

Five Oaks Beef

Five Oaks Family Farm Monthly Newsletter

September/2016

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On The Farm...

Well, September has arrived and with it, the promise of moderating temperatures! Keeping a small farm running is a lot of work, even in the best of circumstances but in 90° + temperatures and humidity just about as high, it can be doubly so. Linda and I are very much looking forward to Autumn!

The heat can be taxing on the cattle as well, so we spend quite a bit of time making sure there is an abundance of cool, clean water for them. An 1100 pound cow can easily consume 35 to 40 gallons of water a day!

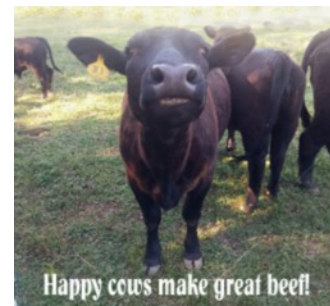


We also ensure that they have easy access to shade, whether it be in the barn or just under a big tree.

During the Summer, cows tend to graze in the morning and evening and

rest and ruminate during the heat of the day.

We inspect our herd every day for problems like heat stress and for any



thing else that might impair their general well being. Not only is it the right thing to do for the animals but

happy healthy cattle produce great beef!

Feedlot Beef...

The vast majority (probably around 95%) of the beef consumed in the United States is purchased from super markets and meat markets who purchase from large wholesalers who, in turn, purchase from feedlot / processing operations, located mostly in the mid-west.

Suffice it to say that cattle in feedlots are treated very poorly. They arrive at the feedlot at about 6 months of age from a farm where they had eaten only grass. They are immediately placed on a new diet that is comprised almost exclusively of corn to add pounds of body weight, at any cost to animal health. Their stomachs (called rumens) which are designed to digest grasses are unable to cope with this mass infusion of corn. The animals become sick and their immune systems degrade. To avoid wide-spread disease and illness, large amounts of antibiotics are mixed with their feed to keep them alive. If you are interested in further reading on this subject, check out this article in 'The Atlantic'. It is called "[Feedlots vs Pastures: Two very different ways to fatten beef cattle](#)".

Low Stress Handling...

When we speak of 'handling' cattle we are talking about the process of gathering them up and moving them single file through a chute with a restraint system at the end. Once each animal is restrained (both for it's safety and ours), the animal can be inspected, weighed, vaccinated and/or pregnancy checked. Calves are also ear tagged while restrained, with a unique number for identification. We always apply ear tags - we NEVER brand (either fire or freeze) our cattle!

Getting a herd of cows to line up, single file in a chute so they can be individually restrained may sound sim-

ple to some. (These are most likely people that have never had to do it! 😊)

To make this happen without raising the stress level of the cattle can be both challenging and frustrating. Cattle, at times, seem quite intelligent and at other times, well... not so much. One thing, however, that they always are is stubborn. Basically, the process consists of placing the cattle in a situation where they have an ever diminishing number of options and patiently waiting for them to finally choose the one you wanted them to choose from the start. It takes time, but it is worth it. Cattle that are stressed produce meat that is not as tender nor as flavorful as cattle raised in a low stress environment.

Five Oaks Beef Referral Program...

Our customer base is growing and we are very excited about that. We do some advertising, but we attribute most of our growth to 'word of mouth' referrals from existing customers, to their friends and family members.

During September, we would like to reward those of our customers who help us to grow our extended family with new customers. During September, if you recommend Five Oaks Beef to someone who purchases one of our great beef packages and becomes a new customer, that person will receive a 10% discount on their beef package AND we will write you a check for 10% of their purchase price! Just tell them to use coupon code "REFER" when ordering and have them enter your full name and phone number in the Note to Seller field.

When their order is processed, we will send you your check as a 'Thank You'. It's as easy as that!

We hope that you will find the content of this newsletter both interesting and informative and we always welcome suggestions for content or style. If you would like to unsubscribe, however, you may do so by clicking [here](#) and typing Unsubscribe in the subject line.

Beef you can trust!