus is one of only a few breeds in the US using a true Multi-breed Genetic Evaluation model with multiple data bases included in that analysis to compute EPDs.
- Brangus has more ultrasound and actual carcass data than other *Bos Indicus* breeds, proving their ability to marble and grade Choice with a more favorable yield grade.
- Two tenderness projects with over 1000 head in each study prove Brangus Warner Bratzler shear values to be equivalent to Angus.
- Brangus (Straight Brangus and Crossbreds) have from the beginning been accepted into the Certified Angus Beef (CAB) program.
- A summary of research reports indicate Brangus are the best compromise of Angus-type

carcass traits with Continental-type growth. And, the productive longevity of Brangus cows is certainly the envy of the beef industry.

No, Brangus are not “eared” cattle. They are an American created *Bos Indicus* breed with very specifically defined origins. They, like other *Bos Indicus* cattle, really shine in harsh environments but without negatives from a carcass standpoint. The positive and profitable genetic contributions they make to a cow herd are dramatically different from any of the other *Bos Indicus* breeds.

The **2012 SPITZER RANCH PROFESSIONAL CATTLEMEN’S BRANGUS BULL SALE** will be at the ranch in Fair Play, SC **Saturday, February 25, 2012**. A downloadable Bull Sale Catalog will be available at www.srbulls.com for you to print for yourself approximately February 1, 2012. If you do not have access to a computer they will be pleased to mail a printed copy on request. Or, if you would like to receive their Newsletters with complete performance reports on bulls being developed for sale (including current EPDs, birth and weaning data as well as current rates of gain on the growth and development program) get in touch and they would be pleased to add your name to their mailing list. Their increasingly popular Newsletters always provide educational tips, inspiration and insights into a wide variety of timely topics of interest to those cattlemen whose goal is increased profitability. Call 864/972-9140, write SPITZER RANCH, 1511 HWY 59, Fair Play, SC, 29643 or send an email to spitzeranch@mindspring.com. And you are invited to visit them at www.srbulls.com and follow their posts on Facebook. They hope to see you at this year’s sale!

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