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SPITZER RANCH Initiates 2012 Bull Development Program

The 2012 edition of the Spitzer Ranch bull development program contains a really nice group of 28 fall-born Brangus and Ultrablack bulls. Because of differing management situations there were 15 bulls weaned and placed on Test 2012-1 on June 7 while Test 2012-2 began June 21 with 13 bulls. These calves have enjoyed some of the wildest variations in weather imaginable. One of the wettest seasons on record saw them coated with mud for most of the fall and winter and then the rains all but stopped from April thru June. Since it is contrary to Spitzer Ranch management to ever creep feed calves, weaning weights were about 100 pounds lighter than usual. However, the bred-in genetic potential the beef industry has come to expect from their genetic program remains consistent. Long time practitioners of “fence line weaning” and a complete pre-weaning herd health and vaccination program to reduce stress, resulted in calves that weaned extremely well and never seemed to miss their mothers.

The program at Spitzer Ranch is dubbed a “development program” rather than a “gain test” as the goal is not to push bulls for maximum gain, but to develop sound, functional, athletic breeding bulls ready to chase cows and not stand around waiting to be fed. Within three days of weaning calves were turned to crabgrass pastures with a high protein soy hull and corn gluten feed based ration and free choice bermudagrass hay. The biggest forage management challenge is to have something green and growing under their feet from weaning until sale date. As soon as crabgrass quits, bulls normally go to fescue until cereal rye/rye grass pastures are ready to be intensively grazed. Bulls will graze those pastures through sale time and the commodity ration will gradually evolve to less corn gluten feed and a higher percentage of soy hulls as bulls grow and their need for protein decreases.

No after weaning “warm-up period” is utilized and calves begin the development program the day they are weaned. Therefore you get to see their gainability throughout their entire life from birth to yearling ages with no missing segments. Some registered operations use a “warm-up period” to allow for adjustments to being weaned and placed on feed. The Spitzers believe that management procedure to be counterproductive to true genetic evaluation and prefer to provide lifetime performance on bulls offered for sale. History indicates these calves will gain somewhere around 3.25 pounds per day and will average being 1300 pound plus long yearlings by sale day. That is certainly an adequate post-weaning gain to be able to sort bulls as to genetics for yearling growth and performance. Additionally they will be hard without carrying excess fat as their bulls typically have only ¼ inch of outside fat when ultrasound scanned at about one year of age.

Almost one half of these calves were sired by the featured Brangus bull in the GENEX AI STUD, TCB Catawba Warrior R532 (Brangus Trait Leader for heavier Yearling Weight and bigger Rib Eye Area and yet still ranking in the Top 10% for lighter Birth Weight) and SR Cadence Warrior S702 (Brangus Trait Leader for lighter Birth Weight and yet still ranking in the Top 35% for heavier Yearling Weight). Other sires with several calves represented are MC Alliance 000P3, an out-cross first generation bull produced in the Mound Creek program in Texas and SR Medicine Man W415, a true “curve bender” PR Elixir 698L3 son. W415 was used for natural service in SC and then a one-half interest in W415 was sold in the Spitzer Ranch Bull Sale which made him one of the high selling bulls for 2011. The Spitzer Ranch program has always been focused around producing bulls with “curve bender” genetics to sire those easily live-born, but fast growing calves sure to put pounds on the ground and dollars in your pocket. A full listing of sires and performance on calves to date will be available in the Spitzer Ranch Summer 2012 Newsletter slated to go in the mail about Mid-August.

The **2013 SPITZER RANCH PROFESSIONAL CATTLEMEN'S BRANGUS BULL SALE and CUSTOMER COMMERCIAL BRANGUS FEMALE SALE** are scheduled for **Saturday, February 23, 2013**. You are invited to investigate the Spitzer Ranch Program, their cooperators and customers, and learn how SPITZER RANCH BRANGUS GENETICS can increase the profitability of your cattle operation. The Spitzers publish an informative and inspirational Newsletter twice each year (Summer and Winter). They extend you a personal invitation to have your name added to their rapidly growing mailing list. Just call 864/972-9140, write SPITZER RANCH, 1511 HWY 59, Fair Play, SC, 29643 or send an email note to spitzeranch@mindspring.com. Be sure to learn more about their program by visiting their website at www.srbulls.com and you might enjoy following their posts and QUOTE OF THE WEEK on Facebook.

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