



GLBGA Newsletter

Upcoming Events

June 10-12
Regional Round Up Junior
Activities & Show
Columbia City, IN

June 12
GLBGA Spring Field Day
Columbia City, IN

June 13
Doug Abney Memorial Open
Show
Columbia City, IN

July 3
Midwest Classic Show
Pecatonica, IL

July 20 - 22
Wisconsin Farm Tech Days
Eau Claire, WI

August 6 - 22
Indiana State Fair
Indianapolis, IN

August 12 - 22
Illinois State Fair
Springfield, IL

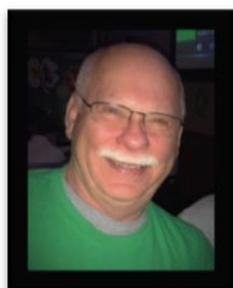
August 12 - 22
Iowa State Fair
Des Moines, IA

In this issue...

- President's Message
- A winning strategy for gut health
- Member spotlight: Showdown Wood Ranch
- You have options: Choose wisely
- Treasurer's report
- Have you herd?



ISSUE
115
Spring 2021



**Terry Willis,
President**

President's Message

While writing this I am sitting at my desk looking out the window at the blowing snow and the -30 wind chill temperatures so I am struggling a little about what to talk about. Maybe it's the cold numbing my thought process or thinking that soon I will have to go outside and move snow drifts to get to the silage bag and round bales of hay, make sure the waterer isn't frozen, and get chores done before my hands and toes are frozen.

I see cows not in the shed to stay out of the cold, but out in the snow rubbing on the scratcher and calves butting heads

and playing in the snow piles and realize Belties are pretty remarkable animals. They make me realize with all the problems and stresses in the world no matter the conditions we can still move forward and enjoy life.

The GLBGA board has just completed three 2 hour sessions on Zoom to discuss plans for the upcoming year. They are organizing and planning new programs and marketing ideas to help you as members succeed in the cattle business. We will be updating the website to make it more friendly and useful to you. The plans for the Regional Roundup Junior Show and Educational Clinics are moving forward. The board is planning to add a youtube channel for videos we feel will be useful and educational to our members. The demand for Beltie cattle is continuing to increase and other cattle breeders are seeing the advantages of the Belted Galloway breed. The demand for direct from the farm to the consumer beef is growing day by day. All this falls right in to the Belted Galloway wheelhouse.

You will be soon receiving your dues and advertising opportunities notice. The GLBGA doesn't have a big stick to hold over your head to pay your dues. It is a voluntary decision; all we can offer are services, educational and marketing programs to benefit your cattle business that you value more than the cost of the annual dues. I truly believe it is a tremendous value and I encourage you to take advantage of what the Great Lakes Belted Galloway Association has to offer to its members.

**Membership dues reminder -
Don't let your membership lapse!
Keep an eye on your mailbox
for your 2021/2022 GLBGA dues
reminder. Annual dues should be
mailed in by April 1, 2021.**

A Winning Strategy for Calf Gut Health

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by Dr. Shelby Roberts, Ruminant Research Scientist



Maintaining good gut bacteria is essential to the health of growing calves. Your primary focus as a producer is providing your calves with what they need to grow into healthy adult animals. To do so, gut health is key. Good gut health allows the calf to efficiently utilize the nutrients in the feed, giving them a strong, stable and healthy start.

However, helping a calf meet its true genetic potential is often easier said than done when there's a battle going on at the microscopic level inside the calf's gut. Understanding gut health in cows and calves and how to be a more proactive producer regarding your herd's health will impact the overall efficiency and success of your operation.

Understanding gut health in cows and young calves

"An animal's gastrointestinal tract is made up of billions of bacteria," said Dr. Shelby Roberts, a postdoctoral research fellow at the Alltech Center for Animal Nutrigenomics and Applied Animal Nutrition. "This bacterial population is comprised of both some pathogenic bacteria and other bacteria that are beneficial to the animal. In a healthy gut, these bacteria keep each other in balance. Gut health problems start when this balance becomes offset and the bad bacteria start to outnumber the good bacteria."

For bad bacteria to cause trouble, they must first attach to the gut, where they start to multiply. Antibiotics kill bad bacteria, but they can also kill good bacteria, so taking a different, more proactive approach when addressing calf gut health can be beneficial.

"Maintaining the good gut bacteria, while ridding the system of the bad bugs, is essential to promoting gut health," Roberts said.

Good gut health benefits cattle in a few ways, including:

- The efficient utilization of feed
- Healthy weight gain
- Immunity
- Gut integrity

Taking a proactive approach to gut health

Traditionally, the gut has been thought of as just another part of the digestive system. However, we also know that it is an active component of the immune system. Considering the dual function of the gut, one way to achieve optimum gut health in calves is to use a feed supplement created to promote good bacteria and support natural defenses. This preventative approach to animal health can help reduce the number of sick calves and, in turn, decrease the amount of antibiotic treatments as well. This can save producers valuable time and money during the busy calving season.

Over the last 20 years, Alltech has conducted research trials that have evaluated management practices that utilize nutritional technologies and the effects of those technologies on calf health and performance. Certain high-quality prebiotics, for example, have been proven to positively impact calf gut health. Prebiotics are indigestible food ingredients that selectively stimulate the growth and/or activity of one or a limited number of microbes in the gut.

Establishing strong calf immunity starts with the dam

- At birth, calves are born with a naïve immune system due to maternal antibodies being unable to pass through the placenta, which leaves calves susceptible to disease.
- Colostrum, the first milk produced at calving, is one of the most important components of calf health. Colostrum is a calf's initial source of the antibodies that are essential for protecting young calves until their immune systems are fully developed, which takes 1 to 2 months.

A Winning Strategy for Calf Gut Health

- Studies of perinatal mortality indicate that 4–12% of calves are born dead or die within 24 hours of birth. Numerous risk factors contribute to higher perinatal mortality rates, including failed antibody transfer from dam to calf, which only reinforces the importance of colostrum and early nutritional management for calves.
- There are numerous factors that can affect colostrum quality, including the dam's age, breed and nutrition. Making sure that the dam's nutritional requirements are being met prior to calving allows the dam to pass along quality stored colostrum to the calf.

Better health for improved performance

Producers spend a lot of time and money trying to improve the genetics of their herds. Calves that have both strong immune system development and a healthy gastrointestinal tract will be better able to utilize nutrients efficiently and reach their genetic potential. "If we can make calves healthier and reduce the energy they spend keeping the bad bacteria in balance, it should result in better performance," Roberts explained.

The principle of improved gut health for improved performance is best applied during periods of stress, such as weaning and feedlot arrival. These stressful times negatively impact animal health and growth due to exposure to new pathogens and periods of decreased feed intake. Improved performance resulting from increased efficiency can mean more money in the producer's pocket. This can be achieved through:

- Improved animal growth (average daily gains)
- Reductions in calf treatments and morbidities

Trials have shown that, without a doubt, enhanced calf health and immunity translate to better growth and gains. "Being proactive with the use of nutritional technologies and establishing a healthy gut could give a producer's calves the leg up they need to reach their genetic potential," Roberts said.

Member Spotlight: Shadow Wood Ranch



Shadow Wood Ranch is a 60 acre homestead located in Bruner, Missouri. Veronica and Daniel have lived there for 12 years now and have spent that time building the farm and raising their five children. They moved from the big city in Phoenix, AZ and have invested literal blood, sweat and tears into their new country lifestyle, but they wouldn't trade it for anything. They started with a bare field, but after countless hours of labor, Daniel was able to build all of the fencing, barns and water systems himself, learning how to weld and many other skills along the way.

They have experimented with many different animals including sheep, hogs, and quail, but nothing really felt right. They first learned of the Belted Galloway from a Mother Earth News article that highlighted the benefits of heritage breed cows. They wanted hardy, sustainable animals that would also be less dangerous for their young children to be around. It was impossible not to fall in love with the Oreo cow. Since then,

they have settled with a small but growing herd of the belties as well as chickens, honey bees, and a wood mill. They rotationally graze, and produce as many of their own resources as they can, in an effort to be sustainable.

Their goals for the future include improving the genetics of their herd, improving the land, 30 acres of which they are in the process of clearing and fencing, and this year will be the first that they hope to replace winter hay with grass pellets produced on the farm.

They are excited to be a part of Great Lakes community for mentorship as they continue to learn. As reformed city slickers starting from scratch, they still occasionally make mistakes regarding simple things that others would take for granted. Although they are new to the breed, and cattle in general, they are looking forward to continuing to learn and improve their operation, and contribute to improving the quality of the Belted Galloway breed in the future.

You Have Options: Choose Wisely

by Julie Willis, Sunnybrook Farms

Are you in the market to expand your herd? Below are five tips to help you choose what cattle to buy!

1. **Weaned Heifers – PRO:** Get long lifetime for production, the most up to date genetics, you can breed to the bull of your choice and when to calve. **CON:** Longest time frame to wait for a return on your money.
2. **Bred Heifers - PRO:** Longest lifetime for production, will get a return in less than a year. **CON:** Have to deal with an inexperienced mom that never had a calf. Usually, higher cost to buy than a bred cow.
3. **Bred Cows – PRO:** Experienced mom, you can see proven performance, faster return on your money than open animals. Buying older proven cows can be a better buy money wise. Especially, if the breeder has kept replacement females and is willing to sell the dam. **CON:** Less years for production.
4. **Open Cows- PRO:** Will be less expense, they are experienced moms, and proven progeny. You can breed them to bull of your choice and have a calf the time you want. **CON:** You have a longer wait to get a calf. Be sure to ask why the cow is open!
5. **3 in 1 package – (cow, bred back, with a calf) PRO:** Get advantages of a cow and a heifer with a faster return. Best bang for your buck. **CON:** Only problem is they are related.



Guidelines for Finding and Selecting Cattle

Find a good reputable breeder or someone who is selling the kind of cattle you're looking for. A purebred breeder may be the best place to start for any beginner cattle-person. These breeders would also be a good source to recommend where to find non-registered cattle breeders. Ask if you can come over to look at his or her cows and other animals for sale. Visit their website and study them in the comfort of your home to see how the animals match up as far as conformation and body condition is concerned. See the history of the farm and the cattle you are interested in. Look for consistency and proven results.

Have a list of questions to ask....Here are some basic ones:

- Herd health, vaccinations, what is the health history of the calves?
- Average weights: cows and bulls, birth weights, weaning and yearling weights?
- What are your objectives with your breeding program and herd?
- Why did you get started with this breed?
- What is your feeding program for cows, bulls, calves, yearlings?
- Study conformation and body condition of the herd.
- What are your breeding guarantees on heifers, bulls (breeding soundness exam), cows or bred heifers that are certified pregnant by a vet, blood test, etc. or are they pasture exposed?

Here are some points to remember:

- If they are registered ask to see the pedigree, but never let a pedigree overrule a visual appraisal based on fertility and soundness.
- Phenotype and temperament should be a priority over pedigree.
- Make sure they are not fine boned and have adequate width when viewed from behind.
- They should move freely, have sound feet (not long or curling hooves) and have strong pasterns.
- Notice if the cattle are easy fleshing. What is their body condition score?
- As you move around them, evaluate their temperament.

- Observe their complete cattle herd. The things you observe in their herd will be imported to your herd when you buy their genetics.
- Your farm tour will reveal how they set up their breeding program. A few gentle questions at the right moments will tell you about their calving difficulties and overall herd conception rates. You'll see how strict the breeder is in his or her culling practices and you'll learn volumes by observing what kinds of cows and bulls they use as their foundation of their own herds.
- Ask to see parents or siblings of the animals you are interested in. What the cow looks like is very likely what her heifer will become. If you are not willing to own the dam then don't buy the calf.
- Remember bulls should be held to the highest standards. They will influence every calf. Ask for a BSE exam on the bull, if they aren't willing to provide one don't buy him.
- Do not buy an older bull or semen from one that doesn't have calves on the ground you really like or so few offspring you can't evaluate his progeny.
- Ask for opinions from one or more other breeders about the farm you are visiting. Especially if you have any doubts or concerns. Talk with some of the breeder's previous customers to see what they think. One simple question to ask is, "would you buy another animal from them?"
- A reputable breeder will not push you to buy something that is not a good fit for you. Matching the right cattle to the right owner is critical to success.
- Satisfied customers should be a major goal of a reputable breeder. An unhappy customer will not be a repeat customer.
- If they don't have what you are looking for, they should be willing to recommend other breeders that would be a better fit for your needs.
- Any animal that doesn't make the grade in your mind should never be considered, no matter how "cheap" the price.

By evaluating potential cattle breeders' entire herds, touring their farms, and understanding who their target customers are, you will be far better prepared to judge whether their cattle are a good match for your farm and breeding objectives.

Note about the author: Julie Willis is a managing partner along with Terry Willis in Sunnybrook Farms. They raised Angus for 42 years and have been involved with the Belted Galloways for 20 years. For the past 9 years the farm has been named National Breeder and Exhibitor of the Year.



Treasurer's Report

Balance, January 1, 2020

\$ 10,459.22

Receipts:

Membership dues

- Farm/Individual \$ 3,300.00
 - Junior 200.00 \$ 3,500.00

Advertising

- Newsletter \$ 1,200.00
 - Newspaper Flyer 250.00
 - Website 375.00 1,825.00

2019 Field Days

- Mauston Convention Bureau 500.00

Midwest Classic

820.00

Sponsorships

- Designated (World Beef Expo - 2020) 250.00
 - Designated (World Beef Expo - 2019) 750.00
 - Undesignated 1,410.00 2,410.00

Miscellaneous

- Promotional Items Sold 416.10
 - BYG Midwest Classic Awards \$76.96 493.06

Total Receipts

9,548.06

Total to be accounted for

\$ 20,007.28

Disbursements:

Promotional

Advertising

- BGS Website \$ 120.00
 - GLBGA Website 519.98
 - Promotional Items 1,261.07
 - Publications - Midwest Herdsman ad 450.00 \$ 2,351.05

Newsletter

- Design & Layout \$ 2,000.00
 - Printing 1,263.73
 - Postage 299.00
 - WBE pictures 45.00 3,607.73

Hoosier Beef Congress

275.00

Indiana State Fair

100.00

Midwest Classic

- Awards \$ 366.81
 - Facilities 200.00
 - Judge 250.00
 - Food for exhibitors 245.81
 - Miscellaneous 12.97 1,075.59

NAILE Junior Show

100.00

Regional Roundup

- Grounds rental deposit 450.00

World Beef Expo

- Awards \$ 289.75
 - Sponsorship 350.00 639.75

Miscellaneous

37.64

Total Promotional

\$ 8,636.76

Administrative

Corporate Filing Fees

\$ 20.00

Insurance

725.00

Miscellaneous

86.52

Total Administrative

\$ 831.52

Total Disbursements

9,468.28

Balance, December 31, 2020

\$ 10,539.00

Change in Fund Balance Since December 31, 2019 Report

	12/31/2020	12/31/2019	Change
Beginning balance	\$ 10,459.22	\$ 12,124.25	(1,665.03)
Receipts	9,548.06	11,201.25	(1,653.19)
Disbursements	9,468.28	12,866.28	(3,398.00)
Increase/(Decrease) in fund balance	\$ 10,539.00	\$ 10,459.22	\$ 79.78

Respectfully submitted

Terry Etheridge, Treasurer



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COUNTYLINE BELTIES



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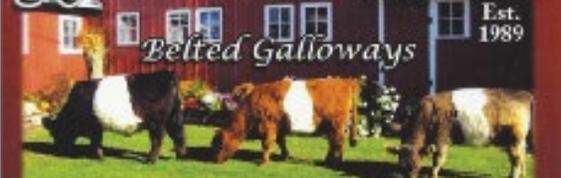


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A family owned and operated farm located in Central New York between Syracuse and Binghamton, 6 miles east of I-81. Our farm raises registered Belted Galloway cattle for breeding stock and freezer beef. Inquires and visitors are always welcome.

PARSONS FARM

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HAVE YOU HERD?

Solid advice coming from an respected long time Angus cattle breeder

Cattle should be bred to have easy going dispositions and to be structurally sound. They should track north to south and float when they walk, not bounce because of stiff or soft pasterns. They should have plenty of capacity and natural muscle. Replacement heifers must have good udders and calm temperaments. The bull's male parts should be adequate and equal in size, hang straight not twisted. Use a balanced trait selection method in breeding. No single trait selection should be used.

When it comes to selecting breeding stock, Use your own eyes. If you go to a sale and find yourself kicking the dirt about a buying decision, should I or shouldn't I buy, you need to get in your truck and head home. But, if you really like the animal, find a way to "own it." Always go with your gut feeling!

Tattoo Year Code

The year code on tattoos for animals born in year **2021** is

J

