

## How Bulls Are Raised

All bulls are born on our operation in Hope Hull. We have a mix of Black Belt prairie soil, which is predominantly Fescue grass, and Sandy soil which is usually Bermuda grass. The bull lots are 10 to 15 acres dominated by fescue with fence line bunks. We utilize AI breeding so our cows stay in groups of 80 to 100 head herds. We utilize rotational grazing and do not creep any calves. We began calving in late September and generally end calving by mid-December.

We vaccinate our calves according to the Zoetis Select Vac program. We give our first round of vaccination shots around first of March. That is when we make our first round of culling the bull calves, getting any excessive birth weight or calving problems and obvious disposition and quality problems. We give our second round of vaccinations in late April, at which time we collect our weaning weights and disposition scores. We fence line wean in June to July according to pasture grass conditions.

When bulls are weaned they go into groups of 30 to 50 head and fed a high roughage ration consisting predominantly of corn silage and various dry commodities depending on markets and availability. We strive to have our bulls gaining at or above 2.5 lbs/day. Due to the high moisture and high roughage content of our ration, coupled with the heat and humidity in our area, the bull calves that do not perform in our environment will sort themselves out.

At yearling we collect weights, scrotal, frame and ultrasound data. All yearling bulls are freeze branded in December with the September and October born bulls being semen tested at that time. These older bulls are then evaluated according to their growth performance data and the highest performing group will be used in our own program as yearlings. This also allows us to have long yearling bulls available for private treaty sale. All yearlings used on CK Cattle will be returned to our bull development program after breeding season. These bulls will then be offered for sale at 2 years of age at our Headquarters sale.

We are continually culling bulls. Soundness and feet issues generally surface at around 18 months. This is another big plus for buying two year olds bulls, as it is very difficult to see some these issues before the bulls have a chance to fully mature.

All bulls that were used in our program as yearlings are trich tested after they are pulled from the cows. All 2 year old bulls are semen tested and trich tested prior to selling, which means the bulls used in our herd will be trich tested multiple times.