April 20, 2015

BULL SALE RECAP

The 85th all-breed performance evaluated bull sale on March 30 averaged $4585 on 41 head. There were two bulls that did not have enough friends to even get off the floor bid of $2000. The evening’s top was $7500 on a Hereford entered by Bonebrake Herefords, Springfield. He was loaded with calving ease to go along with an attractive phenotype. The successful bidder was Two Bar D of Niangua.

Bidding was very reserved during the sale with only 15 bulls going for $5000 or more. From my perspective the sale could have beat a $5000 average based on feeder calf prices and how other bull sales have averaged this spring.

Most of you have heard my historical bull price theory for the 85 sales. Over the years, buyers have averaged paying the equivalent of the value of 4, 450 pound, medium and large frame number 1 muscle steer calves. Sure sometimes they’ll go up to 5:1; and even down to 3:1. The week of the sale the Missouri Market News reported the average price for that type of steer was $311.25 per hundred. That valued it at $1401 per head. When you do the math the ratio for this sale was 3.3:1. This is well below my expectations and it left the consignors shaking their heads.

The 15 top sellers, in fact had a “power” EPD number of 27.8 when you averaged their 6 EPD percentile ranks. This shows they had a lot of numbers that showed their expected genetic potential. Our buyers are pretty savvy and have studied their lessons and if the numbers aren’t there, they won’t bid.

My view on the tested bull sales is they’re all good. Some are good for the seller, some are good for the buyers. Since I work with both parties I can see goodness in both. The March 30, 2015 sale was a good one for buyers.

FEEDOUT DEADLINE AHEAD

May 10 is the deadline for entering 5 or more steers in the Feedout program in Iowa this summer. So far entries are light in number. If you enter 10 or more head they will give you a $400 per head cash advance. I don’t guarantee what the cost of gain will be, but Kansas State’s Feedlot Report projects around $80 per hundred. Give me a call if you’d like to learn what kind of calf you’re raising. Is it Choice, Prime or Select? Is it a 2 Yield Grade or a fat 4 or 5? Do your calves gain better than the average in their pen? What’s their health and treatment costs at the lot? Are they calm and easy going or excitable when being worked? How do your cattle rank on retail yield value per day of age? You’ll have those answers by the end of the year if you participate in the program.

SHOW-ME-SELECT SALE

May 15, 7 pm at Joplin Regional Stockyards will be the next SMS heifer sale in this region. We’ve catalogued just
under 300 heifers that will calve from mid-August to the end of November.

There are 20 sellers this sale with several new ones that have some excellent prospects. The catalog is on-line at www.swmobcia.com or check with my office and we’ll get you a copy.

We have a few more Tier Two heifers this time. Besides the regular specs the SMS heifers must meet the Tier Two are AI sired and their sire must meet EPD accuracy values on calving ease direct, weaning weight, calving ease maternal, carcass weight and marbling.

Plan to be in the seats at JRS on the 15th whether you’re buying or not.

**MAY HAY**
Is your haying equipment ready to harvest early May hay? Remember last year I reported on some novel endophyte fescue hay that was cut on May 1. There were very few stems and seedheads in it and the lab results were 20.1% crude protein, 64% total digestible nutrients (TDN) and a relative feed value of 117. Remember full bloom alfalfa has a 100 RFV, so this is outstanding hay. It can either be rolled up dry or put in a bag. If it’s dry, plan to barn store it to insure the quality and palatability remains.

Fescue, whether “hot” or not can make decent hay if harvested by May 10 or 15. You won’t be able to do any bragging about the number of bales but focus on quality. In addition, think of the high quality you’ll also produce in the second cutting or grazing if you plan to turn the cattle on it.

By the way, if you seeded legumes in the fescue this winter getting the fescue off early will permit the legumes to compete better.

If you small square bale any good hay this year keep our State Fair and Ozark Empire Fair hay shows in mind. It’s an educational and marketing opportunity. Check with your nearest extension office for details. Why one of us will even come and sample the hay for you.

**PINKEYE PREP**
I know many cattlemen had lots of eye problems in 2014. Do you have a strategy to combat a reoccurrence in 2015? I wish I could help more than I can but I advise you to visit with your veterinarian soon. There have been a number of vaccines tried with mixed results.

However, if you consistently experience serious pinkeye problems don’t give up. Try one of the newer products that have different strains of the causative bacteria. Follow the label and your veterinarian’s recommendation which may include a booster shot. Most of the products suggest boosting it each year.

Continue to practice some of the basic pinkeye prevention practices such as adequate nutrition, ample shade, fly control, try to reduce dust and pollen as much as possible. If you clip pastures, do it early rather than the end of June.

Finally, watch your cattle closely, daily if possible, and pull and treat those weepy-eyed animals then isolate them in a sick pen. Keeping them away from herd mates should reduce the spread of the disease. An increasing number of you now use the rifle and medicated dart treatment. Whatever you use don’t put it off till next week hoping it will clear up.

Early treatment may save some eyes. It can reduce the chance you’ll be docked when you sell your “blue eyed” calves. If you do the Show-Me-Select program, the eye scars should be reduced which could add several hundred dollars to the value of your heifers later on.

I encourage you to keep good records in your Redbook, in the computer or on the kitchen calendar regarding the ID of pinkeye affected animals. You might find a pattern regarding ages, breed, or more likely animals within a breed or cross that seem more sensitive to the eye infection. Good records will be helpful as you assess the effectiveness of your prevention and treatment protocols.

Good luck in your pinkeye battle and pass along any revelations to me, both good and not so good.

**MORE MINERAL RESEARCH**
The March Arkansas Research Report carried an article from the University of Florida about comparing cow colostrum and milk composition on mature Angus and Brangus cows which were given two different mineral supplements 90 days before expected calving. One supplement contained inorganic trace minerals, while the other one had organic minerals.

The summary statement said that breed and treatment did not affect colostrum fat, total protein, lactose, dry matter or somatic cell count. Overall results indicate breed had more effect on colostrum and milk composition than prepartum mineral supplement.